

TIME AND  
WESTERN MAN  
*BY*  
WYNDHAM LEWIS

BOOK ONE:  
THE REVOLUTIONARY SIMPLETON

BASED ON THE  
CHATTO AND WINDUS  
1927 EDITION



# CONTENTS

## BOOK 1

### THE REVOLUTIONARY SIMPLETON

PREFACE	<i>page</i>	5
CHAPTER		
I: Some of the meanings of romance		17
II: The principle of advertisement and its relation to romance		23
III: Romance and the moralist mind		26
IV: The romance of action		30
V: Art movements and the mass idea		32
VI: The revolutionary simpleton		36
VII: The russian ballet the most perfect expression of the High Bohemia		38
VIII: The principle 'revolutionary' tendency to-day that of a return to earlier forms of life		42
IX: Ezra Pound, etc.		45
X: Tests for counterfeit in the arts		53
XI: A brief account of the child-cult		56
XII: 'Time'-children. Miss Gertrude Stein and Miss Anita Loos		58
XIII: The prose-song of Gertrude Stein		63
XIV: The secret of the success of Charlie Chaplin		67
XV: A man in love with the past		69
XVI: An analysis of the mind of James Joyce		74
CONCLUSION		131
APPENDIX		136

BOOK 1  
THE REVOLUTIONARY SIMPLETON

*'It is in literature that the concrete outlook of humanity receives its expression. Accordingly it is to literature that we must look, particularly in its more concrete forms, namely in poetry and in drama, if we hope to discover the inward thoughts of a generation.'*

*Science and the Modern World. A.N. Whitehead.*

## PREFACE TO BOOK I

THIS essay is the first part of a longer and more comprehensive study of the 'time'-notions which have now, in one form or another, gained an undisputed ascendancy in the intellectual world. In Book I, the time-mind, as I have called it, is considered in its more concrete manifestations—as we find it, notably, in works of fiction, poetry or painting. In Book II, the significance of all that type of belief and feeling which can conveniently be marshaled under the concept 'Time', is examined in detail. How the 'timelessness' of einsteinian physics, and the time-obsessed flux of Bergson, merge in each other; and how they have conspired to produce, upon the innocent plane of popularization, a sort of mystical time-cult, is shown. How history and biography, and more particularly autobiography, are, more truly than anything else, the proper expression of this *chronological* philosophy, is canvassed in the literary criticism of Book I, and in the analysis of Spengler's 'world-as-history' doctrine in Book II.

As the object of this book is ultimately to contradict, and if possible defeat, these particular conceptions upon the popular, the concrete, plane, where they present themselves, as it is, in a rather misleading form, I have attempted to present my argument in the plainest manner that I could. With this end in view I have chosen to open the discussion among books such as those of Proust or Joyce, which have been widely read, and which are popularly accessible, and in which I consider that, with a very little attention, the *time-cult* can be observed in full operation. In this way I, at the outset, unmask the *will* that is behind the Time-philosophy, by displaying it in the heart of the representative ferment produced by it—in the full, instinctive indulgence and expansion of the artistic impulse, and imposing its values upon the impressionable material of life.

The main characteristic of the Time-mind from the outset has been a hostility to what it calls the 'spatializing' process of a mind *not* a Time-mind. It is this 'spatializing' capacity and instinct that it everywhere assails. In its place it would put the Time-view, the flux. It asks us to see everything *sub specie temporis*. It is the criticism of this view, the Time-view, from the position of the plastic or the visual intelligence, that I am submitting to the public in this book.

The position from which this essay is written is outwardly a 'narrow' one. Any merit it claims it founds if anything on a certain illiberality; for it had to be sharp in order to penetrate, and so it had to be gathered to a single point. I can perhaps give you the best idea of what I think I am doing by quoting here a passage against myself, as it were, from Caird, about the Cynic philosophy. I should be sorry to give you the idea that I regard myself of his Megarian antagonist, Stilpo. Rather would I suggest of such people as the Cynics and the Megarians, with the inevitable extremism of a certain sort that would most likely result. Still, in giving Caird's account of the virtues and vices

attendant upon the Cynic revolution. I shall be furnishing you with a hint (against myself, as I say) that may serve to enlighten you as to my intentions, unless you proceed to apply it too literally.

“The Cynic philosophy (Caird writes) was one of those beginnings of progress which take the appearance of reaction. When some aspect of thought or life has been for a long time unduly subordinated, or has not yet been admitted to its rightful place, it not seldom finds expression in a representative individuality, who embodies it in his person, and works it out in its most exclusive and one-sided form, with an almost fanatical disregard of all other considerations—compensating for the general neglect of it by treating it as the one thing needful. Such individuals produce their effect by the very disgust they create among the ordinary respectable members of the community. . . . Their criticism of the society to which they belong, and of all its institutions and modes of action and thought, attracts attention by the very violence and extravagance of the form in which they present it. And the neglected truth or half-truth, which they thrust into exclusive prominence, gradually begins by their means to gain a hold of the minds of others, forces them to reconsider their cherished prejudices, and so leads to a real advance of thought. In this fashion the Cynic seems to have acted upon the ancient . . . world, world, as a disturbing, irritating challenge to it to vindicate itself—a challenge which was violently resented, but which awakened thought and in time produced a modification, and even a transformation of prevailing ‘opinions.’” (*The Evolution of Theology*, etc.)

Now I have supplied you with an analogy against myself for practical reasons, although it has no literal application, as I remarked above. I am doing a very different thing from what the Cynic was doing, and I am very differently placed. But certainly I am issuing a ‘challenge’ to the community in which I live. I am ‘criticizing all its institutions and modes of action and of thought.’ I ‘create disgust,’ that I have proved, ‘among the ordinary respectable members of the community,’ that is to say among the established orthodoxy of the cults of ‘primitivist’ so-called ‘revolution’: what I say is violently resented,’ and I very sincerely hope will ‘awaken thought.’ Finally, what I say is ‘*one of those beginnings of progress which takes the appearance of reaction.*’ What I have written—and I call to witness my book, *The Lion and the Fox*—should prove me exceedingly remote from what is generally termed a ‘reactionary.’ But I am entirely sick to death, like a great host of other people, of many of the forms that ‘revolution’ takes, in art, in sociology, science and life: and I would, however modestly, hasten the day when ‘revolution’ should become a more rigorous business, humanely and intellectually, if undertaken at all, and no longer be left only in the hands of people who do nothing but degrade and falsify it.

So let me return to my adumbration of this exclusive ‘one-sided’ position that is mine, or that will be said to be mine. I will try next to give some compendious idea of the manner in which I regard the claims of *individuality*. First then, although it is true that a pig would be a strange pig who dreamt himself a cat, or a cat that allowed the psychology of the horse to overpower it, and so forgot it was a cat, for this life, at least, a man still is the most

detached and eclectic of creatures. But if his life is centred upon some deep-seated instinct or some faculty, he will find a natural exclusiveness necessary to proper functioning. For our only terra firma in a boiling and shifting world is, after all, our 'self.' That must cohere for us to be capable at all of behaving in any way but as mirror-images of alien realities, or as the most helpless and lowest organisms, as worms or as sponges.

I have said to myself that I will fix my attention upon those things that have most meaning for me. All that seems to me to contradict or threaten those things I will do my best to modify or to defeat, and whatever I see that favours and agrees with those things I will support and do my best to strengthen. In consequence, I shall certainly be guilty of injustice, the heraclitean 'injustice of the opposites.' But how can we evade our destiny of being 'an opposite,' except by becoming some grey mixture, that is in reality just nothing at all? Yet this fixation shall be upon something fundamental, quite underneath the flux; and this will in no way prevent my vitality from taking at one time one form, at another another, provided, in spite of these occupations, on the surface, of different units of experience, the range of my sensibility observe the first law of being, namely to maintain its identity; and that the shapes it chooses for experiment shall agree with that dominant principle, and such shapes not be adopted without rhyme or reason, at the dictate of fashion or some casual interest, just because they happen to be there, in an eternal mongrel itch to *mix*, in undirected concupiscence, with *everything* that walks or crawls.

Yet how are you going about this fixation you may ask; how will you tell offhand what is essential and what is not, for the composing of your definite pattern; and, even among essential things, how do you propose to avoid the contradictory factors of empirical life; since every one includes, below the possibility of change, dispositions that war with one another? Well, the way I have gone about it is generally as follows. I have allowed these contradictory things to struggle together, and the group that has proved the most powerful I have fixed upon as my most essential Me. This decision has not, naturally, suppressed or banished the contrary faction, almost equal in strength, indeed, and even sometimes in the ascendant. And I am by no means above spending some of my time with this domestic Adversary. All I have said to myself is that always, when it comes to the pinch, I will side and identify myself with the powerfullest Me, and in its interests I will work. And luckily in my case the two sides, or micro-cosmic 'opposites,' are so well matched that the dominant one is never idle or without criticism. It has had to struggle for supremacy first with critical principles within, and so it has practised itself for its external encounters. This natural matching of opposites within saves a person so constituted from dogmatism and conceit. If I may venture to say so, it places him at the centre of the balance.

As to what this formally fixed 'self' is, and how to describe it, I have already plainly indicated how I would go about that. From the outset I gave away the principle of my activity, and made no disguise of its partisan, even

its specialist, character. So my philosophic position could almost be called an occupational one, except that my occupation is not one that I have received by accident or mechanically inherited, but is one that I chose as responding to an exceptional instinct or bias. So as the occupation is an art, and hence implies a definite set of faculties and predispositions (which, out of all the other things that it was free to me to occupy myself with, made me adopt that art as my occupation), it could perhaps more exactly be described as the expression of the instincts of a particular kind of man, rather than an artist among men of other occupations. What philosophy is not that?—you could say, however, with truth. But the definiteness of those instincts, those of a plastic or graphic artist, make his responses to the philosophic tendencies around him more pointed than if he were a scholar mainly, or if he approached them from some political position, or as a professional of philosophic thought. For at least his partisanship from the start has its plain label, there is no ambiguity about where he gets his beliefs from: though there are artists and artists, and it is certainly true that many would take opposite views to those of the present writer.

But let me take an instance that will throw into more relief the rationale of the method I am explaining. Whatever the Marquis de Sade said about life or things in general, you could be in no doubt as to what his remarks would come back to in the end; you would know that they all would have the livery of the voluptuary, that they would all be hurrying on the business of some painful and elaborate pleasure of the senses, that they would be devising means to satisfy an overmastering impulse to feel acutely in the regions set aside for the spasms of sex. With as much definiteness as that, whatever I, for my part, says, can be traced back to an organ; but in my case it is *the eye*. It is in the service of the things of my vision that my ideas are mobilized.

The significance of the concept 'Time' in contemporary philosophy, and the results of its application to all the complexity of life and artistic expression around us, is the main subject of this essay. But in the title, *Time and Western Man*, another notion is introduced, namely, 'Western Man,' and that notion stands in this case simply for the environment in the midst of which we are scrutinizing, in Book I., the ravages of the doctrine of 'Time.' That spectacle leads us to believe that perhaps that doctrine may have a particularly unfortunate effect on specifically Western Civilization; though a course of it might equally well be found to have a devastating effect upon the remnants of the immemorial civilizations of the East. But what at least I think can be shown is that the Time-doctrine is not, emotionally and psychologically, essentially Western; and so the Western scientific man cannot, really, be held responsible for it. But on the other hand, it could have hardly seen the light in the native atmosphere of the Indian intelligence, for instance; it is not a philosophy that would have had much appeal for the true heirs of Upanasadic thought. If we must place it, it would be in the mongrel westernized-



orientalism of alexandrian mystical doctrine that we should see it first flowering, its highest flight 'the flight of the Alone to the Alone'; via Bergson it has reached, philosophically, our distressed contemporary Western arena, contributing beyond doubt to our ever-deepening confusion of the mind.

Western Man, as such, is of course the completest myth. The only question is whether we should not erect that myth into a reality, define it more (not *historically* so much as in conformity with the realities of the moment); and whether, in short, some such generalization would not serve our purposes better than the multiplicity of myths that swarm in our drifting chaos. 'Western' does respond to something that the European is responsible for, for good or ill; but of course there is every sign that before long the great asiatic populations will have turned into 'Westerners' *pur sang*, and the factory hand of Wigan and Hanchow 'meet' long before the Trump of Doom, in a way that would have been quite inconceivable to Mr. Kipling when he wrote his famous imperial ballad, with its mystical 'Eastern' and 'Western' duality. We are told for instance, that the jewish settler in Palestine is so very 'Western' that the Arab can see no traces in him of that first-cousin who left the Ancient East after the exploits of Titus, and indeed regards him as a complete alien. So 'Western' must be a very inclusive term; and the 'Westerner' flirts incessantly with the Black Bottom of the Swanee River, with mahometanism, with the tobacco-coloured Samoans of Gauguin, and the Japanese of Lafcadio Hearn, and indeed with everything that is *opposite*, technically, to his own kind (so romantic is he), for which latter poor White trash he advertises the greatest contempt. So the task of fixing a 'Western' norm would be anything but an easy matter. Still, perhaps the time has arrived (so familiar are we now with all that is strange and different) to turn back with a thrill of novelty to ourselves—even that, at last! The European, or generally the Western Man, should almost be ripe for the novel proceeding of flirting with his own kind, for a change.

'Thought turns to hope'; or it could be said that thought was in the nature of a promise. But it is not with such hopes, or thoughts, that we are concerned here. And the 'Western' of our title is given no more definition than what naturally inheres in the something that still characterizes our Western environment, as opposed to others distinct in tradition and outlook.

But there are still a few difficulties that at the start, and before any further progress is attempted, should be cleared up. Very reasonably it has been objected, upon the evidence of the first and already published part of this essay, that this 'occupational' standpoint of mine should not be a starting-point for criticism of things that do not fall within the sphere of that occupation: (very reasonably if that view of what I was doing—and to which perhaps first uncompleted statement gave me some colour—had been the correct one). It has been suggested, for instance, that as an artist I have tended to imply that mathematical physics should conform to the creative requirements of the arts in which I am exclusively interested: and that I should be better advised to ignore such things, and only attend to

what happens in my own field. Now that I should be delighted to do if these different worlds of physics, philosophy, politics and art were (as, according to my view, they should be) rigidly separated. To receive blindly, or at the best confusedly, from regions outside his own, all kinds of notions and formulae, is what the 'creative artist' generally does. Without knowing it, he receives into the central tissue of his work political or scientific notion which he proceeds to embody, if he is a novelist, in his characters, if he is a painter, or a poet, in his technique or emotional material, without in the least knowing what he is doing or why he is doing it. But my conception of the rôle of the creative artist is not merely to be a medium for ideas supplied him wholesale from elsewhere, which he incarnates automatically in a technique which (alone) it is his business to perfect. It is equally his business to know enough the sources of his ideas, and ideology, to take steps to keep these ideas out, except such as he may require for his work. When the idea-monger comes to his door he should be able to tell what kind of notion he is buying, and know something of the process and rationale of its manufacture and distribution. But further than this, of course, it was as a critic, and not as a creative artist, that I was speaking of in the first part of this essay. And as such it was certainly my business to know the origins of what I was examining in the works chosen for discussion.

In this part of my essay I am, however, definitely passing over into the metaphysical field, following the tracks of all the ideas that find their way into the regions of artistic creation: and my objectionable task, as a perhaps overconscientious critic, is to examine to the best of my ability their credentials.

I do not feel at all impelled to explain myself when I am examining a mere philosopher: he speaks my language, usually with less skill, but otherwise much the same as I do. But there is a certain feature of my proceedings that does, I think, require elucidation, for my argument will run more smoothly and free of interference if I forestall possible objections. I refer to my dealing with the physicist, or the ideas emanating from the physicist. Just as the practical engineer receives from the mathematician fresh knowledge, theoretically arrived at, that makes him rub his mere practical eyes, and just as these formulae are found to *work*, so the equations of the mathematical physicist are found often to be truth-telling in the same way: they take their rise in response to the difficulties met with in experiment, and, having met that case, they are perhaps found applicable to a whole system of new facts. Within a few years of the arrival of Einstein upon the European scene, the layman, I suppose, knows more about Relativity physics than any layman has ever known about the Newtonian cosmology, either during Newton's lifetime or since. There is an enormous Relativity literature from which any one who cares can acquaint himself with the main bearing of these theories. Of course, the more ignorant people are with regard to the points at issue, the more likely they are to say that you must be a mathematician to discuss them at all. But, in point of fact, there is no more reason to-day why a

person should refuse himself the right to use his wits, on the grounds that he is not a mathematician, than there was in the time of David Hume. If Hume, Hobbes, Berkeley or Locke, for instance, who were not mathematicians, had closed their minds to us, we should know far less about the world than we do to-day. It is a superstition to suppose that the instruments of research, as to-day developed, have excluded from participation in the general critical work of intellectual advance, the independent critical mind, for that mind is still the supreme instrument of research: and the history of thought amply proves that that instrument is not always mathematical, any more than it is always artistic. The criticism of the newtonian system made by Berkeley is in fact one of the main bases of mathematical thought to-day; and yet the newtonian system is the most gigantic mathematical achievement. In spite of that, it was built on assumptions that Berkeley, observing it independently and not as a mathematician, was able to detect and, in the interests of his God, finally to discredit.

These remarks are by no means preliminary to an announcement that it is my intention to cast my mere artist's eye, like an impertinent bird's, into the awful machinery of Relativity, and with an inspiration transcending disabilities of any description, pluck out the heart of that arcane fastness of logic. No. My remarks are merely directed to clearing the field of any of the more troublesome lookers-on or camera-men, who would perhaps attempt to prevent us from questioning the Sphinx, on the ground that we were using words instead of other symbols.

I have very little to do with Relativity physics, however, as it happens. I am only concerned with their effects; and I am in that, on the principle indeed of all the most and I am in that, on the principle indeed of all the most approved and most recent scientific method, thoroughly justified. For it is now quite accepted that all we need deal with in anything is the *effect*—what, for instance, can be observed to *come out of* the atom—rather than what we should commonly describe as the 'cause' of the disturbance. We are authorized, and indeed commanded, to remain sublimely indifferent to what 'causes' what we can see and note, or indeed whether it has a 'cause' at all. God, even, from being, as common-sense saw it, a Cause, has now become an Effect, when he is allowed a place at all in this curious picture. Instead of being the Cause of Causes, he is the Effect of Effects. So all we are allowed or invited to do is to invent a certain number of things that give the 'effects' a properly non-causative aspect. A great many *effects*, a whole string of highly characteristic disturbances, *come out of* einsteinian physics, then. And those I am thoroughly competent to observe, and it is those with which I have set out to deal: the physics themselves can remain for us in the region at most of hypothesis, a vague *something* that produces, in the observable field of philosophy, a chain of *effects*, or of mysterious happenings. The cause, if a cause we must have, is einsteinian physics. But what *they* are, or if they exist at all, indeed, we shall be not only justified, but invited by the most approved scientific procedure, entirely to neglect.

In spite of this highly fortunate disposition of the contemporary mind, absolving us from going *inside*, as it were, the 'reactionary-mass' or the 'atom' (or in this case the mathematical corpus producing the disturbances labelled 'space-time'), indeed exacting that we should remain the periphery and should merely jot down what happens—count, classify, describe and assess the effects—nevertheless a few brief remarks may be made on another aspect of the matter relating to the celebrated author and proximate cause of what we are about to observe. I have been taxed with identifying Einstein with Bergson, Alexander, Cassirer and the rest. This, in fact, I have not intended to do for Harvey, in discovering the circulation of the blood clearly could not be described as doing so with a view to showing us to be machines, or for any motives except those of pure scientific curiosity; and the physical investigations as to the structure of our universe which culminated in Einstein, were, for all any one need suppose to the contrary, as innocent as that (or as the formulae for constructing an improved type of bridge or the formularies of an actuary) of any human *arrière-pensée*. Nor, further, were they necessarily at all metaphysical in origin. 'It is not ... metaphysical concepts (which even before this had brought time and space together) but mathematical fact of the invariance of Maxwell's equations and experiments in physics, which leads us to the new conception with its paradoxical consequences.' Let us take that account of the matter; we can accept that without further trouble; and as the time-space or space-time solution is the capital one for us, in Einstein, that disposes of our wishing to associate Einstein with subsequent relativity-philosophy, or with the time-philosophy of Bergson, in any close or peculiar way: nor, if the subsequent or preceding philosophies are proved to possess some especial sociological or political colour (as Bosanquet or Benda think they have), need such impurities be ascribed to the mathematical physicists, of whom Einstein is the most famous.

But having said that, and made our position clear as regards the great mathematical innovators who have had such a vast influence in all contemporary thought, and in some ways such an invigorating one, the following considerations should be associated with that statement. First it is inconceivable (fully allowing for the natural detachment from mundane things of the mathematical intelligence as contrasted with the philosophic) that the mathematician working in such imaginative material as physical stimulus, should not *be* to some extent metaphysical; or that their mathematical formulation of pictures of the world should not conceal, or be susceptible of, some metaphysical belief or meaning, of which they were quite conscious. It is mere superstition to suppose 'a mathematician' to be a sort of divine machine. In any reasonable, and not romantic, account of the matter, we must suppose the mathematical physicist not entirely unaffected by neighboring metaphysical thought. That Einstein, as much as Sorel or Proust, for instance, had not at least read the work of Bergson, and formed some opinion upon it, favourable or otherwise, is unlikely, to say the least. It would be just as unlikely as that Newton remained entirely uninfluenced by the

english platonism by which he was surrounded. The newtonian conception of absolute space probably came to him while basking in the platonic airs of the *Enchiridion* of More, or the similar benignant atmospheres of Cudworth or Cumberland (and so, it is now believed, it would be indirectly derived from Philipon, an alexandrian whose importance Duhem and Wohlwill have lately brought to light). Is it, then, so unlikely that the *time* factor so powerfully transforming mathematical physics in our day had something to do with the metaphysical speculation preceding it, and all that growth of time-dimensional speculation with which most people are familiar: in other words, that *time* may have found its way into those systems by the same metaphysical road that *space* took to reach the mechanics of Newton? It does not seem at all impossible, though there is no occasion to insist upon such a possibility: indeed it will be one of our tasks here to make such an explanation otiose.

If I quote a passage from Einstein's Boswell, Moszkowski, some people might object that a person of such a low order of intelligence as he shows himself in one sense to be, deserves no notice. But it must be remembered that the type of criticism which these pages are designed to circumvent on the popular field is often of a far lower order of intelligence than that displayed by the man whom Einstein, after all, admitted to his intimacy. And at least Moszkowski, to put it no higher than that, is more intelligent than Spengler. In his book of gossip about his hero, Moszkowski has (*chap. V.*) secured permission, on the occasion of his next visit to Einstein, to open a grand full-dress discussion upon 'discovery in general.' Her prepares himself intellectually for this great occasion. 'We are precluded from questioning Galileo personally about the foundations of Mechanics, or Columbus about the inner feelings of a navigator...etc., but a great discoverer lives among us, etc. etc.' So he gets ready. 'Before meeting him again I was overwhelmed with ideas that arose in me at the slightest echo of the word "discovery"... the sum of (man's) discoveries... find their climax in the conceptions *civilization* and *philosophy*, just as they are partly conditioned by the philosophy of the time. We might be tempted to ask: which of these two precedes, which follows?' He comes to the conclusion that 'they are intimately interwoven with one another, and are only different aspects of one and the same process.' In short, he takes quite the same view of the matter as does Spengler.

Then he goes on:—

It seemed to me that even at this stage of my reflections I was somewhere near interpreting Einstein's intellectual achievement. For his principle of relativity is tantamount to a regulative world-principle that has left a mighty mark in the thought of our times. We have lived to see the death of absolutism; the relativity of the constituents of political power, and their mutability according to view-point and current tendencies, become manifest to us...The world was far enough advanced in its views for a final achievement of thought which would demolish the absolute also from the mathematico-physical aspect. This is how Einstein's discovery appeared as inevitable.

So there is no question about the way in which Einstein's Boswell regards

his master's discoveries. He brings to them, perhaps, a peculiarly political eye: he sees them as a rooting out from the Cosmos, by means of a kind of mathematical guillotine, of the principle of the *Absolute*; rather as Heine regarded Kant—as a God-killer (Robespierre merely killed kings, whereas Kant destroyed a God, in the eyes of that witty but snobbish enthusiast).

History does not (continues Moszkowski) adapt itself to the time measures of politics and of journalism, and philosophies are not to be calculated in terms of days. The philosophy of Aristotle held sway right through the Middle Ages, and that of Epicurus will gain its full force only in the coming generation. But if we make our unit a hundred years the connexion between philosophies and great discoveries remains true. Whoever undertakes to explore the necessity of this connexion cannot evade the fact that the lines of the result had been marked out in the region of pure thought....Even the achievement of Copernicus would follow this general rule...it was the last consequence of the belief in the Sun Myth which had never been forsaken by man in spite of the violent efforts of the Church and of man himself to force the geocentric view.... (Copernicus') discovery was the transformation of a myth into science.

Then he proceeds to discuss the parallel between Bergson and Planck:—

...deep down in the consciousness of man there has always been an opposition to (the formula *Natura non facit saltus*), and when the French philosopher Henri Bergson set out to break up this line of continuity by metaphysical means in ascribing to human knowledge an intermittent, cinematographic character, he was proclaiming...what had lain latent in a new but as yet incomplete philosophy. Bergson made no new" discovery," he felt his way intuitively into a new field of knowledge and recognized that the time was ripe for the real discovery. This was actually presented to us in our day by the eminent physicist Max Planck...in the form of his 'Quantum Theory.' This is not to be taken as meaning that a revolutionary philosophy and a triumph of scientific research now become coincident....(It) was probably not a case of the accidental coincidence of a new philosophical view with the results of reasoning from physical grounds, but a demand of time, exacting that the claims of a new principle of thought be recognized.

A very interesting discussion ensues when he gets to Einstein's house—or it would be interesting if Moszkowski expressed himself with lest bombast and possessed the literary skill of Johnson's friend. Einstein appeared to put forth the view that the 'discovery' rather discovered the 'discoverer,' or condescended to pop into his head, than that the discoverer himself *y était pour quelque chose*.

Really Moszkowski (although possessing all the peculiarities of a born 'Boswell,' perhaps of a not very high order even in his own class) is not such a blockhead as people would no doubt suggest, nor as his style would imply. What he has just said above shows that for him Relativity is not devoid of a *political* significance: and in his remarks on bergson and Planck, he describes Bergson as 'intuiting' what Planck subsequently 'discovered,' both impelled to these facts by the *Zeitgeist*. A few pages further on Einstein remarks: 'the rally valuable factor is *intuition!*' This appears to put Planck's invention or 'discovery' on the same plane as Bergson's 'intuition,' only the latter was the

first on the scene. The gist of Einstein's part in this dialogue is that there are certain things existing eternally which people come upon, indifferently 'intuiting' or 'discovering' them. Some of the 'intuitions' don't come off, owing to the unfortunate prevalence of the negative instance, but some do, like Relativity, though all subject, Moszkowski energetically does *not* think to Duhem's law of reversal, whereby *any* physical system can be knocked over, and can rely on *no* experiment, however 'crucial.'

Both these statements of Moszkowski's may be absurd; but they are made by a person not devoid of common-sense, at a time when he was in close association with the greatest physicist of the day, who apparently did not regard him as such a fool as all that. The opinion favoured here is that he exaggerated the political parallel between the destruction of the *Absolute* in Einstein's physical system, and the rise of bolshevism in the political world. It is fantastic to suppose that such a parallel could *absolutely* exist—though people in speaking of Newton's system are certainly in the habit of saying, for instance, that he conceived the sun as a monarch round whom the planets revolved, because in his day the political system contained a monarch at its centre (cf. Bertrand Russell: 'In Newton's theory of the solar system, the sun seems like a monarch whose behests the planets have to obey. In Einstein's world there is more individualism and less government than in Newton's'). Sorel gives an analogous account of the effect of the spectacle of the stability of the kingship, as illustrated supremely by the Roi Soleil. These parallels between a construction of the 'pure intellect' and a political system terrestrially circumscribing its author, must be admitted as real. It is only by fully accepting the evident fact that many men of science, or philosophers, are politicians, and their supposed 'pure' theoretic mind in reality merely a very practical one, working in and through ideas as it would otherwise and more becomingly be working in soap, hair-oil or sanitary appliances, or at bookmaking or stockbroking, that we can show that *all* theory and all theoretic men are not involved in those proofs and arguments. The *historical* world of Spengler or of Moszkowski is a world of the second rate. Is not any average volume of history a long account of the triumphs and disappointments of the second-rate, of kings, bootleggers, bishops and merchants? It is the *average* life of England, France and America to-day, for instance, only *past* and treated flatteringly as 'history.' What part does any truly great achievement of the mind play in those historical feuilletons? If Moszkowski's reading of Relativity could be shown by some competent person to be true, then immediately we should know that the Relativity physics we have been taught to admire was not an achievement of the first order, and that we had been taken in, however much amused in the process. For such an *ad hoc* universe as would result from a desire to 'banish absolutism,' and impose terrestrial politics upon the stars, would indeed be scientifically a farce, however intelligent a one. But so many eminent men of science have accepted Einstein's theory, that Moszkowski, as far as Einstein is concerned, must be wrong. In the case of Einstein Mr. Bertrand Russell,

I venture to think rightly, attaches less importance to the 'relativism' which has provided the theory with its title (and it is after all the oldest feature of his system, relativity being a classical doctrine of idealism) than to the merging of Space and Time, which is the great novelty. Surely in that highly technical operation, one would have thought, there could be no reflection of political passions! With the Moszkowskis and Spenglers we reach the point at which the system of the mathematical physicist becomes suspect, in exactly the same way as for long now we have been accustomed to regard with suspicion the system of the philosopher. If there is something in the air of a time that influences even the processes of the secluded mind of the 'pure mathematician,' we should at least not turn a blind eye to it, but investigate it as we would anything else. There are no doubt good and bad times: in the bad ones these influences may be more powerful. The immense influence exerted on our lives by these 'discoveries' cannot leave us indifferent to the character of the instruments that are responsible for them—namely, the minds of the discoverers. But it is only the less fine instruments that can be influenced in that way and lend colour to spenglerism, that is our argument. This essay is among other things the assertion of a belief in the finest type of ind, which lifts the creative impulse into an absolute region free of spenglerian 'history' or politics.

As to the plan according to which I have arranged my arguments, I have not left a general 'summing-up' until the end, but attempted as I went along to introduce, as early as possible, and in connection with each particular phase of my arguments, the conclusions that must ensue from my evidence.



## CHAPTER I

### SOME OF THE MEANINGS OF ROMANCE

AT the Conference of the Peace Society, on the eve of the Crimean War, John Bright reminded his audience of the title of their god, who was called the 'Prince of Peace'; and he asked them: 'Is this a reality? Or is your Christianity a romance? Is your profession a dream?' Christianity has been, for the European, strictly speaking, a *romance*. Also, of course, it has been an exceptionally bloody one, just as his socialism, in its turn, is proving.

Romance and reality, these are the two terms we most often employ to contrast what we regard as dream and truth respectively. The 'romantic' approach to a thing is the unreal approach. John Bright used the word above in the sense of a lie. It is not, however, the calamitous snobberies waiting on Romance that concern us so much here. The attitude to 'time' is the main subject of this essay, and Romance is a decisive factor in that attitude. That is why I am starting with a brief scrutiny of the romantic mind.

There is nothing that has a monopoly of 'reality,' nor a monopoly of 'romance.' Romance, even, is certainly real, existing not in the imperfect manner of a unicorn or of a golden mountain (though existing as highly mentalized fact certainly); and Reality can be, when it wishes, extremely romantic; if 'romantic' you decide shall describe that which is full of the pungent illusion of life, and not consider it as the description, merely, of the unreal and impossible glammers of some super-existence.

That there could be anything 'beautiful' about machinery, or anything 'romantic' about industry, was never so much as entertained by the victorian mind. Wilde, I believe, was the first person to popularize the paradox that machinery could be beautiful. The conception of the romance of industry—indeed, the claim that nothing is so overwhelmingly romantic, looked at properly, that is from the point of view of the great monopolist, as is industry—marks the frontier between the Money-age in which we live, and the still aristocratic and feudal age that preceded it—when love and war were the typical 'romances,' what we still think of as the Romance-age proper. But the Money-age has created new values. It has incidentally bought the term Romance.

Even such a man as Fourier at the opening of the last century, was attacked with the sharpest disgust at the sight of the, at the time, novel pretension of Commerce to be *romantic*. In *The Art of Being Ruled* I have quoted a very interesting passage from his writings expressing his hatred of what he regarded as the decay of 'poetry,' or its transference to such things as soaps and boot-polishes. I will use some of it again here, as it shows how a vigorous and innovating mind, on the spot, when that great ideologic revolution was first occurring, could review the matter :—

The philosophers, accustomed to reverence everything which comes in the name

and under the sanction of commerce, will consecrate their servile pens to celebrating its (the new order's) praises... It is no longer to the Muses nor to their votaries, but to Traffic and its heroes that Fame now consecrates her hundred voices... The true grandeur of a nation, its only glory, according to the economists, is to sell to neighboring nations more cloths and calicoes than we purchase of them... The savants of the nineteenth century are those who explain to us the mysteries of the stock market. Poesy and the fine arts are disdained, and the Temple of Fame is open no longer except to those who tell us why sugars are "feeble," why soap is "firm." Since Philosophy has conceived a passion for Commerce, Polyhymnia decks the new science with flowers. The tenderest expressions have replaced the old language of the merchants, and it is now said, in elegant phrase, that "sugars are languid"—that is, are falling; that 'soaps are looking up'—that is, have advanced. Formerly... manœuvres of monopoly... excited the indignation of writers; but now these schemes are a title to distinction, and France announces them in a Pindaric strain, saying: "A rapid and unexpected movement has suddenly taken place in soaps"—at which words we seem to see bars of soap leap from their boxes and wing their way to the clouds, while the speculators in soap hear their names resound through the whole land... All these flowers of rhetoric contribute, doubtless, to the success of Industry, which has found in the support of the Philosophers the same kind of assistance they have extended to the people—namely, fine phrases, but no results.

The question may have sometimes occurred to people why what goes on in the bed or upon the battlefield should be more 'romantic' than what happens in the bank. Romance is perhaps a word with a fatally absurdity inherent in it. Should we, however, transfer our term 'romance' to the exclusive use of financial enterprise, we should be tripped up by the well-known conservatism peculiar to language. Chivalrous love was once a strange newcomer; but it coined the word 'romance' for itself. There must have been a time even when war was strange, and ill-favoured. Some day, perhaps, it may become so again. But the word 'romance' is haunted for ever by those activities. Language has to be destroyed before you transform ideas at all radically.

Sooner or later we shall have to discriminate between what is 'romantic' for a person acquainted to some extent with the reality, and what is 'romance' for a romantic, or a person who has not much grasp of present and actual things. The majority are 'romantic,' living as they do in a dream of non-existent things—for instance, the world of cheap art, education, and publicity, or else the feudal world of half their ordinary speech.

'Romantic' is very generally used to describe a 'dreamer.' Ruskin, we say, was such a man, for instance. One of his main doctrines illustrates this. He wished all machinery to be destroyed. Aside from the question of its desirability, we know this to have been irrealizable. The term 'romantic' jumps on to our tongue, therefore, to describe a man capable of that aberration. A more sensible notion, more sweeping were it implemented, perhaps, but equally impracticable, would be this: *Let us destroy all the drums in the world*—kettle-drums, side-drums, tom-toms, etc.—and arrange to hang any man discovered making one. Even to indulge in the 'devil's tattoo' would become a criminal offence.

There you would have, it would be possible to contend, a tremendous

innovation. It would banish at one stroke a great deal of gratuitous emotionalism. We should be well rid of that, you might believe. The time honoured method of calling people to battle, to rut, to religious ecstasy, to every known delirium, would then not exist. Yet the individual advocating this measure we should call 'romantic'—very romantic. It is not practicable. It is even ridiculous. It is reminiscent of the day-dream of the naïf prohibitionist. The same applies to dreams of banishing machinery.

In analysing 'romance' the first definition required, perhaps, is to this effect: *the 'romantic' is the opposite of the real*. Romance is a thing that is in some sense non-existent. For instance, 'romance' is the reality of yesterday, or of to-morrow; or it is the reality of somewhere else.

Romance is the great traditional enemy of the Present. And the reason for the contemporary enmity to the mind of Greek Antiquity is because that mind was an 'ahistorical' mind—without perspective. But that 'yesterday' that was Rome, Jerusalem or Athens is a great reality. So it is not a 'romance' by any means. Similarly, if some political event of great magnitude is brewing to-day in Calcutta, *here, to-morrow*; then, because Calcutta is not here, nor the event to-day's, it is not less 'real' for that.

Again, sometimes dreams can be converted into realities. Your day-dream, supposing the requisite power is yours, may some day become a nice or disagreeable reality for your neighbour. His appeal to other facts, more reputably causal, will be useless. So much for a few of the traps that wait the person essaying definitions of 'romance.' To circumscribe with distinct meaning such a word as 'romance' is difficult.

Ezra Pound is, from any standpoint, a good person to whom to address yourself in such a difficulty. He is a poet; and he is a great authority on Romance. He has even been at the pains to write a book—*The Spirit of Romance*—for seekers after the truth, about Romance. To this I suggest we turn; and we shall find the following enlightenment :—

'There is one sense in which the word Romance has a definite meaning that is, when it is applied to the languages derived from the Latin; and 'Romance literature began with a Provençal "Alba," supposedly of the tenth century.' So much for the source of the term merely. As to its present meaning: 'When England had a "romantic school" it was said to join "strangeness" with "beauty"...' But, 'speaking generally, the spells or equations of "classic" art invoke the beauty of the normal and spells of "romantic" art are said to invoke the beauty of the unusual.' Pound, however, 'fears the pigeon-hole.'

Generally speaking, as he says, the normal, the known and the visible, is what Romance is *not*. 'Romance' is what is unusual, not normal, mysterious, not visible, perhaps not susceptible at all of visual treatment.

But Pound places his finger on a more important aspect of the matter when he writes (in the same book) :—

It is dawn at Jerusalem while midnight hovers above the Pillars of Hercules. All

ages are contemporaneous. It is B.C., let us say, in Morocco. The Middle Ages are in Russia. The future stirs already in the minds of the few. This is especially true of literature, where the real time is independent of the apparent.

In the periodic images employed here, imbued with relativity sentiment, all 'real time' (which also apparently includes 'the future') is somewhere about, within the circle. There is no real 'future' any more than there is a real 'past.' So, according to this way of looking at the matter, the 'timeless' view, 'romance' would consist in apparent absence, or in a seeming coyness on the part of time.

Men now dead will be the playfellows of your grandchildren, says Pound, and many ostensibly 'alive' are really playing with Dante or Propertius, rather than with us; although Dante and Propertius, in their turn, were also 'elsewhere' to a greater extent than was consistent with their temporal and spatial status.

The same 'timeless' view is advocated by Spengler in his *Decline of the West*; indeed he expresses that standpoint so perfectly, by means of his 'homology principle,' as he calls it, that I will quote a passage which defines completely what we require:—

The application of the 'homology' principle to historical phenomena brings with an entirely new connotation for the word 'contemporary.' I designate as contemporary two historical facts that occur in exactly the same—relative—positions in their respective Cultures...we might describe Pythagoras as the contemporary of Descartes, Archytas of Laplace, Archimedes of Gauss. The Ionic and Baroque, again, ran their course contemporaneously. Polygnotus pairs in time with Rembrandt, Polycletus with Bach.... Contemporary, too, are the buildings of Alexandria, of Baghdad and of Washington; classical coinage and our double-entry book-keeping; the first Tyrannis and the Fronde; Augustus and Shih-huang-ti; Hannibal and the World War.

Without further defining my position with regard to this 'timeless' standpoint—a very common one for many years now, for Relativity fashion did not commence with Einstein's General Theory—a few of its implications can be pointed out. The circular, periodic imagery does knock out a good deal the sense of the 'future.' For, far enough back, it is also the 'past.' The idea of periodicity so used (of a spiral formation it usually is, with repetitions on higher planes) leaves, no doubt, some margin and variety to play with, but very little.

You have above, in the extract beginning 'It is dawn at Jerusalem,' an average example of the formula advanced on behalf of the 'timeless' standpoint. Before leaving that subject (and still in touch with the psychology outlined above) the following observation is of great use. The profession of thee 'timeless' doctrine, in any average person, always seems to involve this contradiction: that he will be much more the slave of Time than anybody not so fanatically indoctrinated. An obsession with the temporal scale, a feverish regard for the niceties of fashion, a sick anxiety directed to questions of time and place (that is, of *fashion* and of *milieu*), appears to be the psychological

concomitant of the possession of a time-theory that denies time as its normal reality. The fashionable mind is par excellence the *time-denying* mind—that is the paradox.

This is, however, not so strange if you examine it. The less reality you attach to time as a unity, the less you are able instinctively to abstract it; the more important concrete, individual, or personal time becomes.

*Bergsonian durée, or psychological time, is essentially the 'time' of the true romantic.* It is the same as in disbelief of the reality of life: the more absolute this disbelief is, as a formulated doctrine, the more the *sensation* of life (which we all experience impartially, whatever our philosophy) will assume a unique importance. Or we can add a third analogy, which will further clear up this obscure point in contemporary psychology. The less you are able to realize other people, the more your particular personality will obsess you, and the more dependent upon its reality you will be. The more you insist on it with a certain frenzy. And the more 'individualist' you are in this sense, the less 'individualist' you will be in the ordinary political sense. You will have achieved a fanatical hegemony with your unique self-feeling.

Political 'individualism' signifies the opposite of that. It expresses belief in the desirability of *many* individuals instead of *one*. Your 'individualism' will be that mad one of the 'one and only' self, a sort of instinctive solipsism in practice. It will cause you to be, therefore, the most dangerous of madmen, that kind that has no scruples where other people are concerned, because he has an imperfect belief in their existence. The rough preliminary note will, I hope, suffice to have made that point clearer.

We have now surveyed some of the principal conditions of the use of the expression 'romance.' What has emerged can be summarized as follows: The term arose in connection with roman dialects. It took with it, from the start, an implication of revolutionary unorthodoxy, of opposition to tradition. It was the speech of 'the people,' or of the roman colonials or rustics, who preferred to express what they had to say in a 'living,' not a 'dead,' language. Romance started as the opponent of tradition, as represented by the classical tongue.

In the modern 'classic-romantic' opposition, Romantic is the warm, popular picturesque expression, as contrasted with the formal calm of the Classical. There is no need to go through the usual questions of the Unities as opposed to disregard for classical construction. Those are the commonplaces of one of the oldest, and most closely canvassed, controversies in the world. The success of such a classification depends on your examples, largely. If Racine is your 'classic,' and Shakespeare your 'romantic,' then 'romantic,' in that instance, wins the day. Between Pope and Marlowe the same thing happens, in my opinion. There are other cases in which 'classicism' might score points. The fact is that the best West European art has never been able to be 'classic,' in the sense of achieving a great formal perfection. The nature of our semi-barbaric cultures has precluded that. So in that connection the 'romantic' is the real thing, I believe, and not the imitation.

If in its origin the 'classic-romantic' opposition possessed a political connotation—namely, the 'classical' standing for the 'old order,' tradition and authority, the 'romantic' for the new insurgent life of the popular imagination, the self-assertion of the populace; so to-day it still conforms to that political symbolism. the 'classical' is the rational, aloof and aristocratical; the 'romantic' is the popular, sensational and 'cosmically' confused. That is the permanent political reference in these terms.

It is not in conformity with its position in this Classic-Romantic controversy, however, that the word 'romantic' is generally used. Rather it is in opposition to positive science—not to the great traditional opponent of positive science, the classical ideal—that we find it employed. This gives it a rather unenviable and damaging sense. It conveys a negative—what would be thought of as the non-modern state of mind. Used in this way, it connotes the following characters. We say 'romantic' when we wish to define something too emotionalized (according to our positivist standards), something opposed to the actual or the real: a self indulgent habit of mind or a tendency to shut the eyes to what is unpleasant, in favour of things arbitrarily chosen for their flattering pleasantness. Or else we apply it to the effects of an egoism that bathes in the self-feeling to the exclusion of contradictory realities, including the Not-self; achieving what we see to be a false unity and optimism, regarding all the circumstances. It was that keen awareness of the Not-self, and the consequent was that keen awareness of the Not-self, and the consequent conception of 'righteousness,' that Matthew Arnold pointed to (in his *Literature and Dogma*) as constituting the originality of the ancient Jewish people. The deep 'mentalism' and personal bias of such an intelligence as that of Proust is a 'romantic' diagnostic, then. Yet 'romance,' as the opposite of the matter-of-fact, and as the frame of mind proper to very young people, comes in for a certain popularity. It depends in what connection you are using it.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PRINCIPLE OF ADVERTISEMENT AND ITS RELATION TO ROMANCE

ROMANCE, as currently used, then, denotes what is unreal or unlikely, or at all the events not present, in contrast to what is *scientifically* true and accessible to the senses here and now. Or it is, in its purest expression, what partakes of the marvelous, the extreme, the unusual. That is why Advertisement (in a grotesque and inflated form) is a pure expression of the romantic mind. Indeed, there is nothing so 'romantic' as Advertisement.

Advertisement is the apotheosis of the marvelous and the unusual; likewise of the scientifically untrue. The spirit of advertisement and boost lives and has its feverish being in a world of hyperbolic suggestion; it is also the trance or dream-world of the hypnotist. This world of the impossible does not pretend even to be real or exact. The jamesian psychology—more familiar to most Europeans as *couéisme*—is its theoretic expression. What you can make people believe to be true, is true. (The american pragmatist test of any theorem is 'What difference will its truth or falsehood make to *you*?')

Advertisement also implies in a very definite sense a certain attitude to Time. And the attitude proper to it is closely related to the particular time-philosophy we were considering above; namely, that philosophy that is at once 'timeless' in theory, and very much concerned with Time in practice. Both that conscious philosophy, and the instinctive attitude of the advertising mind towards Time, could be described as a *Time-for-Time's-sake* belief. For both, time is a permanent fact. Time for the bergsonian relativist is fundamentally sensation; that is what Bergson's *durée* always conceals beneath its pretentious metaphysic. It is the glorification of the life-of-the-moment, with no reference beyond itself and no absolute or universal value; only so much value as is conveyed in the famous proverb; *Time is money*. It is the argent comptant of literal life, in an inflexibly fluid Time.

And the ultimate significance of the philosophy of Time-for-Time's-sake (since Time is a meaningless thing in itself) is Existence-for-Existence's-sake. (This difficulty of the meaninglessness of Time, which becomes especially acute when it is your intention to erect Time into a god, as is the case with Professor Alexander, is dealt with at length by that philosopher.)

The world in which Advertisement dwells is a one-day world. It is necessarily a plane universe, without depth. Upon this Time lays down discontinuous entities, side by side; each day, each temporal entity, complete in itself, with no perspectives, no fundamental exterior reference at all. In this way the structure of human life is entirely transformed, where and in so far as this intensive technique gets a psychologic ascendancy. The average man is invited to slice his life into a series of one-day lives, regulated by the clock of fashion. The human being is no longer the unit. He becomes the containing frame for a generation or sequence of ephemerides, roughly organized into

what he calls his 'personality.' Or the highly organized human mind finds its natural organic unity degraded into a worm-like extension, composed of a segmented, equally-distributed, accentless life. Each segment, each *fashion-day* (as the day of this new creature could be called) must be organically self-sufficing.

This account of the *fashion-day* of Advertisement may seem to contradict between the Present of the classical mind, as opposed to the perspectives of the romantic, the time-mind, too. This misunderstanding will already have been partly averted. The reader's attention has been drawn to the paradox of the doctrinaire of 'timelessness' more obsessed by Time, and the *fashion day*, than is anybody else. For the further and complete dispersal of this possible difficulty, I must refer the reader to a subsequent section of my book. It can only finally be disposed of by a careful definition of the classical 'Present,' as opposed to the romantic 'Present.'

In the world of Advertisement, Coué-fashion, everything that happens to-day (or everything that is being advertised *here and now*) is better, bigger, brighter, more astonishing than anything that has ever existed before. (Dr. Coué actually was embarked upon his teaching, so he said, by noticing, and responding to, an advertisement.) The psychology that is required of the public to absorb this belief in the marvellous one and only—monist, unique, superlative, *exclusive*—fact (immediately obliterating all other beliefs and shutting the mind to anything that may happen elsewhere or to-morrow) is a very rudimentary one indeed. The best subject for such a séance would be a polyp, evidently. An individual looking, with his intellect, before and after, seeing far too much at a time for the requirements of the advertiser or hypnotist, is not at all the affair of Advertisement. For the essence of the this living-in-the-moment and for-the-moment—of submission to a giant hyperbolic close-up of a moment—is, as we have indicated, to banish all individual continuity. You must, for a perfect response to this instantaneous suggestion, be the *perfect sensationalist*—what people picture to themselves, for instance, as the perfect American. Your personality must have been chopped won to an extremely low level of purely reactionary life. Otherwise you are of no use to the advertiser. If there were many like you, he would soon be put out of business.

The traditional yankee method of Advertisement suggests a credulity, a love of sensation and an absence of background in the submissive, hypnotized public, that could justly claim to be *unexampled*, and as beating anything ever heard of before in recorded history. But that method is now in universal use. It promises *monts et merveilles* every instant of the day. It has battered and deadened every superlative so much that superlatives no longer in themselves convey anything. All idea of a true value—of any scale except the pragmatic scale of hypnotism and hoax—is banished for ever from the life of the great majority of people living in the heart of an advertising zone, such as any great modern city. They are now almost entirely incapable of anything except sensation; for to think is to be able to traverse the scale of values from the



nadir to the zenith. The world of superlatives is a monotonous horizontal drumming on the top-note, from which an insistent, intoxicating time can be extracted, but nothing else. So Advertisement fulfils all the requirements of the general definition of 'romance.'

It is not altogether without point to refer to this method to its origins in the competitive frenzy of finance, and of finance first become delirious as it saw its staggering opportunity in its operations in the New World. The marvellous american vitality enhanced this process, and may yet defeat it. For the decision, as to Europe and even the destiny of the White Race, rests with America, perhaps.

Just as the individual whose conscience is clear, and whose pockets are full, does not experience the need to overwhelm his neighbour with assurances of his honesty—indeed, if his pockets are sufficiently full, does not care much what his neighbour thinks; so such a system as that of Coué is not invented for people in robust health, but for the debilitated and ailing members of a ruined society. The optimism-to-order of 'Every day and in every respect I grow better and better' is of the same kind as the political optimism-to-order- of democratic politics.

The wholesale change-over of what was 'public' into what, for the European, was private (the conditions obtaining in aryan civilization, what Maine calls the 'ancient order of the aryan world,' from the earliest tribal times, as a result of the 'individualism' distinguishing our race), and vice versa, has been very much facilitated by the agency of Advertisement. Advertisement has functioned in the social and artistic or learned world rather as the engineer has in the factory. It has taught the public—as the engineer taught the producer—that as Advertisement-value nothing is refuse or waste. Indeed, the garbage is often more valuable than the commodity from which it proceeds. But this value is a money-value essentially, and functions imperfectly in its social application.

### CHAPTER III

## ROMANCE AND THE MORALIST MIND

**B**ETWEEN Romance and the principle of Advertisement the liaison is clear enough, I hope, by now. On the other hand, for a reader unfamiliar with the time-philosophy of Bergson, the Relativists, Whitehead, Alexander and the other space-timeists, the psychology of the time-snob that I have outlined may be imperfectly defined; the relation between the advertising principle of competitive industry, and these time-philosophies, may still escape him. All that welter of thought and sensation which has recently culminated in Relativity Theory is the necessary background for even these preliminary remarks.

Perhaps an equally refractory conception would be that of the affiliation for Romance and of Morals in this sense, it is understood, in which we may decide to accept these terms. But that is the next relationship I propose to examine. It seems to me a very important one indeed. There is nothing at all abstruse, at least, about the christian ethical code; especially that of the evangelical christian, of the 'puritan' produced by the Reformation, and his descendants to-day. For its spirit and various ordinances are all to be found in the Old Testament. Our use of that primitive code, framed as it is for conditions totally different from ours, is symbolic of our incurably romantic outlook.

Our civilization is much more artificial than that of Greece or Rome; and the main cause for that is the christian ethic. Where Romance enters the sphere of morals is at the gate of sex; and nearly all the diabolism (helping itself to the traditional sadic and invert machinery), springing up so eagerly in a puritan soil, can be traced to a sex root. It is even extremely easy in the modern West to sexify everything, in a way that would have been impossible in the greek world, for instance. To see this, you only have to consider the fact that the Athens of Socrates was notorious, as his dialogues witness, for what is (for us) the most obsessing sort of sex cult. Yet it did not interfere at all with greek philosophy; life did not become the rival of thought, the life of the intellect and that of the senses co-existed harmoniously; and philosophic speculation, for the men who disputed with Socrates, was evidently as exiting as any of their other occupations. The dialogues of Plato have not an alexandrian effluvia of feminine scent; nor do they erect pointers on all the pathways of the mind, waving frantically back to the gonadal ecstasies of the commencement of life. They are as loftily detached from the particular delights in fashion with the Athenian as it is possible to be; the core of the mind was not invaded, or even touched, by the claims of that group of glands, in spite of the fact that the puppets who used to conduct the intellectual contests were often conventionally epicene. The psychological composition of the mind of such a philosopher as Socrates, or Democritus, showed no bias whatever such as you inevitably find in a Wilde or a Pater that alexandrian

enervation and softening of all the male chastity of thought.

In modern Western democracy thought usually, even has to get started in a sex-centre. People are saturated with moral teaching and the artificialities of the legal or moralist mind to such a degree, that it is most difficult to make them think without first shocking them; or without, contrariwise, edifying them. Edification or outrage must precede thought; there is no escape generally from that law the law of sensation, of extremism and of snobbery.

The attempt to escape will be made here. We shall aim to get behind morals, which is the same order of enterprise as getting behind Romance. And we can bear in mind, as regards the psychological aspect of our argument, that, generically, the romantic man is some sort of a moralist, simple or inverted. And he always, to that there is no exception, is an arch-snob. Snobbishness and the romantic disposition are commutative: to be 'romantic about something' is to be 'snobbish about something.' Both imply superstitious excess, and capitulation of the reason.

When Revolution—that is simply the will to change and to spiritual transformation—ceases to be itself, and passes over more and more completely into its mere propaganda and advertisement department, it is apt, in the nature of things, to settle down in the neighbourhood of sex, and to make the moral disease its main lever. But Revolution in Europe and America must in the nature of things centre around 'sex', owing principally to the over-sensitive 'repressed' sex-psychology of the post-Reformation man. No Western revolution would be complete without its strident advertisement. In the pagan world the facts of sex had no undue importance. That they have derived entirely, as we have said, from the puritan consciousness. The whole back of tricks of sex, simple and invert, reduces itself, on the physical side, to a very simple proposition. Chivalrous love, on the other hand, was a very abstruse and complicated religion (attached to the man-woman relationship). but at its intensest it ceased to be 'sex' altogether. It was the christian counterpart of the idealistic boy-love of greek antiquity, complicated with mariolatry.

But in the power of 'sex' as a lever in the modern european world (to which success of Freud is witness) you are dealing with something quite different from that. It is necessary, if you are you understand it, to put out of your head all analogies with Antiquity, or with other periods. What you are confronted with, always, is *forbidden fruit*; that is what 'sex' has meant persistently to the post-Reformation European. The delights of sex have been build round for us with menacing restrictions: and a situation has been created which a Greek or a Roman would with great difficulty have understood.

The result is that every license where 'sex' is concerned has been invested with the halo of an awful and thrilling lawlessness. If it were not for the superlative sweetness of lawlessness of a sex order, all lawlessness would lack its most exciting and hypnotic paradigm and principal advertisement. How this applies to-day is evident. If you are desirous of showing your

‘revolutionary’ propensities, and it is a case of finding some law to break to prove your goodwill and spirit, what better law than the dear old moral law, always there invitingly ready and eager to be broken? So it is that ‘sex’ for the European is the ideal gateway to Revolution, that no one but a violent sex-snob can enter any more than a camel can go through the eye of a needle. And so it is that that will-to-change, or impulse to spiritual advance, which is the only sensible meaning of Revolution, is confused and defeated.

Any sex-license at all has the revolutionary advantage of ‘lawlessness.’ But how much more is not this the case where some in itself insignificant eccentricity is in question. Blue infernal fire bursts up out of the ground, almost, for the superstitious puritanic mind (and in the West of Europe and America the evangelical, puritan spirit the shadow of the Geneva Bible is strong yet) at the suggestion of one or other (there are only two) of the more sensational first-class sex-misdemeanours.

The levity and even lack of interest with which the Greeks usually treated these things is so much more healthy, it is quite evident, that it is a pity from any point of view that it should not be expected of a ‘broad-minded’ and ‘modernist’ person as a *sine qua non* of modernity. If you believe that such things as revolutionary propaganda of ‘original’ vice are socially undesirable, then all the more should you seek to apply to them the chill of this mortal indifferentism. For they would certainly wither at the touch of it.

The most unlikely and incongruous things are dragged into the emotionalism of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ backed up by the sex-impulses; a host of militant passions are let loose on both sides; and in the ensuing tumult, the blood-and-thunder, brimstone and blue fire, there is nothing that cannot instantly be submerged once the business is started. The ‘mob of senses,’ as Plato called them, are let loose and our rational constructions flounder.

So it is not sex, properly speaking and in its simple natural appeal, that is in question at all; it is the diabolics locked up in the edifice of ‘morals’ that is arch-enemy of the artist.

There is no activity you can engage in that is not liable to be trapped, pushed or misled into the moralist quagmire. As to artistic work of any kind, once it gets involved with that machinery, for or against it, it is lost; for its particular values are entirely engulfed in the sea of sensation—of ‘right’ or of ‘wrong.’ Yet the mind of the western public (and especially of the Anglo-Saxon public) works in such a way that it is very difficult to convince it that a man rebelling, perhaps, as a painter, against the degraded standards of the Salon or Academy is not proposing some insidious attack also upon the stronghold of orthodox sex. The ‘I told you so!’ that must have arisen when the eccentric Bunthorne poet, Wilde, was unexpectedly convicted of vice, must have been universal. Yet, of course, Wilde was an inferior artist; that may have been one reason that decided him to add ‘sex’ to what was deficient as ‘art’—to heighten it and give it a sporting chance to set the Thames on fire.

*Where any sex- nuisance is concerned, the greek indifference is the best specific.* For with regard with anything which is likely to obsess a society, it is of

importance not to give it too much advertisement. These few remarks may make it possible to understand a little better how 'sex' of any sort, invert or direct, as an ally, must be regarded by an artist, who is not a moralist. It also places the romantic and snobbish in its true light, where it is engaged in the diabolics of 'sex.' And it cooperates with the most intelligent tendencies in modern life, those directed to the rationalization of our automatic impulses.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ROMANCE OF ACTION

**B**ESIDE Advertisement (as one of the bastards of Romance) can be set that instinct for the frantic and the excessive, for which it is difficult to find a compendious name. The prefix 'super'—as in superman, or super-Dreadnought—gives the key to the state of mind involved. It is almost indistinguishable from Advertisement, in many ways, as a department of Romance.

Fatally and intimately connected with this is the gospel of *action*. This doctrine has, in the form of the romantic energetics of war, already made a living melodrama of the Western World. The last ten years of *action* has been so overcrowded with men-of-action of all dimensions, that they none of them have been able to act; and what has been *done* on this doctrinal but terribly real field-of-action, has brought to us our present state of inaction, in due course.

But the man-of-action (low-browed, steel-jawed, flint-eyed, stone-hearted) has been provided (whether in mockery or not is aside from what we wish now to prove) with a philosophy. And it is some form of that *Time-for-Time's-sake* philosophy we have already briefly considered. But this mechanical, functional creature would implicitly possess such a philosophy in any case; since the dream-quality of pure-action must leave him virtually a child, plunged from one discontinuous, self-sufficing unit of experience to another; always living in the moment, in moods of undiluted sensationalism; the ideal slave and instrument of any clever and far-seeing person—who, of course, is the *real* man-of-action; for it is never the frantic servant of this doctrine of action who ever does anything, at least of any use to himself.

The super-ism, or whatever you like to call it, with which we started is only the most exaggerated, fanatical, and definitely religious form of the doctrine of *action*. Mussolini is, of course, the most eminent exponent of both. As a politician he is only concerned with the *usefulness* of things, and so he cannot be justly criticized on account of them. What may be useful in one connection is often not appropriate in another, however. If you applied the conditions and standards required for the flowering of a Jack Dempsey to a Beethoven, say, you would be doing what is done in a more general and less defined sense on all hands at this moment, as a thousand different activities mystically coalesce in response to the religion of merging, or mesmeric engulfing.

Action (the dionysiac and dynamical) is highly specialist. But action is impossible without an *opposite*—'it takes two to make a quarrel.' The dynamical—or what Nietzsche called the dionysiac, and which he professed—is a *relation*, a something that *happens*, between two or more opposites, when they meet in their pyrrhic encounters. The intellect works alone. But it is precisely this solitariness of thought, this prime condition for

intellectual success, that is threatened by mystical mass-doctrines.

## CHAPTER V

### ART MOVEMENTS AND THE MASS IDEA

THIS essay has been undertaken to examine the fundamental philosophic concept of the present age, namely, 'Time,' especially with regard to its influence upon the arts and upon the social world. Before coming to that eel-like concept itself, and attacking it in its home-waters (the philosophy of flux), it is my plan to show it powerfully operating in every department of 'advanced'—that is the only significant—contemporary literature. I have chosen literature rather than the static or graphic arts, because in the nature of things such a concept has more leverage upon literature than upon them. That is, indeed, an important aspect of my argument. Still, even in the arts of painting, sculpture, and design, it has exercised, usually indirectly, some influence. And they are included in my survey.

A rigorous restatement is required, I have felt for some years, of the whole 'revolutionary' position; nowhere more than in my peculiar province—art and literature. For me to undertake that statement must involve me also in a restatement of my personal position. This in its turn must bring me into conflict with the interests of several people with whose names mine has been fairly closely associated.

I have recently worked out, with great care, a system. The present essay is its philosophic elaboration. But before coming to a detailed criticism of the current interpretation of the concept 'time,' I am dealing with some of the concrete appearances of this compelling concept. If it is the good fortune of my critical system to be adopted or used by a certain number of people, it should make certain intellectual abuses, humbugs, and too-easy sensationalisms henceforth impossible. The arguments brought forward here, and the questions that will be constantly raised in my paper, or elsewhere, will have to be met. Where they are not met adequately, or are ignored, there will be a standing danger-spot in the defences of whoever attempts to evade them. For they are not idly-held opinions; but are a critical engine constructed from the material of directly observed fact of the most refractory description, sedulously submitted to repeated tests. The use of a 'system' in the 'systematic' at all is much resented. But it is my claim that this one is, and increasingly will become, an almost fool-proof system of detection where contemporary counterfeit, of the 'revolutionary' kind, is concerned. It cannot, I think, be used as a destructive weapon by the irresponsible for things which its machinery is not intended. But on the other hand, its activity may, on occasion, be reversed, so that it can be made to protect those things in whose interests its destructive ingenuity is set in motion.

In stepping directly into the world of art we shall fall upon a great deal of politics, too, as elsewhere, or the reflection of politics. To attempt to get rid of these politics, or shadow politics, is one of my reasons for undertaking this



difficult analysis.

First of all, the same emotional tension, the same spurious glamour, in which no one believes, but which yet arrests belief from settling anywhere—extracting, as it were, the automatic reaction from it, without desiring, even, a more conscious, or deep-seated, response; the same straining merely to outwit and to capture a momentary attention, or to startle into credulity; the same optimistic air, or a vulgar self-congratulation; the same baldly-shining morning face; the same glittering or discreetly hooded eye of the fanatical advertiser, exists in the region of art or social life as elsewhere—only in social life it is their own personalities that people are advertising, while in art it is their own personally manufactured goods only. (In the case of the artist, his own personality plays the part of the refuse in the factory.) And these more blandly-lighted worlds are as full as the Business world, I believe fuller, of those people who seem especially built for such methods, so sickly does the glove fit. (In the case of the artist, his own personality plays the part of the refuse of the factory.) Yet who will say that the vulgar medium which the scientific salesman must use to succeed, in Western Democracy, does not, thrust into the social world, destroy its significance? The philosophy of ‘action’ of trade is as barbarous as that of war.

But unlike social revolution, art is not dependent on fortuitous technical discoveries. It is a constant stronghold, rather, of the purest human consciousness; as such it has nothing to ‘revolt’ against—except conditions where art does not exist, or where spurious and vulgar art triumphs. Modern industrial conditions brought about organized ‘revolutionary’ ferment in the political sphere. They also rapidly reduced the never-very-secure pictorial and plastic standards of the European to a cipher. The present ‘revolution’ in art is not a revolt against tradition at all. It is much more a concerted attempt, on a wider and subtler basis (provided by recent research and technical facilities), to revive a sense that had been almost totally lost, as the Salons and Academies witnesses.

The only art at the present time about which there is any reason to employ the word ‘revolutionary,’ or that sentimentalist cliché, ‘rebel,’ is either inferior and stupid, or else consciously political, art. For art is, in reality, one of the things that Revolutions are about, and cannot therefore itself be Revolution. Life as interpreted by the poet or philosopher is the objective of Revolutions, they are the substance of its Promised Land.

If, on the other hand, you wish to use ‘revolutionary’ in the wider and more intelligent sense which I generally give it here, then there is a form of artistic expression that has attempted something definitely new; something that could not have come into existence in any age but this one. Art of that type is confined to a very small number of workers. And it is one of the tasks I have set myself here, to mark this off distinctly from the much greater mass of work which uses a very little of that newness to flavour something otherwise traditional enough, and which, if properly understood, is in no sense revolutionary; or else which looks novel because it is attempting to get back to

standards or forms that are very ancient, and hence strange to the European.

London, for example, is periodically startled by some work in sculpture or painting which would have seemed a commonplace to Amenhotep III., or to a fifth-century Tartar Khan. It is probably much better than the average Royal Academy article; it could scarcely help being that. Yet one of the curious objections brought against works of that sort is that they are 'asiatic.' The trouble with them, if anything, is in reality the opposite to that—namely, that they are not asiatic enough. There is usually some germanic sentimentalism marring the conception—or some germanic brutality—which makes them inferior to the oriental masterpiece that has inspired them.

The first thing that would be noticed by any one entering the art world for the first time would be that it was discriminated into 'movements,' rather than into individuals. It would be for the sake of *le mouvement*, for the advancement of 'the group,' not of the individual artist, that this or that was initiated. This becomes less pronounced as the decay of art, from a material point of view, advances, and the disillusionment deepens; but the movement or group idea is sufficiently prevalent.

The effect of that form of organization, to start with, is, inevitably, to advertise the inferior artist at the expense of the better. Most inferior artists interpret such an arrangement as a good opportunity to combine against any of their number who displays conspicuous ability, and fix upon him obligations all to his personal disadvantage. Or else 'the group' is more simply an organization of nothing but inferior artists, directed, sometimes by means of specific propaganda, against the idea of individual talent altogether; the suggestion being that only a great many cooks can make a really good broth; and the mastery of each individual must be of an unnoticeable, democratic order. The proof of this would naturally be in the eating. But as there is no public for such things to-day, these theorists are quite secure: it will never be put to the test.

Now no one, I suppose, will be found to contend that contemporary politics are not reflected in such 'groups' and 'movements' in art. We will assume that the resemblance is too striking to be passed over; that the 'group,' 'movement,' phenomenon in art is, where found, a political reflection, in its contemporary form.

But in art, as in anything else, all revolutionary impulse comes in the first place from the exceptional individual I have shown. No collectivity ever conceives, or, having done so, would ever be able to carry through, an insurrection or a freeform of any intensity, or of any magnitude. That is always the work of individuals or minorities. It is invariably the man who is privileged and free, as Plato was, who initiates or proposes, and plans out, such further ambitious advances for our race. The rest follow.

Since writing *The Art of Being Ruled* (1925) I have somewhat modified my views with regard to what I then called 'democracy.' I should express myself differently to-day. I feel that I slighted too much the notion of 'democracy' by using that term to mean too exclusively the present so-called

democratic masses, hypnotized into a sort of hysterical imbecility by the mesmeric methods of Advertisement. But whatever can be said in favour of 'democracy' of any description, it must always be charged against it, with great reason, that its political realization is invariably at the mercy of the hypnotist.

But no artist can ever love democracy or its doctrinaire and more primitive relative, communism. The emotionally-excited, closely-packed, heavily standardized mass-units, acting in a blind, ecstatic unison, as though in response to the throbbing of some unseen music—of the sovietic or fourierist fancy—would be the last thing, according to me, for the free democratic West to aim at, if it were free, and if its democracy were of an intelligent order. Let us behave as if the West were free, and as if we were in the full enjoyment of an idea democracy.

I prefer (I should say acting on this principle) the prose-movement—easy, uncontrolled and large—to the insistent, hypnotic rhythm, favoured by most fashionable political thought in the West. For me, there should be no adventitiously imposed *rhythm* for life in the rough. Life in the rough, or on the average, should be there in its natural grace, chaos and beauty; not cut down and arranged into a machine-made system. Its natural gait and movement it derives from its cosmic existence; and where too obsessing a human law—or time, or beat—gets imposed upon it, the life and beauty depart from it. *Musical-politics*—as the uplift politics of millennial doctrinaires can be termed—are, without any disguise, the politics of hypnotism, enregimentation, the sleep of the dance.

A unit looser and more accidental, moving more freely than the ubiquitous drum-throb allows, is to be preferred: 'unemotional,' as the American and Englishman is called usually; 'individualist' as he is also called—not moving in perfect and meticulous unison with his neighbours, if even eccentric. The uniformity aimed at by the method of mass-suggestion is, as an ideal, only a counsel of desperation. Any man of intelligence must be instinctively against it. But in a more specialist connection, this uniformity is not very dear to the artist, either.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE REVOLUTIONARY SIMPLETON

WE now are prepared to hail the figure in the title-rôle of Book I. of this essay. Aside from the hack or small professional of 'revolution, there is (and one of his habitats is the art world) the revolutionary simpleton. He is not the enthusiast of the will-to-change at its source, but only of its surface-effects, on the plane of vulgarization.

Almost all Tories are simpletons—the simpletons of what passes with them for 'tradition,' we could say (as is proved conclusively by the way in which they have defended themselves—how they hastily close all the stable doors long after the horses have all disappeared; also by their rare instinct for closing all the wrong doors, behind which there were never any horses). But the revolutionary simpleton, too, is a well-marked figure, found here and there. His characteristic gesture is the opposite to that of the Tory simpleton. He opens all doors, as it were—whether there is anything inside or not. He exclaims; he points excitedly to what he believes to be the herds of wild horses that are constantly pouring out of the doors flung dramatically open by him. We look where he points, and occasionally observe a moke or an old hack crawling forth. So he serves at least to advertise our terrestrial emptiness. Everything which is described as 'radical' or 'rebel,' or which palpably can receive that label, and reach its destination, excites him, in rather the same way that 'scarlet sin' and suggestions of Sodom or Lesbos, or worse, thrill the sex-snob, schoolboy, curate or spinster of stage tradition—the latter the authentic affinity of the revolutionary simpleton.

This personage is, in one word, a romantic—that is the essential diagnostic for his malady. He is sick for things he has never experienced, or which he is incapable of experiencing—as the schoolboy, or the curate or spinster of stage tradition, is sick for highly-flavoured, 'wicked' or blood curdling exploits and adventures. The revolutionary simpleton is a death-snob; though generally the most inoffensive and often engaging of people himself—the sort of man who would hurt a fly, and say boo! very truculently, to a goose; marmoset a butterfly; or, with motor gloves and a fencing casque, swing a small cat by the tail. Nothing but the thought of the great danger that so-called 'revolutionary' art runs from this attractive simpleton would persuade me to open my lips about him, he is so nice, so pleasant.

I am not able to give you paradigmatically, in the concrete, this theophrastian booby. Generally he is obscure; he is an Everyman, necessarily an abstraction to some extent. Every one is more Everyman now than in a less populous time, and in everybody now alive a proportion of 'revolutionary simpleton' makes them a sort of feeble compass, dragged subtly to one centre. Their souls' form may be bent towards the West, they are nevertheless 'carried towards the East'; and, become smooth and spherical to order, the destiny of all spheres overtakes them: they—

Subject to foreign motions, lose their own.  
And being by others hurried every day  
Scarce in a year their natural form obey.

Some, however, are simpler than others, and at the same time have 'revolutionary' written all over them. These are the authentic revolutionary simpletons. So though no outstanding, easily identified, person is supplied with this treatise by way of illustration, look round you, and Nature will make up for the deficiency; you will not have to look far to see some fool blossoming, in orthodox red.

With the revolutionary simpleton, where most people find a difficulty is in believing his simplicity. But the simpleton does exist. I have known several quite guileless true-believers, often quite gifted people. But put before the following kind of man, and you will have the pattern of what I am attempting to describe: one who is very much the creature of fashion, reverencing the fashionable fetish of the 'group' or of any collectivity, with many excited genuflections and an air of cystic juvenile incontinence; great crowd-snob, the portentous vociferous flunkey of any small crowd whatever, the richer the more afraid he is of them; regarding all creative work in opportunist terms of a conformity to the fashions of this crowd or of that, the nearest to him at the moment—blind to the fact that all fashion is imposed on a crowd from somewhere without itself, in opposition to its habits, and belongs to it about as much as a hired fancy-dress; frightened and scandalized by the apparition of anybody who opposes any group or collectivity whatever; who believes snobbishly in any 'minority,' however large and flabby, provided it can satisfy him it is not a 'majority,' and who is always with the majority without being aware of it; his poor little easily 'blowed' machine panting to be there in time, punctual at all the dates of fashion, remarked in the chattering van at all her functions; flying hatless and crimson when he hears an egg is to be broken, not particular as to whether it be an eagle's or a tom tit's; very truculent but very sweet and obedient in fact; advancing any kitchen-maid's sickly gushed out romance, provided she only calls her baby-boy her 'bastard,' and can be patronized (By himself and the reading-crowd he addresses) because she has never learnt how to spell, and so can be discovered, as you discover things in disused lofts or in gutters, or in that case a scullery; advancing the fruit of the dead past as new, and when knowing what in the present is false, fearing to denounce it, because it is momentarily current, and he trembles at the shadow of the law; such a nice, simple, timid 'revolution'-loving man is what you should have in mind. But the revolutionary simpleton is everywhere. It is important not to fix the mind on any particular figure. It is the thing, rather, incarnated on all hands, that it is my wish to bring to light.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE RUSSIAN BALLET, THE MOST PERFECT EXPRESSION OF THE HIGH-BOHEMIA

THE art that I am attacking here is the art of this High-Bohemia of the 'revolutionary' rich of this time. That is the society the artistic expression of whose soul I have made it my task to analyse. That a glittering highly-intellectualist surface, and a deep, sagacious, rich though bleak sensuality make its characteristic productions appear, as art, a vast improvement on the fearful artlessness, ugliness, and stupidity that preceded it (what passed for art with the European bourgeois society of the nineteenth century), is true enough. That Marcel Proust (the classical expression up to date of this millionaire-outcast, all-caste, star-cast world, in the midst of which we live) is more intelligent, and possesses a more cultivated sensuality, a sharper brain, than his counterpart of the age of Tennyson, must be plain to every one. But it is not with the intellectual abyss into which Europe fell in the last century that you must compare what we are considering. It is not the small, cold, smug sentimentalists that middle-class democracy threw up like a cheerless vomit to express itself for a hundred lamentable years, with which the typical works of our High-Bohemia should be matched. All the works which I shall deal in the course of this critical survey will not be the proper expressions of this world of 'rebel' riches. But that is the influence of its standards and its characteristic cults and predilections spreads, as an intellectual fashion or infection, far beyond what are its borders, should be remembered. People born outside it, and who have never passed much time in it, possibly, may still be spiritually of it.

As to the imitation of the old (always hand-in-hand with a strident claim to the 'new') which characterizes this society, it may be said that what takes you to the old, or takes you, on the other hand, to what is there in the world around you, may be a principle of life or the reverse—the Black Man sees one tree and the White another, when both are looking at the same plant. In an attack on the snobbery of learning, Swift wrote as follows:—

If it be necessary, as the case is with some barren wits, to take in the thoughts of others in order to draw forth their Own, as dry pumps will not play till water is thrown into them; in that necessity, I would recommend some of the approved standard authors of antiquity for your perusal, as a poet and a wit; because, maggots being what you look for, as monkeys do for vermin in their keepers' heads, you will find they abound in good old authors, as in rich old cheese, not in the new....

'Maggots being what you look for'—if that form of life, a low form but tasty, is what you look for—there is no need to go to the old cheese at all; for the new cheese has a very old and fruity air, and is completely full of maggots. You waste your time, really, in going back three thousand years.

A sort of neglected bride, her nuptials long overdue, Art remains waiting

and watching, in the company of other disappointed entities—such as ‘the proletariat’—for the millennium, of course, which never comes. But as its once great sentimental part in the general revolutionary programme successively shrinks, it passes over, silently, but bag and baggage, to the same place to which ‘the proletariat’ has gone—namely, to the volatile ‘revolutionary’ millionaire-Bohemia.

That is probably the only millennium that either the artist or ‘the proletariat’ will ever see. The artist, on account of the nature of his calling, is nearer to this ill-smelling pseudo-Paradise than are most ‘proletarians.’ If he is an artist with any taste he will find it difficult to believe, in contemplating this millionaire ‘revolutionary’ Utopia, that it justifies its paradisaic claim.

If there is one art-form more than another that is the faithful mirror of the High-Bohemia I have been describing, it is the Ballet created by Diaghileff, for the post-war world of Western Europe. In it you see the perfect expression of the society Proust has immortalized, and which to-day has come into its own, fully co-ordinated and provided with a philosophy. It is a musical society, essentially; so its theatre is a musical theatre. And the Russian Ballet is to that society what the theater of Racine or Molière was to French Society in the gallic heyday. Only it is far more pleased with itself than was the society of *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, or *Le Misanthrope*. This might almost be said to be its peculiarity, as has already been pointed out, and as Benda also immediately noticed.

Mr. Diaghileff is a ‘revolutionary’ impresario; that is to say, what he provides is designed to pass as the ‘latest’ and most ‘revolutionary’ fare possible. In Western Europe there is no other stage-performance so original and experimental as his Ballet. Although invariably full of people, a very fashionable and wealthy audience, his performances are supposed, on account of their daring originality, not to pay. And every one who has the interest of experimental art there is no greater advertisement than that provided by Diaghileff’s Ballets. And for the majority of educated people, their idea of the tendency of experimental art is a good deal derived from them. Therefore, Mr. Diaghileff has been in a position for some time to help or injure, according to his instincts, those interests. It is my opinion that he has injured them, and that he misrepresents entirely the dominant tendency, that that is most profoundly original and symptomatic of a ‘new birth,’ in the revolution in expression exploited by him.

So the ‘revolutionary’ impresario Diaghileff can be convicted of deliberately manufacturing a bastard ‘revolutionary’ article, to flatter the taste of his clientèle—the ‘revolutionary’ High-Bohemia of the Ritzes and Rivas. He can be said to have betrayed the principles of the so-called revolution in art (of which he has an intimate personal knowledge, and therefore his betrayal is the more flagrant) to the gilded ‘revolutionaries’ of the post-war capitals: to have associated in the mind of the great Public the work of the finest artists of this time with the vulgar life of the war-gilded rabble: never to have seriously attempted what he was not sure would sell, and that yet all the

time it had been understood that quite the opposite was happening, namely, that this idealist impresario was risking his neck, financially, every time his Ballet appeared, by his unpopular and revolutionary experiments. In that way he has used and degraded all the splendid material of artistic invention on which he could lay his hands to the level of *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (if you make the 'blonde' a gentleman). He has given to that great impulse, which is essentially 'chaste and masculine,' a twist and colour entirely adventive to it.

With his high-brow loot from the Paris studios he has toured the world, surrounded by an epicene circus, appropriate, as it exists to-day, only the representation of on phase of 'revolution'—namely, 'advanced' sex revolution. On that particular head, whatever his intentions may be, the impression conveyed is that the epicene fashion which in many quarters has assumed the proportions of a fanatical cult, is being staged and insisted on. And, as though thirty or forty years ago that had not all been exploited to admiration, it is on that basis that this 'newness' had found its culmination in a Nineties up-to-date. The Russian Ballet is the Nineties of Oscar Wilde and Beardsley staged for the High-Bohemia, evolved by the constellations of wars and revolutions of the past ten years.

If you turn to the earlier Russian Ballet, that is merely archaeological and romantic. *Petroushka* is a beautiful romantic ballet, possessing the advantage of music by Stravinsky; but as art it is of the same order as Gauguin; only where Gauguin went back to the primitive life of the South Seas, it goes back to the old times in Russia. Its charm is nostalgic, that of the Middle Ages, with orientalism thrown in.

All the earlier Russian Ballets consist of reconstructions of the Past and especially of barbaric times, principally Russian or Asiatic. The Ballet, thus, to start with, was a Scott novel, or a *Tarzan of the Apes*, in a sensuous, spectacular, choreographic form. It had nothing whatever to do with any artistic experiment specifically of the present period. And as to Diaghileff's more recent troupes, they reflect, as I have said, that phase of feminism expressed in the gilded Bohemia of the great capitals by the epicene fashion.

The Russian Ballet has stressed and advertised everything that the half caste world of Riches and Revolution desires and imagines. It is therefore the most perfect illustration of what I mean in my analysis of the degradation of Revolution (cf. Appendix, p. 136) and the assimilation of that to the millionaire spirit.

If I were a woman and if I found an art springing up which founded itself upon and twisted everything into an interpretation of the world from the unique standpoint of my function as a woman, I should, if I were a little unassuming and distrustful of flattery, first ask myself why my sex was so strangely honoured and singled out for attention; and I should (with the same proviso again) condemn this one-sided and too specialized art-form. So whatever our sex-position may be, whether strongly polar, or of an intermediate nature, we must equally disclaim intellectual expressions that seek to found themselves upon sex, which is the most specialized thing about



us, the most 'artistic' thing, it is true, but the least promising as material for the finest art; and which is linked with interests that are too feverish and stupefying to guarantee a perfect aesthetic expression. Artistic expression is a dream-condition, and its interpretation must be kept clear of sex-analysis, or else the dreamer passes over immediately into waking life, and so we get no art, and are left with nothing but sex on our hands, and can no longer avail ourselves of the dream condition.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PRINCIPAL 'REVOLUTIONARY' TENDENCY TO-DAY THAT OF A RETURN TO EARLIER FORMS OF LIFE

THE general summary of this charge, citing the Russian Ballet first as best answering to all its requirements, is as follows. It is clear that we cannot go on for ever making revolutions which are returns merely to some former period of history. Yet that is what most 'revolutions' resolve themselves into. The little revolution of the Naughty Nineties was essentially archaeological and historical. Victorian England had piled up a scientific materialism, a mercantile spirit and a nonconformist humbug of such dimensions, that it was a target no artist-attack could miss. The 'culture' gospel of Arnold and his war against the Philistine was responsible, of course, for the Naughty Nineties; it was that that infanted Wilde, Beardsley, and Symons. It was a revolt that raised up against the 'bourgeois' degeneracy of England the charms of the Eighteenth Century, the Restoration, or the Augustan Age, and more distantly the idealism of the Greek World. And the Russian Ballet, of the last un-russian phase, has revived the faded spirit of the Yellow Book, and given it a new dramatic life. Nothing new can be invented, it seemed to say, or, if invented, it could not be swallowed by the Publics degraded by the last phases of the democratic régime. So an old success had to be dug up and repeated. It has ended in a cynicism of a What the Public Wants description, where by 'Public' is meant the moneyed throng of the 'revolutionary' High-Bohemia.

The Fascist Revolution again, to revert to the political scene, is an imitation of an antiquity. The fasces are the axes of the lictors; the roman salute is revived; and the Roman Empire is to be resuscitated. Mussolini continually announces. It is interesting to remember that it did not begin that way, but in an exclusive glorification of the Present. For fascism is an adaptation, or prolongation, only, of futurism. But however 'revolutions' may begin, they always end in what Marinetti named *passéisme*.

Feminism, to take another political movement, is a revolution that aims at reversing the supposed conditions of the sexes, and so returning to the supposed conditions of the primitive Matriarchate. It is indeed impossible to point to any one of the many 'revolutionary' movements of to-day that are not conscious returns to former, more primitive, conditions of society. 'Communism' is, of course, an example of this.

All the most influential revolutions or sentiment or of ideologic formula to-day, in the world of science, sociology, psychology, are directed to some sort of return to the Past. The cult of the savage (and indirectly that of the Child) is a pointing backward to our human origins, either as individuals (when it takes the form of the child-cult) or as a race (When it takes the form of 'the primitive').

Freud's teaching has resuscitated the animal past of the soul, following upon Darwin, and hatched a menagerie of animal, criminal, and primitive 'complexes' for the Western mind. All these approaches stress the Past, the primitive, all that is not the civilized Present. There is no revolutionary theory or movement that does not ultimately employ itself in bringing to life ghosts, and putting the Present to school with the Past.

But there is nothing so 'new' and so startling as the Past, for most people. All the supreme novelties come from the most distant epochs; the more remote the more novel, of course. The 'Future,' it is true, contains nothing but potential novelties. But they are not yet in existence, and so cannot be educed. And the creative myths and dreams of the poets are no longer allowed. So what we generally name 'the new' is the very old, or the fairly old. It is as well to point this out, and even to stress it, since it is an impressive fact not sufficiently recognized.

But where the 'new' is dug up, pieced together, and given a new lease of life, it is customary to announce it as an absolute novel creation. That is the rule to-day. And it is this bad rule or habit that it seems to me it would be a good thing if we could break. Let us call a spade a spade; let us call what the spade digs up old, very old; not new, very new. If we will not make use of our inventors, when it comes to the point, but only off our archaeologists, then do not let us call our discoveries 'creative' or 'new' (which they are not); but rather call them scholarship and archaeology—that is to say, the science of the old and the primitive. That would be more truthful, and it would prevent misunderstandings.

It is especially in art that this would prevent misunderstandings. Art is as much a 'timeless' thing as technical invention is a creature of time. Its values are more static, as physically it is more static; in its greatest or most universal expression it is in another world from that of fashion. I am not therefore suggesting that here art is concerned other periods, races and countries should be banished. It is the 'revolutionary' terminology and propagandist method, alone, that I am criticizing. But beyond that it is imperative to say as well that the perfectly novel inventive forces that contemporary science and technique suggest are not used in art; or when used are not recognized. If you happen to admire and enjoy the art of antiquity, as I do, you will welcome its exploitation. But there can be no object except a commercial one in advertising it as 'new.' And what really is new is obscured by that device. In that new creation I am supremely interested.

The 'newness' obtained, again, as in the case of the Russian Ballet, by means of novelties that are not novelties (psychologically or formally), or by a mechanical collection of trivial surface-novelties, drawn from The plane of vulgarization, as the hybrid pseudo-'revolutionary' plane of the High-Bohemia could be called called, are equally misnamed. And this sort of novelty, of necessity, takes on all the distorting modes of pseudo-Revolution, as affected by the Millionaire World; especially those centering round feminism and sex-revolt, to the confusion of the true revolutionary impulse.

These criticisms apply to all the phases of artistic expression I have subsequently to examine. Romance and scholarship plus advertisement, take the place of really new creative effort. Some quite ridiculous piece of the mildest 'daring' in the world, or the tamest 'experiment,' is advertised as an outrage. And as an outrage it is accepted, on the word of the advertiser; though there is nothing there to disturb the pulse of a rabbit, and no more invention than is required to spell a word in an unusual way, or to paint a bird with a monkey's tail.

## CHAPTER IX

### EZRA POUND, ETC.<sup>1</sup>

NEXT after the Russian Ballet I propose to range, for analysis, an old associate of mine, Ezra Pound. There are some obvious objections to this, chief among them the personal regard in which I hold him. Since the War I have seen little of Pound. One towards the end of my long period of seclusion and work, hard-pressed, I turned to him for help, and found the same generous and graceful person there that I had always known; for a kinder heart never lurked beneath a portentous exterior than is to be found in Ezra Pound. Again, Pound is not a vulgar humbug even in those purely propagandist activities, where, to my mind, he certainly handles humbug, bug quite innocently, I believe. Pound is—that is my belief—a genuine naïf. He is a sort of revolutionary simpleton!

But my present critical formulations must certainly bring me into conflict with many people whom Pound is pledged to support, or whom he is liable to support. For some time it has been patent to me that I could not reconcile the creative principles I have been developing with his sensationalist half-impresario, half-poet; whose mind can be best arrived at, perhaps, by thinking of what would happen if you could mix in exactly equal proportions Bergson-Marinetti-Mr. Hueffer (with a few preraphaelite 'christian names' thrown in), Edward Fitzgerald and Buffalo Bill. At all events, Pound's name and mine have certain associations in people's minds. For the full success of my new enterprise it is necessary to dispel this impression.

I will start by giving the briefest possible account of how, in the past, we came to work together.

The periodical, *Blast* (the first number of which appeared in 1914 just before the outbreak of war, and the second in 1915—the 'war-number'), was, as its name implies, destructive in intention. What it aimed at destroying in England—the 'academic' of the Royal Academy tradition—is now completely defunct. The freedom of expression, principally in the graphic and plate arts, desired by it, is not attained, and can be indulged in by anybody who has the considerable private means required to be an 'artist.' So twelve years since that mass of propaganda was launched, in turning over the pages of *Blast* to-day it is hard to realize the bulk of the traditional resistance that its bulk was invented to overpower. How cowed these forces are to-day, or how transformed!

Ezra Pound attached himself to the Blast Group. That group was composed of people all very 'extremist' in their views. In the matter of fine art, as distinct from literature, it was their policy to admit no artist disposed to technical compromise, as they regarded it. What struck them principally about Pound was that his fire-eating propagandist utterances were not accompanied by any very experimental efforts in his particular medium. His poetry, to the mind of the more fanatical of the group, was a series

of pastiches of old french or old italian poetry, and could lay no claim to participate in the new burst of art in progress. Its novelty consisted largely in the distance it went *back*, not forward; in archaism, not in new creation. That was how they regarded Pound's literary contributions. But this certain discrepancy between what Pound said—what he supported and held up as an example—and what he did, was striking enough to impress itself on anybody.

My opposition to Marinetti, and the criticism of his 'futurist' doctrines that I launched, Pound took a hand in, and those of my friends were just as opposed to Pound's antiquarian and romantic tendencies, his velvet-jacket and his blustering *trouvère* airs, as was the futurism of Marinetti. But these inconsequences were matched by many other disorders and absurdities in our publicist experiments—inseparable from things done just for the day, and regarded as of no more consequence than hand-bills, and possibly rockets or squibs. Pound supplied the Chinese Crackers, and a trayful of mild jokes, for our paper; also much ingenious support in the english and american press; and, of course, some nice quiet little poems—at least calculated to vex Signor Marinetti with their fine *passéiste* flavour.

Until quite recently I heard little of my old friend. Then I was informed that the good Ezra was breaking out in a new direction. He was giving up *words*—possibly frightened, I thought, by the widespread opposition to *words* of any sort—words, idle words and their manipulators. He was taking to music—a less compromising activity. For in music the sounds *say* nothing. (M. Paul Valéry, like Ezra Pound, would prefer to believe that they *say* nothing in poetry either. But in spite of these musical dogmatists, *still they speak*. Pound shows his appreciation of this by turning to music.)

In the matter of revolutionary excitement there was indeed not much more to be got out of the plastic or graphic arts. Their purely 'revolutionary' value exhausted after the war (which also eclipsed and luckily put an end to Marinetti's bellowings, besides killing off most of the 'futurists'), their play-boys' place was taken by real, Red Revolution; just as Marinetti's post-nietzschean war-doctrine became War, *tout court*; and then Fascismo, which as Futurism in practice is the habit of mind and conditions of war applied to peace.

The *Blast* situation, on a meaner scale, repeats itself. Pound is there with a few gentle provençal airs, full of a delicate scholarship and 'sense of the Past,' the organizer of a musical disturbance. The real business is done by a young musician, Antheil, of a fiery accomplishment and infectious faith in the great future of jazz. (As I don't know the first word in musical composition I can say nothing about Antheil's work except that from what he has played to me I have got considerable pleasure from.) Not only a typical Pound-situation is thus set up, but (as I see it) a typical 'revolutionary' situation of the bad type.

If Antheil is as interesting as I (quite ignorantly) believe him to be, and if he is really aiming at something *new*, the quality of Pound's championship, or his personal motives, would not concern us; though it is a question if his support is at any time more damaging or useful. But that is merely a practical

question. It is *disturbance* that Pound requires; that is the form his parasitism takes. He is never happy if he is not sniffing the dust and glitter of *action* kicked up by other, more natively 'active' men. With all his admirable flair for 'genius' (in which he has described himself as 'a specialist'), it leads him into the support of things that are at once absurd and confusing. He is not always so lucky as I believe him to be in his choice of Antheil. It is the *type* of man that Pound is, or partly is, and the method that he advocates and practises, that sooner or later has to be repudiated by the artist.

Pound is, I believe, only pretending to be alive for form's sake. His effective work seems finished. The particular stimulation that Pound requires for what he does all comes from without; he is terribly dependent upon people and upon 'atmosphere'; and, without a sensationalist of his type, in the nature of things little development is possible, his inspiration is of a precarious order, attached as it is to what he regards as his rôle, handed him by a shadow to whose authority he is extremely susceptible, a Public he despises, is afraid of, and serves. So he is easily isolated, his native resources nil.

It is said that Nature kills all lyrical poets young. Perhaps Pound believed that he had found a solution for that distressing situation. He may have become aware of an up-till-then undiscovered alternative for the lyrical poet. Just as Nature (very busy with other things at the moment), hearing a new lyric rising on the air from a quarter which she esteemed should have discontinued its issue of such youthful trifles, had turned with an obviously

At all events, there is Pound (glad to be in the neighborhood of a big drum) making music.

What made me finally decide that the time had arrived publicly to repudiate my associate with Pound, was the following interview with him, appearing in the *Christian Science Monitor* two summers ago. Remembering his opposition, following me, to Marinetti and his 'futurism' (to the intellectual *commis* of Big Business—especially the armament line—and his ridiculous gospel), this interview is especially curious :—

'It is possible to imagine music being taken out of the chamber, and entering social and industrial life so completely and so splendidly that the whole clamor of a great factory will be rhythmically regulated, and the workers work, not to a deafening din, but to a superb symphony. The factory manager would be a musical conductor on an immense scale, and each artisan would be an instrumentalist. You think that perhaps George Antheil and I are foolish visionaries, etc.'...

It was thus that Ezra Pound, American poet and musician, indicated the possibilities of a convergence of the lines of industrial and musical development. Revolutionary as the notion appears at first sight, it is extraordinarily suggestive. So a thousand men not only would be making material things, but in the process would be producing, not a mere cacophony of confused noises, but a gigantic symphony in accordance with a score directed by a *chef d'orchestre* altogether surpassing the *chef d'orchestre* of the concert-room. An entire town, might, in Pound's view, become the stage from which would arise the regulated harmony of industry.

Marinetti is rehabilitated by Ezra—music, provençal airs and ballads of Villon, as far as he personally is concerned, taking him paradoxically right to the great throbbing, singing heart of the great god, Industry. I should be tempted to think that it had taken Ezra a decade to catch up Marinetti, if I were not sure that, from the start, the histrionics of the milanese prefascist were secretly much to his sensation-loving taste. I observe rather that he has not moved from where he was.

To turn from his musical enterprise to other schemes in which he has recently participated, I reach material about which I am more competent to speak. A vast publication appeared a year or so ago, which sallied forth under his banner. Not to burden posterity with an unnecessary name, I will call it the *Q. Review*.

This enterprise answers to all the requirements laid down, in connection with my criticism of the Ballet, for a typical production of the false 'revolutionary' milieu of that Millionaire Bohemia that has absorbed and is degrading the revolutionary impulse of the West—the creative impulse, that is. It announces as surprisingly new what is old, or merely the dull wash of any time; as outrageous what might startle a secluded spinster charwoman, but no one else; as 'daring' what does not display the dash of a tortoise. In fact, it is surprising with what completeness it fulfils these conditions, on an epic scale. The 'revolutionary' enthusiast, whether a stupid or an intelligent one, will look in vain, in this colossal publication, for anything to satisfy his appetite, outside the fragments of work by Mr. Joyce and Miss Stein, now become the standbys of all 'revolutionary' editors who are able to supply nothing revolutionary themselves. The editor freely favors his barren sentimentalism with the early mannerisms of Miss Stein. That is the most violent thrill that you will get. Nothing of the roguishness even, or physical dislocation of Dada; no new technical attempt whatever enlivens those unhappy pages. But to make up for this striking absence of ordinary spirit, you will get all the big and noisy, six-foot advertisers' claims; all the 'Greater than Shakespeares,' the 'Death to the Pasts,' the announcement of this enterprise as that of an absolutely new era, with which you have long been familiar.

And there is Ezra Pound, as patron saint, at the heart of all this profuse and meaningless word-bath—full of his old love of the Past, plodding melodramatically through mediaeval Italy, and throwing in snatches of translation and paraphrase of the greek, or of any other language which is ancient or traditional enough. Meanwhile, the editor exclaims at the top of his voice: 'Tradition is an unimportant fact....To speak of continuing the great traditions to-day is to plead for the use of condemned bridges....It is going to the scrap heap for advice on development.' 'It is the aim of the present writer to imagine that life has begun only to-day so far as culture and civilisation,' etc. etc. How to reconcile that with what Mr. W-sh (the initial of the editor; posterity has to be protected) says, and what Pound, he and the rest of them, *do*, must be very difficult for the best-intentioned. If this ideal fool,



W-sh, were a little *shrewder* and more intelligent, he might have spoilt what is a quite perfect give-away for himself and all his kind. As it is, he is worth quoting; for I dare say we shall never have such a fool as Mr. W-sh again to do some of our dirty work for us.

All the big words, then, without exception, are still there. Pound is enthroned as the master-poet of the absolutely *new* epoch; but all that was ever new or that showed any signs of wanting to evolve some formula never tried before, has evaporated. It is totally absent Q. Review. There was never anything *new* about Ezra, but there is not not the faintest flicker of 'newness' in those with whom he has associated himself, always excepting Antheil, Joyce and Gertrude Stein. If your eye just fell on W-sh's editorials, you would turn to the rest of the paper, perhaps, with bated breath. 'Great traditions—condemned bridges—scrap heap! Life has begun only to-day!' Turning to life, as exhibited in the contributions, you then would find, to your dismay, this sort of overwhelming literary innovation, both in manner and conception :—

The protestant pastor was sane, so were the props of the protestant church who took the collection (all men) and the well-balanced fathers, brothers, husbands, brothers-in-law, judges, lawyers, doctors, architects, bank managers, bank clerks, farmers, waiters, gardeners, railway porters, etc. etc.

There was never any talk in the home about her being a painter; they had never known any such thing, but they would let her indulge in that low streak. Even her father's enthusiasm stopped short at that, and her mother was disdainful. Cissy said she should go, and saved money and sent it to her regularly. And then she found the *Atelier Carmen* (belonging to voluptuous Carmen), where the inspired master 'corrected,' and there she worked furiously with an eager group of American students.

You would be under the impression that you were reading a feuilleton in the *Daily Mirror*. There are forty closely printed pages of that. (for some reason the thirteen first pages are printed twice in different parts of the paper—so you get over fifty altogether.) Then there is this, from another, though very similar hand :—

'I'll be American and try anything once, if it really isn't imposing on you, then,' Miss Taylor answered as she left. Ni watched her as she walked away. He felt antagonistic in a way to her. She was too restrained, too insistent on balance and sense, and was sure. She must believe in taste and refinement. The calm English temperament put him off anyway, and he hated the cageiness of conventional minds of any race. Nevertheless, he was attracted, or curious about, Miss Taylor, beneath his antagonism, etc.

Damn it, there was no use. Virg and Margie might be feather-witted, but they were the kind of girls to be around with easily, and if he got amorous they didn't think it meant anything serious. Poor old Amy, whom no man but he bothered about on the campus, was apt to wish to believe that even an amiable attention meant marriage intentions in the offing. He supposed he had been rather abrupt with her, though, since coming back, and she had been decent about writing him letters, etc. etc.

There is a good deal of that as well; it is the handiwork of that literary wonder we will call Bud Macsalmon, announced by Wush to his readers as

‘one of the most astonishing writers since the fathers of English literature.’  
Here is the editor on this particular giant of his super-circus :—

I can’t wait (howls W-sh). I can’t wait *any* longer to say that Bud Macsalmon is one of the most astonishing writers since the fathers of English literature. If you care for Shakespeare, if you care for Dickens, if you care for Conrad, you will care more for Macsalmon. He is colossal without being dull. He had the deep smile and the hidden laughter of Indian women pounding maize without caring at all who is to eat it. The world eats maize. The world eats bread. Very well. Pound maize. Somebody eat by and by. Everybody got to eat sooner or later. Pound maize. Macsalmon write. He write a great deal, etc., etc.

He goes on to say of Bud and his friends that they are ‘the school that writes by instinct.’ And he illustrates this by quoting their spelling—they spell tries as trys, he exultantly points out. They are *true primitives*. All these primitives have had, like children, the same difficulty: they have not been able to spell! And yet how expressive their little faults of orthography can be! What a nice archaic feeling it gives one to see tries spelt trys! (Just like *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, as a matter of fact—only, of course, much higher-class stuff! else, of course, Shakespeare wouldn’t have been mentioned—not in connection with *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*!)

What is wrong with Ring. W. Lardner, his publisher could ask Mr. W-sh, for ‘Shakespeare’ honours, or the heavy-weight English literary belt? I will give a slice from the Lardner (he is a well-known American humorist, not appearing in the *Q. Review*. He is the author of *Gullible’s Travels*, etc.). You can compare it with Bud, and you will be able to judge on the spot if Lardner’s chances would not be rosy if there were nothing but Bud there to stop him, for the literary world-title.

Before we started, Mother patted me on the back and told me to do my best, so we started in and I seen right off that I was in for it, as I hadn’t pitched a shoe in sixteen years and didn’t have my distance. And besides, the plating had wore off the shoes so that they was points right where they stuck into my thumb and I hadn’t throwed more than two or three times when my thumb was raw and it pretty near killed me to hang on to the shoe, let alone pitch it.

Well, to make a long story short, I was just beginning to get my distance when I had to give up on account of my thumb, which I showed it to Hartsell and he seen I couldn’t go on, as it was raw and bleeding. Even if I could have stood it to go on myself, mother wouldn’t have allowed it after she had seen my thumb. So anyway I quit and Hartsell said the score was nineteen six, but I don’t know what it was. Or don’t care, neither.

That, from Mr. Lardner’s latest book, will, I think you will agree, take some beating in its own class—the class, of course, of Wush’s favourites. Lardner has the deep smile and hidden laughter of Indian women pounding maize. Also, if you like *Antony and Cleopatra*, you will like Lardner. He is colossal without being dull—that is what he aims at and that is what he achieves. If he does not spell properly, well, the Fathers of English Literature

couldn't either, and if he *can* spell, but *won't*, well, then he's like a lot of other people. My money is on Lardner for being read longer than his competitors, Wishes champions. Besides he (Lardner) has the deep smile of Indian women on purpose because it pays him to have that smile. He does not give a hoot for that smile, I guess, aside from that. Lardner one can respect. Mr. W-sh has a weakness for pidgin English too. But the dialect of his predilection is the spurious child-language of Miss Stein, cadenced and said twice over in the form of the hebrew narrative. That is, as it were, his native tongue. I will quote a few passages at random. Here he is writing about the greatest genius that has ever lived (not Bud this time) :—

He never told me his thoughts. I never knew what was in his mind. And then came his book, A HURRIED MAN, and that is why I am writing and why I have told you all that I have because I want you to know how one comes to know a great man not yet thirty years old and how one is very close to a great pleasure and a great dignity without being aware.

'One' is also very close to Miss Stein, as will be perceived in the way one expresses one's self—'and that is why I am writing and white I have told you all that I have,' etc. He is also, himself, naturally, 'a hurried man.' You get the full flavour of the breathless hurried confidential lisp of the little baby girl, rushing to its mother's knee and pouring out coyly its winsome chatter, do you not, with our Mr. W-sh? And yet soon this charm stolen by that big rough hairy dark-browed Mr. W-sh, from some innocent, must wear out the most benevolent reader (for some one must be benevolent where he is concerned, somebody must love Wush, or he would not prattle in public in this way). 'Told oo that me have, oo naught mammie oo' is at all events the type of his main line of writing. 'Belly well. Pound maize. Somebody eat by and by,' is a side track.

The author of the *Hurried Man* is, along with 'Bud' (the author of *The Hasty Bunch*) and, as a third, the lady from whose work I have already quoted, Wooshe's pick, the trio of his heart. So he recommends to us one who is perhaps the 'greatest' of the 'great.' Here is a specimen of what is written by the author of the *Hurried Man* (he is a poet and a little bitter, that is his note) :—

I received from a friend  
a letter where  
was a portrait of yours  
cut from a paper;  
and was kinda nostalgic  
the way a man would be  
who'd left a barrel of rotting apples  
uneaten.

The daring of this takes your breath away, and the bitterness of the ending fair turns yer up: am I right? The very spirit of 'revolution' breathes in

every word of it. Everything in this enormous *Review* of 340 pages was not so abominably foolish as W-sh, as might be expected. Hemingway, for instance, is an admirable writer, almost universally admired. But his impresario is not satisfied. He must be admired by Wush, as well; go through it he must, since he is there between the same covers with Wush. So Wush says :—

Hemingway is the shyest and proudest and sweetest smelling storyteller of my reading.

What a horrible nosegay—for a really shy and proud man! Again he says :—

The genius of Hemingway's writing lies somewhere around his getting ready to write since some time back. The next happened. Hemingway managed to get born in America and born with more sensitiveness than most young men in America.

So much for *Q. Review*. Pound, Stein and Joyce I will deal with next, under a separate head. What a field for some Mencken is lying fallow, and it seems unsuspected in the world of bastard 'revolutionary' prose and verse. The laughable extravagance of some provincial american advertiser, evangelist or what not, is not more absurd, vulgar, and unnatural. But because the Wushes of this world fly the colours of 'high art,' are 'poets'—*rebel* poets—are the intellectual élite, they are immune from critical notice. It would be an important service to art if some publicist like Mencken specialized in them for a season, and gave the low-brows a turn to laugh, or vomit.

When a person, whatever his past services in the cause of art may be, reaches such a state of decay that he can support such enterprises as the *Q. Review*, it is time to cut loose, if you have been formerly in his company. The end with Pound cannot be long delayed. So it will be evident, I hope, already that my action as regards the estimable Ezra is by no means premature; that there was in fact not a moment to be lost.

<sup>1</sup> Since writing this chapter I have heard of the death, under tragic circumstances, of one of the people whose activities are examined here. But I have envisaged the *Q. Review* as essentially an activity of Pound; and whether it continue or not, it remains a portion of his history.

## CHAPTER X

### TESTS FOR COUNTERFEIT IN THE ARTS

**I***n the beginning was the Word* should rather be, in the *beginning was Time*, according to Miss Stein (as also according to Bergson, Prof. Alexander, Einstein, Whitehead, Minkowski, etc. etc.). And she is one of the most eminent writers of what I have described as our *musical society*; that is our time-society, the highly-intellectualized High-Bohemia.

‘In the beginning there was time in the composition that naturally was in the composition but time in the composition comes now and this is what is now troubling every one the time in the composition is now a part of distribution and equilibration.

In Miss Stein’s composition there is above all *time*, she tells us as best she can. As best she can, as you see; for she is not able to tell us this or anything else clearly and simply; first of all because a time-obsession, it seems, interferes, so we are given to understand. The other reason is that she is not simple at all, although she writes usually so like a child—like a confused, stammering, rather ‘soft’ (bloated, acromegalic, squinting and spectacled, one can figure it as) child. Miss Stein you might innocently suppose from her naïf stuttering to be, if not a child, simple, at least, in spite of maturity. But that is not so; though, strangely enough, she would like it to be thought that it is. That is only the old story of people wanting to be things they are not; or else, either as strategy or out of pure caprice, enjoying any disguise that reverses or contradicts the personality.

*Composition as Explanation* is a little pamphlet just published by the Hogarth Press. In it you have the announcement that ‘Time time of the composition is the time of the composition.’ But as simple as that sounds, it is only roguishness on the part of its authoress, all the while. That is her fun only. She is just pretending, with a face of solemn humbug, not to be able to get out the word; what this verbal inhibition results in is something *funny*, that will make you laugh. It is a form of clowning, in short; she will disarm and capture you by her absurdity.

But *Time*, as you are told, is at the bottom of the matter; though that you could have guessed, since it has been so for a very long time, from the beginning of the present period; from the birth of Bergson, shall we say? (Bergson was supposed by all of us to be dead, but Relativity, oddly enough at first sight, has recently resuscitated him; for the *time-spacer* has turned out to be the old-timer, or timist, after all.)

Miss Stein announces her time-doctrine in character, as it were. She gives you an ‘explanation,’ and illustrations, side by side; but the explanation is done in the same way as the examples that follow it. A further ‘explanation’ would be required of the ‘explanation,’ and so on. And in that little, perhaps unregarded, fact, we have, I believe, one of the clues to this writer’s mind. It tells us that her mind is a sham, to some extent.

In doing her explanation' of her compositions in the same manner as her compositions (examples of which she gives), she is definitely making-believe that it is impossible for her to write in any other way. She is making a claim, in fact, that suggest a lack of candour on her part; and she is making it with an air of exaggerated candour. Supposing that the following line represented a typical composition of yours :—

*FugfuggFFF-fewg:fugfug-Fug-fugue-ffffffuuuuuuuG*

Supposing, having become celebrated for that, you responded to a desire on the part of the public to know what you were driving at. Then the public would be justified in estimating your sincerity of a higher order if you sat down and tried to 'explain' according to the canons of plain speech (no doubt employed by you in ordering your dinner, or telling the neighbouring newsagent to send you the *Herald*, *Tribune*, or *Daily Express* every morning), your verbal experiments, than if you affected to be unable to use that kind of speech at all.

Every painter who has experimented in abstract design, for example, has often been put into that situation; he must often have been asked the familiar question: 'But do you really see things like that, Mr. So-and-So?' Were Miss Stein that painter, we know now what would happen. She would roll her eyes, squint point in a frenzy at some object, and, of course, stammer hard. She would play up to the popular ignorance as to the processes by which her picture had been arrived at, in short. She would answer 'in character,' implying that she was cut off from the rest of the world entirely by an exclusive and peculiar sensibility. Yet every one knows who engages in experiments of any sort, verbal or pictorial, that that is not at all the point of the matter. It is a deliberate adjustment of things to some formula which transforms what is treated into an organism, strange according to the human norm, though it might appear normal enough to the senses of some other animal. Normal speech, or normal vision, are not interfered with in the practitioner of these experiments, on the one hand; nor does what in the result has an abnormal appearance arise literally in an abnormal experience, or an experience without a normal, non-visionary, basis.

For these reasons Miss Stein's illustrations would have been much more impressive if she had not pretended, to start with, that, as to the explanation, she 'could not do it in any other way.' In this fact, that 'explanation' and 'composition' are both done in the same stuttering dialect, you have the proof that you are in the presence of a *faux-naïf*, not the real article. Miss Stein's merits elsewhere are not cancelled by this—people are often gifted without being able to lay any claim to being 'sincere,' as we say. But it is a little difficult to understand how she could be so stupid. Her assumption that any advantage was to be gained by this studied obscurity, where it was, after all, pointless, is that. Perhaps, however, it was only conceit.

Should my ensuing remarks sting Miss Stein into a rejoinder, then I think

you would see something like the situation that would be created if some beggar shamming blindness observed a person about to disappear with his offertory box. The 'blind' under such conditions would *see* at once, and rush after the robber. It is the classic test case in the everyday world of everyday sham. I am afraid, however, that Miss Stein is too cunning a stammerer to be so easily unmasked. Miss Stein's stutter in her *explanation* even of her other celebrated stutters, is a proof, then, to my mind, that she is a homologue of the false-blind; that, in some measure, she is a sham.

Still, what we can retain from that little affected treatise, is that *Time* is at the bottom of her mind, the treasured key to her technical experiments. And so she is working in the strictest conformity with all the other 'time'-doctrinaires, who have gathered in such disciplined numbers, so fanatically disciplined, as though to the beating of a ritualistic drum.

With a trick like Miss Stein's, every one, I think, should have to pay a fee for using it. It is quite certain that it would never have occurred to most of those who use it more or less, like the editor of the *Q.*, for instance, without the promptings of the jazz-sibyl. This habit of speech, like a stuttering infection, is very contagious. Mr. Joyce even has caught it, and, one of the most pedagogically careful of men, has thrown overboard a great deal of laboriously collected cargo, and romps along at the head of the fashionable literary world, hand in hand with Gertrude Stein, both outdoing all children in jolly quaintnesses.

The child-personality, the all-important base of this school that I am attacking, and all that the affecting of that personality, and the language of childhood, implies, is of such decisive importance, that I will now, during some pages, provide a brief analysis of this sudden malady of childhood that has mysteriously overtaken all our world, from the hoariest veteran down to the veritable child.

## CHAPTER XI

### A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE CHILD-CULT

I SUPPOSE that there is no one who has not noticed, passim and without attentiveness, perhaps, in a hundred different forms, the prevalence of what now amounts to a cult of childhood, and of the *Child*. This irresponsible, Peterpannish psychology is the key to the Utopia of the 'revolutionary' Rich; the people, namely, who have taken over, have degraded, and are enjoying the fruits of revolutionary scientific innovation—far from its creative ardours, cynically scornful of its idealisms, but creating out of its ferments, which they have pillaged, a breathless Millenium.

This subject has been so thoroughly analysed by me elsewhere that I do not propose to go into it again here. All that is necessary to say is that it is essential, if you wish to understand at all a great deal of contemporary art and thought, even the developments of positive science, not only to gather up all the dispersed manifestations of this strange fashion, but—having done so—to trace this impulse to its source in the terrible and generally hidden disturbances that have broken the back of our will in the Western countries, and have already forced us into the greatest catastrophes. Whether these great disturbances are for the ultimate good of mankind or not, no one can claim that they are pleasant, or that they do not paralyse and weaken the system they attack. Many complaints break out in consequence in the midst of our thinking; and the instinctive recoil of the stricken system makes it assume strange shapes.

What you have to ask yourself is why, exactly, a grown person should wish to be a child?—for to use the forms of infantile or immature life, to make an art of its technical imperfections, and to exploit its natural ignorance, is, in some sense, to wish to be a child.

That, to start with, it is connected with the cult of the *primitive* and the savage, is *obvious*. The same impulse that takes the romantic painter, Gauguin, to the South Sea paradise, takes a similarly romantic person of to-day to the Utopia of childhood, in the sense indicated above. Only the latter has the Heaven of Childhood inside himself (it is a *time-paradise*); whereas Gauguin had to go to a long way to reach Samoa. That is the advantage that *time-travel* has over *space-travel*.

That was really Proust's Utopia, too. And the great appeal of that author is partly because he shows a method for capturing and retaining that spirit—the *recherche du temps perdu*—and partly because he so feverishly expresses the will to that particular dream. As we read him, the 'I' of his books is that small, naïf, Charlie Chaplin-like, luxuriously-indulged, sharp witted, passionately snobbish, figure, a model for many variations bred thickly everywhere. But that is not the whole story; and rather than give an imperfect notion of what a little investigation will reveal, I will, having started the inquiry, leave it at this point, or refer the reader to that part of my recent book dealing with this



subject.

How the *demented* also joins hands with the child, and the tricks, often very amusing, of the asylum patient, are exploited at the same time as the happy inaccuracies of the infant; how contemporary inverted-sex fashions are affiliated to the Child-cult; and in fact all the different factors in this intricate sensibility, being evolved notably by such writers as Miss Stein, will be found there. Not to seize the secret of these liaisons is totally to misunderstand the nature of what is occurring around you to-day.

CHAPTER XII  
'TIME'-CHILDREN. MISS GERTRUDE STEIN AND  
MISS ANITA LOOS

IN the few extracts from a Review quoted on page 50 we have in the *And then came A Hurried Man* specimen, this: 'and that is why I am writing and why I have told you all that I have because I want you to know how one comes to know a great man,' etc. I will take at random a passage from Miss Stein's *Three Lives* :—

Melanctha Herbert had not made her life all simple like Rose Johnson. Melanctha had not found it easy with herself to make her wants and what she had, agree. Melanctha Herbert was always losing what she had in wanting all the things she saw. Melanctha was always being left when she was not leaving others. Melanctha Herbert, etc.

Here is the opening of *Composition as Explanation*. Without any pricking of the ear, it is easy to isolate in these passages the Child, the naïf-motif :—

There is singularly nothing that makes a difference a difference in beginning and in the middle and in ending except that each generation has something different at which they are all looking. By this I mean so simply that anybody knows it that composition is the difference which makes each and all of them then different from other generations and this is what makes everything different otherwise they are all alike and everybody knows it because everybody says it.

The 'there is singularly nothing' is a jamesism, which James was already a little over-naïf grace. 'By this I mean so simply' or the concluding words are pure 'child.' It is in the same category as :—

And I know and she knows and all the world knows  
No girl need love unless she chose,

only Miss Stein does not say (as the poet who wrote the above lines implies) 'now I am going to be a simple little thing, tossing my golden head in a Ring-o-ring-o-Roses.'

I will now compare Miss Stein and Miss Loos. Here is a passage from *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, by Anita Loos :—

Paris is devine. I mean Dorothy and I got to Paris yesterday, and it really is devine. Because the French are devine. Because when we were coming off the boat, and we were coming through the customs, it was quite hot and it seemed to smell quite a lot and all the French gentlemen in the customs, were squealing quite a lot. So I looked around and I picked out a French gentleman who was really in a very gorgeous uniform, etc.

Here is a poem by Miss Gertrude Stein :—

If you hear her snore.  
It is not before you love her  
You love her so that to be her beau is very lovely  
She is sweetly there and her curly hair is very lovely  
She is sweetly here and I am very near and that is very lovely.  
She is my tender sweet and her little feet are stretched out well which is a treat and very lovely.

If you put the passage from *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* into the free-verse form you will see the relationship still more closely :—

Paris is devine.  
I mean Dorothy and I got to Paris yesterday, and it really is devine.  
Because the French are devine.  
Because when we were coming off the boat, and we were coming through the customs, it was quite hot and it seemed to smell quite a lot and all the French gentlemen in the customs, were squealing quite a lot.  
So I looked around and I picked out a French gentleman who was really in a very gorgeous uniform, etc.

Here is another passage from *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* :—

So while we were shopping in the afternoon I saw Louie get Dorothy off in a corner and whisper to her quite a lot. quite a lot. So then I saw Robert get her off in a corner and whisper to her quite a lot. So when we got back to the Ritz, Dorothy told me why they whispered to her quite a lot. So it seems that when Louie whispered to Dorothy, etc.

The tricks are identical, and the reasons for them (in the last two instances) are identical. Everything is repeated over and over again. As Miss Stein says in her Explanation :—

In my beginning it was a continuous present beginning again and again and again and again, it was a series it was a list, etc.

This repetition which technically weds Miss Loos and Miss Stein is the 'time-trouble,' the 'time- nuisance,' as it were; though any one who believed that it was such an unfortunate affair as all that for Miss Stein would be *bien naïf*. Here, in full-sail of affected naïveté, is Miss Stein complaining of this terrible sense that gives her and everybody else so much trouble, as a pretty girl may complain of her becoming large hat on a windy day.

There must be time....This is the thing that is at present the most troubling and if there is the time that is at present the most troublesome the time-sense that is at present the most troubling is the thing that makes the present the most troubling.

'Composition is time'—that is the secret according to Miss Stein. 'In this way at present composition is time that is the reason that at present the

time-sense in the composition is the composition,' etc. It is the repetition (the result of the troublesome time-sense, Miss Stein tells us, obsessing her, she can't help it) that the most obvious point of resemblance is to be found between Miss Stein and Miss Loos.

But the identity in all these tricks of manner is deeper than a simple technical imitation would explain. In the case of both the quotations from Miss Stein and from Miss Loos there are these two fundamental similarities. The passages are alike because (1) the person who is supposed to be writing is illiterate; and because (2) she or he is naïf, and engagingly childish. In the case of Miss Loos she has employed this method because she wished to obtain the breathless babble of the wide-eyed child, telling Mummie all about what has happened to her.

Let us take Ring W. Lardner again and see how he fits in. We will take his short story, *Some Like Them Cold*. This is how it opens (it is letter-form) :—

Dear Miss Gillespie: How about our bet now as you bet me I would forget all about you the minute I hit the big town and would never write you a letter. Well, girlie, it looks like you lose so pay me. Seriously we will call all bets off as I am not the kind that bet on a sure thing and it sure was a sure thing that I would not forget a girlie like you and all that is worrying me is whether it may not be the other way round and you are wondering who this fresh guy is that is writeing you this letter. I bet you are so will try and refresh your memory.

In all these cases, from Melanctha to Lardner's letter, the manner depends on the following essentials, postulated before the composition starts. The manner shall be that of a very simple, naïf person, suggesting extreme youth or at least the deepest inexperience; it shall be told with the breathlessness and monotony of the child; its charm shall be attached to a habit of never-varying, sing-song repetition; and (this is of great importance) the child shall be a *child of the people*, with the pathos of the illiterate added to the pathos of the child, the charm of both confounded. Humour is to be deliberately extracted from all this; that is to say that author and reader are both superior the narrator.

Miss Gertrude Stein in her *Melanctha* is giving the life of a poor ngress, not in the ngress's own words, but in her own manner. Then the mannerism is intended to convey, with its ceaseless repetitions, the monstrous *bulk* and vegetable accumulation of human life in the mass, in its mechanical rotation. Creaking, groaning, and repeating itself in an insane iteration, it grows, flowers heavily, ages and dies. Its sodden lustreless heaping up of sheer meaningless material, composing the mortal career, is conveyed in the monotonous, imbecile, endlessly-repeated, lumbering words: Melanctha Herbert, for instance, the name of the principal figure. The tone, again, the words used, very roughly approximate to the subject.

Miss Anita Loos is engaged in the same literary game, and is employing the same method. Only her subject, or victim, is an american midinette, and the phases of her cheap gallantry, imbecile in its empty cunning, told her naïf illiterate jargon, and in consequence supremely amusing to educated people

in England and America, where, of course, it has achieved a similar success to that of the *Young Visitors*.

Miss Stein has a considerable reputation as a serious writer, of experimental type, but earnest intentions; therefore to compare her compositions with those of Miss Loos may still strike the well-informed reader as an extravagance. To see really how fundamentally alike they are you cannot do better than take a passage in her *Composition as Explanation* where she is speaking in the first person, giving an account of herself and her doings. The tone, as will be seen in the extract I am about to give, is almost identical with *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*.

In beginning writing I wrote a book called *Three Lives* this was written in 1905. I wrote a negro story called *Melanctha*. In that there was a constant recurring and beginning there was a marked direction in the direction of being in the present although naturally I had been accustomed to past present and future, and why, because the composition forming around me was a prolonged present. A composition of a prolonged present is a natural composition in the world as it has been these thirty years it was more and more a prolonged present. I created then a prolonged present naturally I knew nothing of a continuous present but it came naturally to me to make one, it was simple it was clear to me and nobody knew why it was done like that, I did not myself although naturally to me it was natural.

After that I did a book called *The Making of Americans* it is a long book about a thousand pages.

.....

Having naturally done this I naturally was a little troubled with it when I read it. I became then like the others who read it....Then I said to myself this time it will be different and I began. I did not begin again I just began.

You will not have to listen very hard to catch, here, the accent of the little girl, telling how she wrote the curious pieces about which grown-ups made such a stir and to-do. 'After that I did a book called *The Making of Americans* it is a long book about a thousand pages.' It is pure *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*; and the more emotional reader would exclaim automatically, 'How sweet!' on reading it, completely bowled over by the punctuation, if nothing else.

There is all the craft of the Charlie Chaplin appeal, all those little dissimulated threads run cunningly to the great big silly heart of the innocent people, in this mannerism of Miss Stein and Miss Loos.

But this is only one aspect of her talent. Miss Stein is a sort of Epstein in words. Her puissant, heavy, churning temperament inspires respect. Or she is a ponderous romantic of the Conrad type; where as Miss Loos is a lightly ballasted best-seller only, working on the same lines. In perspective the latter will appear as a small mercenary practitioner of the school of Stein, just as Arlen and Huxley are baser varieties of Marcel Proust, in the same tradition. It is not at all un instructive to compare, making allowance for their respective scale and pretensions, these artists of varying calibre, but similar impulse and taste (In the above illustration, I am not saying that Miss Stein is equal in importance of Proust; only that she is the limiting member of a certain class.)

So what Miss Loos does is this: she makes fun of the illiteracy, hypocrisy and business instinct of an uneducated american flapper-harlot for the benefit of the middle-class public who can spell, and who say 'intriguing' and 'divine,' and who therefore are able to chuckle over the dish of bad grammar and naughtiness to their hearts' content; and Miss Loos arrives at this by affecting to be her victim ('told from the inside' method) by acting the part in her rôle of author.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE PROSE-SONG OF GERTRUDE STEIN

MISS STEIN has certainly never had any unvirtuous and mercenary intentions of the kind besetting Miss Loos; she has never needed to be a best-seller, luckily for herself—had that been so, she would have opened our eyes, I suspect. But in her earlier books (from one of which I have quote), she, too *became* the people she wrote about, adopting their illiteracies and colloquialisms. The other main factor in her method resulted in her story taking the form of a *prose-song*.

It is in a thick, monotonous prose-song that Miss Stein characteristically expresses her fatigue, her energy, and the bitter fatalism of her nature. Her stories are very often long—all the longer, too, because everything has to be repeated half a dozen times over. In the end the most wearisome dirge it is possible to imagine results, as slab after slab of this heavy, insensitive, common prose-song churns and lumbers by.

To an Antheil tempest of jazz it is the entire body that responds, after all. The executant tires; its duration does not exceed ten minutes or so, consecutively. But it is the tongue—only the poor, worried, hard-worked tongue—inside the reader's head, or his laryngeal apparatus, that responds to the prose-song of Miss Stein.

At present I am referring to what I have read of Miss Stein at the *Three Lives* stage of her technical evolution. What is the matter with it is, probably, that it is so *dead*. We can represent it as a cold suet-roll of fabulously-reptilian length. Cut it at any point, it is the same thing; the same heavy, sticky, opaque mass all through, and all along. It is weighted, projected, with a sibylline urge. It is mournful and monstrous, composed of dead and inanimate material. It is all fat, without nerve. Or the evident vitality that informs it is vegetable rather than animal. Its life is a low-grade, if tenacious, one; of the sausage, by-the-yard variety.

That is one aspect of the question, the technical one. There is another which has a certain reference to the political ideology I have been analysing. In adopting the simplicity, the illiterateness, of the mass-average of the Melancthas and Annas, Miss Stein gives proof of all the false 'revolutionary,' propagandist *plainmanism* of her time. the monstrous, desperate, soggy *lengths* of primitive mass-life, chopped off and presented to us as a never-ending prose-song, is undoubtedly intended as an epic contribution to the present mass-democracy. The texture of the language has to be jumbled, cheap, slangy and thick to suit. It must be written in a slovenly, straight-off fashion, so that it may appear to be more 'real.' Only the metre of an obsessing *time* has to be put into it. It has to be rhythmized; and this proclivity both of Miss Stein, and of all the characteristic fashions of those for whom she writes, destroys the 'reality' at least, giving to the life it patronizes the mechanical bias of its creator.

Next we will take up the fashionable child-factor as it is found in the work of Miss Stein, and in most art to-day, from Sir James Barrie to Charlie Chaplin. Her latest book, a vast one, I hear, I have not read. But many slighter, or at least shorter, more recent pieces, I know. In these, where she is not personifying a negress or some small american bourgeoisie, but playing her own personal literary game (she may be described as the reverse of Patience sitting on a monument—she appears, that is, as a Monument on a monument—she appears, that is, as a Monument sitting upon patience), this capable, colossal authoress relapses into the rôle and mental habits of childhood. Fact is thrown to the winds the irresponsible, light-hearted madness of ignorance is wooed, and the full-fledged *Child* emerges. This child (often an idiot-child as it happens, but none the less sweet to itself for that) throws big, heavy words up and catches them; or letting them slip through its fingers, they break in pieces; and down it squats with a grunt, and begins sticking them together again. Else this far-too-intellectual infant chases the chosen word, like a moth, through many ages, worrying the delicate life out of it. The larynx and tongue of the reader meantime suffers acutely. Every word uttered threatens to obsess and stick to his tongue. Having come, wrongly spelt, wrongly pronounced, or wrongly according to usage, it refuses to move till it has been put right; yet will not come right in Miss Stein's hands.

It is in these occasional pieces that the *child-personality* of Miss Stein is discovered in its acutest form. But the child with her is always overshadowed by the imbecile. That is to say, that very clever, very resourceful Gertrude Stein is heavily indebted to the poor honest lunatic for her mannerisms. All the regions between the dull stupor of complete imbecility—which is splendidly portrayed in Picasso's pneumatic giantesses—and the relatively disciplined, alert, fixed condition, which is humanly regarded as the other pole to imbecility, she has thoroughly explored. The massive silence of the full idiot is, unfortunately, out of her reach, of course. In her capacity of writer, or word-knitter, she has to stop short of that, and leave it to her friend Picasso. For words, idle words, have one terrible limitation—they must represent human speech in some form. The silent canvas is their master there.

That, very briefly, is Miss Stein's rôle in the child-cult, and the kindred one (Freud-inspired or not) of the *demented*. She is herself a robust intelligence, a colossus among the practitioners of infancy; a huge, lowering, dogmatic Child. The point of her writing is best seen, perhaps, in less intelligent imitators or homologues. Even by taking a quite flimsy writer in the same movement (both on account of psychology and technique) like Miss Loos, you will be helped to that essential simplification.

My general objection, then, to the work of Miss Stein is that it is *dead*. My second objection is that it is *romantic*. As to the latter count, for all its force I feel it to be *unreal* in the same way that I feel Conrad or Zola to be, but without the rationale of the fictionist. It is the personal rhythm, the obvious bias, that of a peculiar rather than a universal nature, that produces



this sensation. The dull frantic vitality of Zola is that of an inferior, a brutal, not a highly-organized, nature. The chocolate-cream richness of Conrad, the *romance* laid on with a shovel—best revealed where Mr. Hueffer helped him in the book specifically named *Romance*—all this excess, this tropical unreality, I find (of course, to some extent concealed in an elaborate intellectualist technique) in Miss Stein.

As to the quality of deadness, that can be matched most exactly by comparison with contemporary painting, even the best. In *The Caliph's Design* I have named this the *nature-mortist* school of painting.

In Miss Stein you get a temperament on the grand scale, as you do in Picasso; they both enjoy the colossal. but if you compare one of Picasso's giantesses (the first born about 1920, I believe) with a giant from the Sistine Ceiling, you will at once find that the Picasso figure is a beautifully executed, imposing, human *doll*. Its fixed imbecility of expression, its immense, bloated, euchoid limbs, suggest the mental clinic immediately. They are all opaque fat, without nerve or muscle. The figures of Michelangelo, on the other hand—the most supremely noble and terrible creations of the dramatic genius of the West—are creatures of an infectious life. Between the outstretched forefinger of Adam and the finger of the hurrying Jehovah, there is an electric force in suspense of a magnitude that no vegetative imbecility, however well done or however colossal, on one side and on the other, would be able to convey.

The *weight*, then, that is characteristic of the work of Miss Stein—like the sluggish weight of the figures, or the sultry oppressiveness of the chocolate-cream tropics in which they move, of Conrad; or of the unintelligent, catastrophic *heaviness* of Zola—is, to me, of a dead order of things. But this kind of doll-like deadness, the torpid fatal heaviness, is so prevalent, in one form or another, as to dominate in a peculiar way the productions of the present time. Now that we have enough of it to generalize what was at first a sense only of the assembling of a peculiar consciousness into a formularized mass, we can study it as a very definite, clearly marked thing. It is the hallmark of a great school. Wherever a member of the school grows ambitious—and in consequence colossal—he or she betrays this essential *deadness*. The reasons, of a sociologic order, for this, it is not my business, here, to analyse.

The inner meanings of the child cult, again, as I have said, I am not undertaking to recapitulate in this place. For a certain restricted number of cases there is an explanation which suggests itself, and which I have not so far advanced, but it only applies to a few of the practitioners. Still it may be worth while to offer for what it is worth.

About fifteen years ago there was a fashion for child-art. But it was the painting and writing of authentic children in the class-room that was sought out and popularized. The possible explanation of the child-art of to-day, then, is this. It may be that some of the present work of that description is what has been *left over* from that period. The authentic children of the time—finding, at that impressionable age, their childish ways so unexpectedly appreciated—may have gone on ever since on the same road. The personality of Miss Anita

Loos, for instance, lends colour to this theory. Here is an interview with her, on her arrival 'at London' :—

Anita staggers any one who sees her for the first time after reading her book. She is four-foot-something-high, weighs a mere six stone, and has the fresh face, wide eyes, and unsophisticated voice of a child.

'That gel looks twelve,' said the scene-shifter who saw her directing a rehearsal for the new play. He was right.

'I am really twenty-six now,' she whispered to me, 'but I started writing when I was thirteen, and I don't suppose I have really changed since.'

This certainly seems a clue to the childish technical habits of Miss Loos. The 'four-feet-something' of Miss Loos, again, may remind you of other tiny, but famous, personalities—the greatest of whom is Charlie Chaplin. And with a brief analysis of the causes of the triumphant success of that celebrated film-tramp, I will terminate this part of my scrutiny.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE SECRET OF THE SUCCESS OF CHARLIE CHAPLIN

THE childish, puny stature of Chaplin—enabling him always to be the little David to the Goliath of some man chosen for his statuesque proportions—served him well. He was always the *little-fellow-put-upon*—the naïf, child-like individual, bullied by the massive brutes by whom he was surrounded, yet whom he invariably vanquished. The fact that the giants were always vanquished; that, like the heroes of Ossian, they rode forth to battle (Against the Chaplins of this world), but that, like those distant celtic heroes, *they always fell*, never, of course, struck the Public as pathetic, too. For the pathos of the Public is of a sentimental and also a naïvely selfish order. It is *its own* pathos and triumphs that it wishes to hear about. It seldom rises to an understanding of other forms of pathos than that of the kind represented by Chaplin, and the indirect reference to ‘greatness’ in a more general sense, conveyed by mere physical size, repels it.

In this pathos of *the small*—so magnificently exploited by Charlie Chaplin—the ordinary ‘revolutionary’ motif for crowd-consumption is not far to seek. The Keystone giants by whom, in his early films, he was always confronted, who *oppressed, misunderstood and hunted* him, but whom he invariably overcame, were the symbols of authority and power. Chaplin is a great revolutionary propagandist. On the political side, the pity he awakens, and his peculiar appeal to the public, is that reserved for *the small man*.

But no one can have seen a Chaplin film without being conscious also for something else, quite different from mere smallness. There was something much more positive than scale alone, or absence of scale, being put across, you would feel. First, of course, was the feeling that you were in the presence of an unbounded optimism (for one so small, poor and lonely). The combination of light-heartedness and a sort of scurrilous cunning, that his irresponsible epileptic shuffle gives, is overpowering. It is Pippa that is passing. God is in His Heaven; all’s well with the world (of Chaplins and all events). And, secondly, you would experience the utmost confidence in your little hero’s winning all his battles. The happy-ending (for the militant child-man) was foreshadowed in the awkward and stupid, lurching bulk of the Keystone giants; in the flea-like adroitness of their terrible little antagonist. It was the little skiff of Drake against the Armada over again. In brief, your hero was not only small, but very capable and very confident. Throughout he bore a charmed life.

To the smallness, and to the *charmed life*, you now have to add the child-factor. Chaplin, the greatest screen artist, is a *child-man*, rather than merely a small man. That was his charm and the nature of his aesthetic appeal, as it were. His little doll-like face, his stuck-on toy moustache, his tiny wrists, his small body, are those of a child as much as is the ‘four-foot-something’ body of Miss Loos. And without the public being conscious of it, no doubt, it was as a child that he went to its heart, which, as far as the popular audience is

concerned, is maternal.

As to the sex-side of this psychology, it would be unscientific, if you like, to forget that the feminist revolution has been in progress all around the creative activities of this great clown, throughout his career. In Chaplin the simple woman would see clearly a symbol of her little arrogant Tommy—or little Charlie—giving that great, big, arrogant, troublesome bully, Dad (even if her particular ‘man’ was not a good specimen of the ruling-sex), a wallop. For the head of a crowd is like a pudding *en surprise*. Everything is put into it; it reacts to the spectacles that are presented to it partly under the direction of those spectacles, but mainly according to the directing synthesis of all that has fallen or been stuffed into it, coming from all that is going on around it.

That, I think, is the way in which Chaplin endeared himself to the great public of the mass-democracy. But he is certainly mistaken in supposing that that was also the secret of Napoleon’s success.

Perhaps in the success of Charlie Chaplin we have the heart of the secret of the child-fashion. It is at least strange how many people answer to the Chaplin-Loos (wide-eyed, naïf) standard. Even in physical stature it is strange how many have sprung up—or have *not* sprung up. And very many more lend their best energies to approximating as far as possible to this popular child-type.

I think it is an age to be small in, said an intelligent flea,  
But I shall see!

And on the other hand, the rôle of the giant, or a rôle involving any greatness, is deservedly unpopular. Men fly from suggestions of greatness as though such things were tainted, as indeed they are as proscribed. In their own bosoms they carefully stamp out all tell-tale traces of a suspect ambition.

I do not wish to be personal, but the subject is such a very significant one that that objection must be overridden. Picasso, then, is very small as well; with, however, a slight napoleonic austerity lacking in Chaplin; though he has the same bright, darting, knowing eyes, the same appearance of microscopic competence. He is build on strictly infantile lines. I could name many more less-known people who answer to this description. Nature is certainly busy somewhere, and has been busy for a long time, turning these *eternal sucklings* out in the flesh, and not only in the spirit. What is Nature about? Why is she specializing in this manner? That is a question for the professional physiologist and psychologist. Those are, however, the facts; which an one, with a few hours to spare, can observe for themselves. At that, for the present, I will leave the problem of the infant cult.

## CHAPTER XV

### A MAN IN LOVE WITH THE PAST

**E**ZRA POUND does not share the child-cult at all with the people I have been considering. But this does not mean that he is unorthodox. He is very orthodox. He would be miserable if he thought he was not conforming to anything that claimed the majority of educated people as its adherents, or slaves. The fiat and orders-of-the-day of the latest encyclical of fashion never would find Ezra disrespectful. He has never desired, himself, to interfere in these mysterious dispensations, or to challenge the invariable worthiness of their origin. At the most, as one Sphinx to another, he may have ventured a wink, and a slight cough. Nor would it ever so much as pass through his mind to set the fashion himself. He receives; his is the receptive rôle; he is the *consumer*, as he would say. It is we who produce; we as the creators; Ezra battens upon us. And he is the most gentlemanly, discriminating parasite I have ever had, personally, nor would I desire a cleaner or sweeter (as Wush would say), if he ever wishes for a testimonial.

In the great Past there were creators, too; and there are few of them, from Sophocles to Cavalcanti, that Ezra has not pillaged. But I am sorry to say that I believe Ezra's effective life-work is over, as I have already remarked; for there are not many left, and of late he has steadily weakened.

But if any one supposes from these remarks, or if they think I mean, that Ezra Pound is anobody, he will be mistaken. Yet how he is a 'somebody' is a little difficult to define. Pound is that curious thing, a person without a trace of originality of any sort. It is impossible even to imagine him being any one in particular of all the people he has translated, interpreted, appreciated.

When he writes about living people of his acquaintance as sometimes he has done, he shows himself possessed of a sort of conventional malice, perhaps, that says about them things that other people would say about them; but he never seems to have *seen* the individual at all. He sees people and things as other people would see them; there is no direct contact between Ezra and an individual person or thing. Ezra is a crowd; a little crowd. People are seen by him only as types. There is the 'museum official,' the 'norman cocotte,' and so on. *By himself* he would seem to have neither any convictions nor eyes in his head. There is nothing he intuits well, certainly never originally. Yet when he can get into the skin of somebody else, of power or renown, a Propertius or an Arnaut Daniel, he becomes a lion or a lynx on the spot. This sort of parasitism is with him phenomenal.

Again, when he writes in person, as Pound, his phases are invariably stagey and false, as well as insignificant. There is the strangest air of insincerity about his least purely personal utterance; the ring of the superbest conviction when he is the mouthpiece of a scald or of a jongleur.

The hosts of this great intellectual parasite, then, are legion; but in meeting Ezra you find yourself in the presence of a person who, if evidently

not a source of life himself, has yet none of the unpleasant characteristics we associate with an organism dependent on others for its habitat and soil. He is such a 'big bug' in his class, that he has some of the airs of his masters. If thoroughly conventional, as you would expect of a good servant—his mind moving in grooves that have been made for it by his social milieu—he is not without personality, or a considerable and very charming sort.

My way of accounting for these discrepancies is as follows:

If Ezra Pound as a living individual were less worthy and admirable, I am convinced he would be unable to enter the renowned and noble creature whom he has passed his time in entering, so cleanly as he does—so faultlessly in places that you could not tell which is Pound and which is them. They or their genius or something that is in their work to guard it, would detect the imposture, and would certainly prevent him from working through vulgarity or sham in the essential Ezra.

His dedication to his task has been fanatical. In order to slip in and out, as he does, in order to want to do so, so often as he has, and in such a great variety of cases, it was necessary for him—for his proper dedication to these men-gods—to be a kind of intellectual eunuch. That is my idea.

So I like, respect, and, in a sense, reverence Ezra Pound; I have found him a true, disinterested and unspoilt individual. He has not effected this intimate entrance into everything that is noble and enchanting for nothing. He has really walked with Sophocles beside the Aegean; he has seen the Florence of Cavalcanti; there is almost nowhere in the Past that he has not visited; he has been a great *time-trotter*, as we could describe this new kind of tourist. And he is not unworthy, in himself, of these many privileges.

But where the Present is concerned it is a different matter. He is extremely untrustworthy where that is concerned. That is the penalty of his function, like that of the eunuch instanced above. When he tries to be up-to-date it is a very uncomfortable business. And because his conventional, and so accepts counterfeit readily where no standard has been established, he is a danger as far as he exerts any contemporary influence. He should not be taken seriously as a living being at all. Life is not his true concern, his gifts are all turned in the other direction. 'In his chosen or fated field he bows to no one,' to use his words. But his field is purely that of *the dead*. As the *nature mortist*, or painter essentially of still-life, deals for preference with life-that-is-still, that has not much life, so Ezra for preference consorts with the dead, whose life is preserved for us in books and pictures. He has never loved anything living as he has loved the dead.

If this account of him is true, it is obvious how unfit he is to deal with living material at all. He has so much the habit of unquestioning obedience and self-effacement, that he cannot at all manage the unruly shaping of things that are in-the-making, and which demand of him also some effort of a creative sort—ask him to set them limits, or direct them even. Ezra, in such a situation, is at his wits' end. He squints at them with an affectation of shrewdness, squares his shoulders, shouts something shrill and incoherent, but

contributes nothing to the situation.

Before leaving Pound I feel it would be best to illustrate the foregoing observations a little. His best translations (the *Seafarer*, for instance) are classics. It is to his more mixed work that I will go for my extracts. First I will draw attention to a point in the less disintegrated of that mixed type of work, where the translation element predominates.

The reader is no doubt familiar with the word 'terse' in its canting sense. 'He was rather terse with me,' people say. This can be otherwise expressed, 'He was short with me.' 'Terse' and 'short' are ways of expressing the laconic manner of a person who is annoyed, and in consequence uses few words, perhaps sarcastically. (Brevity or conciseness is the original meaning of terse.)

Here is an example of a man being 'terse' with another. Two doctors, Dr. Mann and Dr. Samuels, had a dispute as to whether a patient had fractured his collar-bone or not. In reporting their telephone conversation to a magistrate, Dr. Samuels said, 'Dr. Mann replied, "Tosh and nonsense."' That was an extreme form of the explosive variety of 'terseness,' of a conventional, professional type.

Now a kind of mock-bitter, sententious *terseness* characterizes most of Pound's semi-original verse, and even mars some of his translations. And then there is the 'terseness' that enlivens his journalism, which must be distinguished from the other more fundamental 'terseness' to which I am now drawing attention. In his journalism his 'terseness' is of much the same order as Dr. Mann's; it is of a breezy and boisterous order. For example, such violent expressions as 'bunk, junk, spoof, mush, slush, tosh, bosh,' are favourites with him; and he remains convinced that such over-specifically manly epithets are universally effective, in spite of all proof to the contrary. But it is not that sort of 'terseness' to which I wished to refer.

The other, more fundamental, 'terseness' of Pound is also of a sententious and, by implication, 'manly' order. It seems to me to make his better personal verse (as distinguished from his translations) very monotonous, and give it all a rather stupid ring. It is not, of course, the nature of meter chosen to which I am referring, but the melodramatic, chopped, 'bitter' tone suggested by the abrupt clipping and stopping to which he is addicted. It is the laconicism of the strong silent man. Were he a novelist, you would undoubtedly find the description 'He broke off' repeatedly used. In his verse he is always 'breaking off.' And he 'breaks off,' indeed, as a rule, twice in every line.

Cave of Nerea  
She like a great shell curved.  
And the boat drawn without a sound  
Without odour of ship-work,  
Nor bird-cry, nor any noise of wave moving,  
Nor splash of porpoise, nor any noise of wave moving,  
Within her cave, Nerea,  
She like a great shell curved.

That actually seems to belong to the repetitive hypnotic method of Miss Stein and Miss Loos. ‘She like a great shell curved,’ and the ‘any noise of wave moving,’ both repeated, are in any case swinburnian stage-properties. The whole passage with its abrupt sententious pauses is unpleasantly reminiscent of the second-rate actor accustomed to take heavy and emotional parts. Perhaps in this next quotation it will be seen better what I mean :—

Now supine in burrow, half over-arched bramble,  
One eye for the sea, through that peek-hole,  
Gray light, with Athene.  
Zothar, and her elephants, the gold loin-cloth,  
The systrum, shaken, shaken,  
                                    the cohort of her dancers.  
And Aletha, by bend of the shore,  
                                    with her eyes seaward,  
                    and in her hands sea-wrack  
Salt-bright.

How you are supposed to read this, of course, is with great stops upon—*burrow, bramble, peek-hole, gray light, Athene, Zothar, elephants, loin-cloth, systrum, shaken, dancers, Aletha, seaward, sea-wrack, salt bright*. The way the personnel of the poem are arranged, sea-wrack in the hand of one, Aletha ‘with her eyes seaward,’ the gold loin-cloth of another, etc., makes it all effectively like a spirited salon-picture, gold framed and romantically ‘classical.’ It is full of ‘sentiment,’ as is the Cave of Nerea; it is all made up of well-worm stage-properties; and it is composed upon a series of histrionic pauses, intended to be thrilling and probably beautiful.

These extracts are from Cantos XVIII.–XIX., and made their appearance in the Q. Review. Here is a specimen of Pound’s more intimate verse (taken from the same place) :—

And the answer to that is: Wa’al he had the ten thousand.  
And old Spinder, that put up the 1870 gothick memorial,  
He tried to pull me on Marx, and he told me  
About the ‘romance of his business’;...So I sez:  
Waal haow is it you’re over here, right off the Champz Elyza?  
And how can yew be here? Why don’t the fellers at home  
Take it all off you?...  
‘Oh’ he sez, ‘I ain’t had to rent any money...  
‘It’s a long time since I ain’t had tew rent any money.’

All Pound’s comic reliefs speak the same tongue; they are all jocose and conduct their heavy german-american horseplay in the same personal argot of Pound. They can never have illumined anything but the most half-hearted smile (however kindly) rather at Pound than at them. Their thick facetiousness is of the rollicking slap-on-the-back order, suggesting another day and another scene to ours. If there were better done and less conventional



in their broad unreality they would be welcome, like belated red-nosed comedians in the midst of a series of turns too strictly designed to meet the ultra-feminine drawing-room-entertainment taste, as a contrast. But they are not spirited enough to serve even that purpose. They are a caricature of Pound attempting to deal with real life—they are Pound at his worst.

If Pound had not a strain of absolutely authentic naïveté in him, had he possessed the sort of minor sociable qualities that make the trivial adjustments of the social world an open book to their possessor, he could not write in this clumsy and stupid way, when attempting to stage scenes from contemporary life. So though they represent Pound the artist at his worst, they show us, I believe, the true Pound, or that part that has not become incorporated in his best highly traditional poetry. And a simpleton is what we are left with. That natural and unvarnished, unassimilable Pound, is the true child, which so many people in vain essay to be. But some inhibition has prevented him from getting that genuine naïf (which would have made him a poet) into his work. There, unfortunately, he always attitudinizes, frowns, struts, looks terribly knowing, 'breaks off,' shows off, pulls himself out, and so obscures that really simple, charming creature that he is.

## CHAPTER XVI

### AN ANALYSIS OF THE MIND OF JAMES JOYCE

THE work of Mr. Joyce enters in various ways as a specimen into the critical scheme I am outlining. What I have to say will not aim at estimating his general contribution to contemporary letters. I prefer his writing to that of Miss Stein, that may as well be set down at once. It does not suffer from the obsessional afflatus that I have noticed in the latter. It has more elasticity and freedom; it is much less psychological, it is more physical. His vices of style, as I understand it, are due rather to his unorganized susceptibility to influences, and especially from the quarter I have been discussing (Miss Stein has influenced him, for instance), than to a native shortcoming.

I cannot see that any work of Joyce—except *Ulysses*—is very significant. It was about six or seven years ago that I first became acquainted with his writing. The *Portrait of the Artist* seemed to me like a rather cold and priggish book. It was well done, like the *Dubliners*, which I have just read; and that was all, that I could discover. *Chamber Music* would certainly not have secured its author a place 'among the english poets,'—it would hardly even have set the Liffey on fire for five minutes. No writing of his before *Ulysses* would have given him anything but an honorable position as the inevitable naturalist-french-influenced member of the romantic Irish Revival—a Maupassant of Dublin, but without the sinister force of Flaubert's disciple.

*Ulysses* was in a sense a different thing altogether. How far that is an effect of a merely technical order, resulting from stylistic complications and intensified display, with a *Dubliners* basis unchanged, or, further, a question of scale, and mechanical heaping up of detail, I should have only partly to decide here. But it places him—on that point every one is in agreement—very high in contemporary letters.

Its evident importance, its success, induced people to go outside the contemporary field for their analogies; and, to start with, it may be as well to remove from our path a few of the unnecessary names at that time, in the first generous flush of praise, injudiciously imported. Ireland, of course, furnished the most obvious comparisons.

So, to start with, Joyce is not a homologue of Swift. That is a strange mistake. There is very little of the specific power of that terrible personage, that *terribilità*, in the amiable authors of *Ulysses*. Another writer with whom he has been compared, and whom he is peculiarly unlike, is Flaubert. But to mention all the authors with whom Joyce has been matched would take an appreciable time. So I will rather attempt to find his true affinities. The choice would lie, to my mind, somewhere between Robert Louis Stevenson and Laurence Sterne, if you imagine those writers transplanted into a heavily-freudianized milieu, and subjected to all the influences resulting in the rich, confused ferment of *Ulysses*.

Contact with any of his writing must, to begin with, show that we are not in the presence of a tragic writer, of the description of Dostoevsky or of Flaubert. He is genial and comic; a humorous writer of the traditional English School—in tempter, at his best, very like Sterne. But he has the technical itch of the ‘sedulous ape’—the figure under which Stevenson (with peculiar modesty, it is true) revealed himself to his readers. The impression produced by his earlier books, merely as writing, is very like that of a page of Stevenson—not of Stevenson ‘apeing,’ but of the finished, a little too finished, article.

*Ulysses*, on the technical side, is an immense exercise in style, an orgy of ‘apeishness,’ decidedly ‘sedulous.’ It is an encyclopaedia of English literary technique, as well as a general-knowledge paper. The schoolmaster in Joyce is in great evidence throughout its pages.

Next, as to his position among the celebrated group of Irishmen contemporary with himself, or his immediate predecessors, that is now fairly well defined. What has distinguished all the famous Irish literary figures of recent years, whether Wilde, Shaw or Yeats, has been the possession of what we call ‘personality.’ This really amounts to a vein of picturesqueness, an instinct for the value of the *person* in the picture, which dominates them, externally at all events. And they have probably always been led into making a freer use of this than would a Frenchman, for instance, of the same calibre, owing to the self-effacing, unassuming, over-plain habits of the English background, against which they have had to perform. Or it may have been that, as isolated adventurers—when they had passed from Ireland and descended into Piccadilly Circus, thenceforth watched by an Empire on which the sun never sets—they were as a matter of course mere *persons*, as contrasted with the new alien *crowds* they were amongst. This florid personal aplomb is, however, now expected of the Irishman by his English audience—although, owing to the political separation of the two countries, probably those times of genial interplay are passed.

Mr. Joyce is by no means without the ‘personal touch.’ But in a sense he is not the ‘personality’ that Shaw or Yeats is, or that Wilde was. But that is in conformity with his rôle, which is a very different one from theirs. Joyce is the poet of the shabby-genteel, impoverished intellectualism of Dublin. His world is the small middle-class one, decorated with a little futile ‘culture,’ of the supper and dance-party in *The Dead*. Wilde, more brilliantly situated, was an extremely metropolitan personage, a man of the great social work, a great lion of the London drawing-room. Joyce is steeped in the sadness and the shabbiness of the pathetic gentility of the upper shopkeeping class, slumbering at the bottom of a neglected province; never far, in its snobbishly circumscribed despair, from the pawn-shop and the ‘pub.’

Shaw, again, escaped early from his provincial surroundings. Joyce resembles him in some striking particulars; but the more recent figure, this quiet, very positive, self-collected Irish schoolmaster, with that well-known air of genteel decorum and *bienséance* of the Irish middle-class, with his ‘if

you pleases' and 'no thank-yous,' his ceremonious Mister-this and Mister-that, is remote from what must have been the strapping, dashing George Bernard Shaw of the shavian heyday. He is also quite unlike the romantic, aristocratical, magic-loving William Butler Yeats.

Shaw is much more a world-figure; but Joyce and Yeats are the prose and poetry respectively of the Ireland that culminated in the Rebellion. Yeats is the chivalrous embodiment of the 'celtic' romance, more of St. Brandon than of Ossian, with all the grand manners of a spiritual Past that cannot be obliterated, though it wears thin, and of a dispossessed and persecuted people. Joyce is the cold and stagnant reality at which that people had at last arrived in its civilized Reservation, with all the snobbish pathos of such a condition, the intense desire to keep-up-appearances at all costs, to be ladylike and gentlemanly, in spite of a beggared position—above which that yeatsian emanation floats.

But on the purely personal side, Joyce possesses a good deal of the intolerant arrogance of the dominie, veiled with an elaborate decency beneath the formal calm of the jesuit, left over as a handy property from his early years of catholic romance—of that irish variety that is so english that it seems stranger to a continental almost than its english protestant counterpart.

The Ireland that culminated in the Rebellion reached that event, however, in a very divided state. There was an artificial, pseudo-historical air about the Rebellion, as there was inevitably about the movement of 'celtic' revival; it seemed to be forced and vamped up long after its poignant occasion had passed. As elsewhere in Europe, the fanatical 'nationalist' consciousness invoked, seemed belated and unreal. Joyce was, I understand, against Sinn Fein. In his autobiographical books you obtain an unambiguous expression of his attitude in the matter. In the *Portrait of the Artist*, where the nationalist, Davin, is talking to him, Stephen (the author of whom that is a self-portrait as a young man) says :—

'My ancestors threw off their language and took another Stephen said. They allowed a handful of foreigners to subject them. Do you fancy I am going to pay in my own life and person debts they made? What for?'

'For our freedom,' said Davin.

'No honourable and sincere man,' said Stephen, 'has given up to you his life and his youth and his affections from the days of Tone to those of Parnell, but you sold him to the enemy or failed him in need or reviled him and left him for another. And you invite me to be one of you. I'd see you damned first.'

A little later Stephen remarks: 'You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets.' So from the start the answer of Joyce to the militant nationalist was plain enough. And he showed himself in that a very shrewd realist indeed, beset as Irishmen have been for so long with every romantic temptation, always being invited by this interested party or that, to jump back into 'history.' So Joyce is neither of the militant 'patriot' type, nor yet a historical romancer. In spite of that he is very 'irish.' He is ready enough,

as a literary artist, to stand for Ireland, and has wrapped himself up in a gigantic cocoon of local colour in *Ulysses*.

It is at this point that we reach one of the fundamental questions of value brought out by his work. Although entertaining the most studied contempt for his compatriots—individually and in the mass—whom he did not regard at all as exceptionally brilliant and sympathetic creatures (in a green historical costume, with a fairy hovering near), but as average human cattle with Irish accent instead of a Scotch or Welsh, it will yet be insisted on that his Irishness is an important feature of his talent; and he certainly also does exploit his Irishness and theirs.

The appreciation of any author is, of course, largely composed of adventitious sentiment. For his vogue to last, or ever to be a serious one, he must have some unusual literary gift. With that he reaches a considerable renown. But then people proceed to admire him for something equally possessed by a quantity of other people, or for reasons that have nothing to do with, or which even contradict, his gifts. So Englishmen or Frenchmen who are inclined to virulent 'nationalism,' and disposed to sentiment where local colour is concerned, will admire Joyce for his alleged identify with what he detached himself from and even repudiated, when it took the militant, Sinn Féin form. And Joyce, like a shrewd sensible man, will no doubt encourage them. That, however, will not at all help us to be clear about this very confused issue. Nor should we be very certain, if we left the matter in that state, in our valuation of Joyce. We should find ourselves substituting orthodox political reactions for the idea of fanatical 'nationalism' (which it is quite evident holds little reality for Joyce) for direct reactions to what is in his work a considerable achievement of art.

2. Here, then, we reach one of the most obvious critical traps, and at the same time one of the main things requiring a decisive reply, in his work. What makes the question of capital importance is the problem set throughout the world to-day by the contradiction involved in (1) a universal promotion of 'nationalism, which seems to take, even in great cosmopolitan states, an ever more intolerant form, and (2) the disappearance of national characteristics altogether as a consequence of technical progress.

Everywhere the peoples become more and more alike. Local colours, which have endured in many places for two thousand years, fade so quickly that already one uniform grey tint has supervened. The astonishing advances in applied science and in industrial technique made this inevitable. Simultaneously, and in frenzied contradiction, is the artificial fostered nationalism rampant throughout the world since the War. So while *in reality* people become increasingly one nation (for the fact that they are fanatically 'nationalist'; does not prevent them from approximating more and more closely to the neighbours against whom, in their abstract rage, they turn) they *ideologically* grow more aggressively separatist, and conscious of 'nationality.'

The same process, of course, may be observed in 'class-war.' A Restoration

courtier was very unlike the Restoration workman, as men go; whereas the contemporary magnate, in appearance, culture, manners and general taste is hardly to be distinguished from the average workman on his estate or in his factory. But the more social distinctions of a real order disappear, the more artificial 'class-consciousness' asserts itself.

That sort of contradiction is paralleled through our life. There is no department that is exempt from the confusions of this strategy—which consists essentially in removing something necessary to life and putting an ideologic simulacrum where it was able to deceive the poor animal, who notices it in its usual place and feels that all is well, but which yet perplexes and does not satisfy him. The 'sex-war' illustrates this as plainly as the 'class-war.' The 'sex-war' illustrates this as plainly as the 'class-war.' For example, the Y.M.C.A. meeting at the Helsingfors (November 1926) starts a discussion on that stock subject with all religious bodies—the naughty thrill of which never diminishes—the 'modern woman.' So 'short hair and short skirts were attacked,' the *New York Herald* reports. But the objectors were overruled, it being decided, in the end, that 'women are asserting their right to develop personality unhampered,' by these means.

Leaving aside the comedy implicit in the mischievous journalese of the statement (namely, the highly-specialized nature of the 'personality' to be 'developed' by those methods), we can state the facts at stake in this way: according to the laws of specialization, the more a woman complicates her attire, the more she 'develops her personality.' The nude is a platonic abstraction. A thousand naked women on a beach, such as Borrow once saw, in Spain, would be a thousand abstractions, or one great palpitating abstraction, compared with the same number dressed in a 'personal' way, and so more and more differentiated from each other. 'Personality,' therefore, is clearly the wrong word. Its sentimental use falsified what is happening.

But it is the *abstraction*, of course, that is required, to-day, of every human being. To 'develop the personality' is an alluring invitation, but it invariably covers some process that is guaranteed to strip a person bare of all 'personality' in a fortnight. This does not seem to me necessarily a bad thing. I am only pointing out that his excellent result is obtained by fraud. So we must not take that fraud too seriously, however much we may applaud its aims.

But in the general arrangements made for our sex-life, there is this little contradiction also to be noted—that the otherwise popular nation of specialization of function (the key to the syndicalist doctrine) is taboo. The rationale of that taboo is that it is desired to turn people's minds away from sex altogether eventually. They are insidiously urged in a neuter direction. William Blake foresaw that development, with his prophet's eye, with a laudable equanimity. The anesthetizing of the cruder desires and ambitions by closer disciplines is, after all, the only alternative to a rationalizing of impulses not excised. However that may be, 'sex' is in the same category as that of the family; it can hardly survive as it is. The family costs too much, and 'sex' is a very costly luxury, too. Its expensive ecstasies and personal adornment must

go in the end. The supposed encouragement of them to-day is illusory.

The savage with only a loin-cloth is notoriously chaste, and even prudish, strange as at first that sounds. From every quarter of the world evidence of this is forthcoming. Havelock Ellis has collected its evidence in a pamphlet, with *Modesty among primitive people*, or some such title. The more clothes people have, and the colder the climate, the more 'immoral' they become; that is now generally established, but not widely enough known to have an enlightening effect where what we are discussing is concerned: so attracted by the lure of the 'immoral,' everybody in the end will be induced to become more moral, simply-clothed, well-behaved and inexpensive.

So you obtain, up to date, in our feminized world, the following result: every woman is conscious of being a very daring and novel being, and 'sex,' and even sexishness, it is universally believed, is more prominent than ever before, because of the 'short skirts,' etc., discussed so acrimoniously at the Y.M.C.A. meeting, and which are thundered at by a thousand idiots to empty pews throughout the puritan world; and even the Pope chases 'short skirts' from St. Peter's. Few people have yet perceived that not only is the present fashion in its effect more chaste (that a 'comrade' or 'chum is hardly as intense a thing on principle as a 'lover,' to arrive at it by way of popular catchwords), but that the intention behind the fiats of fashion, leading to 'short skirts,' etc., is hardly to debauch the world. It is much rather intended to uniform and discipline it, to teach it to be neat and handy, *to induce it to dispense with that costly luxury, 'personality,' instead of to 'develop' it, as it pretends;* to train people to be satisfied to be just like their neighbours, hat for hat, and button for button, and finally to be active, so that they can *work*. Skirts are short for work, not love. That is the principle to grasp beneath all the concentrated flattery directed upon the revolutionary amazon leading her sex to victory in a glorious 'war' or social revolution. So the fashion is much more sensible than it affects to be, but also much less romantic.

This long excursion into the process of of sex-politics has been justified, I think, by the light it throws upon the other questions belonging to the main stream of our present argument. I will now return to the contradiction subsisting between doctrinaire 'nationalism,' and the conditions of international uniformity created by scientific advance.

The adventitious stimulus given to the historic sense, the imposition of this little picturesque flourish or that, a patina like that manufactured for the faking of 'antiques' (a good example is the 'roman' veneer in fascist Italy) goes hand and hand by side with a world-hegemony, externally uniform and producing more every day a common culture.

It is headlong into this sheer delusion, which makes a nonsense of our continued civilized advance (unless you repudiate the idea of *advance*, and substitute that of mere fashionable *change*), that we are running, every time that we essay to found our view of things upon some harmonious and precise picture. We all immediately into that trap of an abstraction coloured to look concrete, and placed where once there was something but where now there is

nothing.

The romantic persons who go picking about in the Arran Islands, Shetlands, the Basque Provinces, or elsewhere, for genuine human 'antiques,' are to-day on a wild-goose chase; because the sphinx of the Past, in the person of some elder dug out of such remote neighbourhoods, will at length, when he has found his tongue, probably commence addressing them in the vernacular of the *Daily Mail*. For better or for worse, local colour is now a thin mixture; it does not inhere in what it embellishes, but is painted on, often with a clumsy insolence. It suits the political intelligence with its immemorial device, *divide et impera*, to encourage it, but its application to the conditions of mind and to the external nature of the machine-age becomes more and more fantastic.

There is nothing for it to-day, if you have an appetite for the beautiful, *but to create new beauty*. You can no longer nourish yourself upon the Past; its stock is exhausted, the Past is nowhere a reality. The only place where it is a reality is in time, not certainly in space. So the mental world of time offers a solution. More and more it is used as a compensating principle.

From this devastating alternative—the creation of new beauty—most people shrink in horror. 'Create!' they exclaim. 'As though it were not already difficult enough to live'!—But it is questionable if even bare life is possible, denuded of all meaning. And the meaning put into it by millennial politics of the current type is as unsubstantial as a mist on a Never-Never landscape.

How these remarks apply to what we are discussing will be obscured for some readers at first by the fact of the challenging novelty of the work in question. But the local colour, or locally-coloured material, that was scraped together into a big variegated heap to make *Ulysses*, is—doctrinally even more than in fact—the material of the Past. It is consciously the decay of a mournful province, with in addition the label of a twenty-year-old vintage, of a 'lost time,' to recommend it. The diffraction of this lump of local colour for the purposes of analysis will in the end isolate the time quality, revealing the main motive of its collection.

3. Before turning to the more personal factors in the composition of *Ulysses*, I will briefly state what I have been approaching in the first phase of my analysis.

I regard *Ulysses* as a *time-book*; and by that I mean that it lays its emphasis upon, for choice manipulates, and in a doctrinaire manner, the self-conscious time-sense, that has now been erected into a universal philosophy. This it does beneath a spell of a similar creative impulse to that by which Proust worked. The classical unities of time and place are buried beneath its scale, however, and in this All-life-in-a-day scheme there is small place for them. Yet at the outset they are solemnly insisted upon as a guiding principle to be fanatically observed. And certainly some barbarous version of the classical formula is at work throughout, like a consorted *daimon* attending the author, to keep him obsessively faithful to the time-place, or space-time, programme.



The genteel-demotic, native subject-matter of Mr. Joyce assists him to a great deal of intense, sad, insipid, local colour. An early life-experience that had removed him from the small middle-class milieu would also have removed him from his local colour, and to a less extent from his time-factor. To this he adds the legendary clatter and bustle of Donnybrook Fair. Beyond that he is not above stealing a few fairies from Mr. Yeats, and then sending them in the company of Dr. Freud to ride a broomstick on the Brocken. Adventures of that order, in the middle of the book, take us still further from the ideal of the Unities, and both Space and Time temporarily evaporate. But on the whole the reader is conscious that he is beneath the intensive dictatorship of Space-time—the god of Professor Alexander and such a great number of people, in fact, that we can almost be said to be treading on holy ground when we compose ourselves to read a work dedicated to that deity, either in philosophy or fiction.

That Joyce and Proust are both dedicated to Time is generally appreciated, of course; Joyce is often compared to Proust on that score. Both Proust and Joyce exhibit, it is said, the exasperated time-sense of the contemporary man of the industrial age; which is undeniable, if the outward form of their respective work is alone considered. The ardent recapitulation of a dead thing—though so recently dead, and not on its own merits a very significant one—and as much the ‘local colour as what may be called the *local time*, ally them. But having got so far, I should put in a qualification which would, I think, unexpectedly discriminate these two methods.

4. I will interject at this point a note on the subject of the temporal equivalent of ‘local colour,’ since I have had occasion to refer to it once or twice. I will not enter into the confusing discussion of which is space and which time in any given complex. I will suppose that there is some partly discreet quality which can come under the separate head of ‘time,’ and so for certain purposes be something else than the ‘local colour.’

The psychological time, or duration, this mood that is as fixed as the matter accompanying it, is as romantic and picturesque as is ‘local colour,’ and usually as shallow a thing as that. Some realization of this essential. *We can posit a time-district, as it were, just as much as we can a place with its individual physical properties.* And neither is the local colour, nor the local time of the time-district, is what is recorded *sub specie aeternitatis*, it is unnecessary to say.

Both may, however, become obsessions, and are so, I believe, to-day. But that is merely—that is my argument—because people are in the process of being locked into both places *and* times. (This can be illustrated, where place is concerned, in the way that Signor Mussolini is locking the Italians into Italy, and refusing them passports for abroad.)

We are now sufficiently prepared and can educe the heart of this obscure organism that so overshadows contemporary thought, by showing its analogies. That the time-fanaticism is in some way connected with the

nationalisms and the regionalisms which are politically so much in evidence, and so intensively cultivated, seems certain—since ‘time’ is also to some extent a region, or it can be regarded in that light. We have spoken of a *time-district*, and that is exact. Professor Whitehead uses the significant phrase ‘mental climate.’ This is by no means a fanciful affiliation; for *time* and *place* are the closest neighbours, and what happens to one is likely to be shared by the other. And if that is so, the *time-mind* would be much the same as the geographic one, fanatically circumscribing this or that territorial unit with a superstitious exclusiveness, an aggressive nationalist romance. Has not time-romance, or a fierce partisanship on behalf of a *time*, a family likeness, at least, with similar partisanship on behalf of a place?

And then, too, the so much mocked and detested non-nationalist, universal mind (Whose politics would be goëthan, we can say, to place them, and whose highest tolerance would approximate to that best seen in the classical chinese intelligence) would have to be reckoned with—once the *time-mind* had been isolated by a thorough analysis, and its essential antagonisms exposed. These two types of mind would be found confronted, eternally hostile to each other, or at least eternally different—for the hostility would be more noticeable on the side of the partisan, the ‘time’ mind, the mind of fashion, than on the side of the other. This is all that I shall say on this very interesting point, for the moment.

The philosophy of the space-timeist is identical with the old, and as many people had hoped, exploded, bergsonian philosophy of *psychological time* (or *durée*, as he called it). It is essential to grasp this continuity between the earlier flux of Bergson, with its Time-god, and the einsteinian flux, with its god, Space-time. Alexander, and his pupil Whitehead, are the best-known exponents, of philosophers writing in English, of these doctrines. It will not require a very close scrutiny of *Space Time and Deity*, for instance, and then of some characteristic book of Bergson’s, to assure that you are dealing with minds of the same stamp.

Temperamentally—emotionally, that is, and emotion is as important in philosophy as in other things—the earlier bergsonian, such as Péguy, for instance, and the relativist or space-timeist, are identical. The best testimony of this is the enthusiastic reception given by Bergson, the old time-philosopher, to Einstein, the later space-timeist. He recognized his god, Duration, cast into the imposing material of a physical theory, improved and amalgamated with Space, in a more insidious unity than he had been able to give to his paramount philosophic principle. Similarly the attitude of Whitehead, Alexander and so forth, where Bergson is concerned, is noticeably one of a considered respect, very different from the atmosphere of disrepute into which Bergson had fallen prior to the triumph of Relativity Theory. The so-called ‘Emergent’ principle of Lloyd Morgan, adopted by Alexander and the rest, is our old friend ‘Creative Evolution.’

So from, say, the birth of Bergson to the present day, one vast orthodoxy has been in process of maturing in the world of science and philosophy. The

material had already collected into a considerably patrimony by the time Bergson was ready to give it a philosophic form. The Darwinian Theory and all the background of nineteenth-century materialistic thought was already behind it. Under the characteristic headings Duration and Relativity the nineteenth century mechanistic belief has now assumed a final form. It is there for any one to study at his leisure, and to take or leave. It will assume, from time to time, many new shapes, but it will certainly not change its essential nature again till its doomsday; for I believe that in it we have reached one of the poles of the human intelligence, the negative, as it were. So it is deeply rooted, very ancient, and quite defined.

In this part of my essay I am not developing my purely philosophic argument more fully than is necessary for the purposes of the literary criticism. I leave my attitude in the 'time' discussion as an announcement of principle, at once to supply the outline of the position such an announcement involves. And the reader who is not conversant with those theories would not be much the wiser at the end of such brief analysis as I should be able to supply in this place. The plan I am following is to help the reader to an inductive understanding of the principle involved, in the course of this analysis of its literary and artistic expression. With Spengler the more technical region is reached. And after that the philosophical analysis is begun. I hope to have interested the reader sufficiently in the questions involved to take him with me into that.

5. The psychological history of the triumph of an idea is interesting to follow; and it is necessary to acquire some knowledge of those processes. To understand how ideas succeed you must first consider what that 'success' implies, especially with reference to this particular age. You would have to ask yourself who those men are who profess them, the manner in which they get advertised, the degree of orthodoxy imposed, and by what means, at the moment. Then, behind that professional and immediate ring of supporters, the mass of people who blindly receive them on faith—as helpless, confronted with the imposing machinery of their popularization, as new-born children—they, too, would have to be studied, and their reactions registered.

Some such analysis of the domination achieved by an idea and how it ceases to be an idea, and becomes an *ideology*, as Napoleon called it, an instrument of popular government, has to be undertaken before you can hope to be in a position to meet on equal terms, without superstition, such prevalent intellectual fashions. If you are that of that great majority who ask nothing better than to have intellectual fashions provided for them—with little handbooks describing which way up the idea (if a 'difficult' one) should be worn, whether it should be worn with a flourish or a languish, with a simper or a pout, with fanatical intensity or an easy catholic grace—then you will have no use, it is needless to say, for such an arduous analytical discipline. It is only if you belong to that minority who care for ideas for their own sake, if you are philosophic in the truest sense, possessing a personal life that tis

not satisfied with the old-clothes shop, or its companion, the vast ready-made emporium, that this procedure will have any meaning for you.

The physical or philosophical theory in the ascendant at any moment is humbly and reverently picked up, in an abridged, and usually meaningless, form, by the majority of people. So it was with Darwin, so it is with Einstein. Apart from questions of expert qualification, few people are able to appreciate all that is involved in such theories. There is certainly never a question in their mind of 'doubting' it. It is not a thing to doubt, but one that is either easy or impossible to understand, as the case may be. To repudiate it would be a still wilder presumption. It has to be 'studied' in the few spare minutes that most people consider may be saved for such things from parties, golf, motoring and bridge, or the Russian Ballet. Then they will say in conversation, 'It appears that there is no such thing as time'; or 'Everything is relative, Einstein says. I always thought it was.' (Relativity seldom involves much more than that to people.) More often than not the professors, who adopt and expound whatever theory has just succeeded, examine it as little. It *amuses* them; professors, like other people, have their amusements—their work is theirs. It is uncomfortable to be unorthodox, life is short, science is long, much longer than art; that is sufficient.

When such a dominant theory is *applied* in literature or in art, then, certainly, even less does any one grasp the steps by which that theory has entered the mind of the author or artist; has either been welcomed at once as a friend and a brother, has taken up its abode there as a conqueror by main force, or else has seduced the sensitive little intelligence from the outside, from beneath the prudent casement from which the peeping-mind inside has watched, fascinated, the big romantic notion swelling invitingly; or has, on the other hand, as a matter of traffic and mutual profit, come to terms with a possible assistant or colleague. In short, any of the hundred ways and degrees in which assent is arrived at, and an intellectual monopoly or hegemony consummated, is even more arcane to the majority than is the theory itself.

Bergson and his time-philosophy exactly corresponds to Proust, the abstract for the other's concrete. There is so far no outstanding exponent in literature or art of einsteinian physics, for necessarily there is a certain interval, as things are, between the idea and the representation. But such a figure will no doubt occur; and further theorists of this great school will be accompanied by yet further artists, applying its philosophy to life. Or perhaps, since now the general outline of the cult is settled, and the changes within it will be incidental, largely, they may crop up simultaneously. Indeed, Proust and Joyce are examples to hand of how already it does not matter very much to what phase of the one great movement the interpreter belongs.

Without all the uniform pervasive growth of the time-philosophy starting from the little seed planted by Bergson, discredited, and now spreading more vigorously than ever, there would be no *Ulysses*, or there would be no *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu*. There would be no 'time-composition' of Miss Stein; no fugues in words. In short, Mr. Joyce is very strictly of the school of

Bergson-Einstein, Stein-Proust. He is of the great time-school they represent. His book is a *time-book*, as I have said, in that sense. He has embraced the time-doctrine very completely. And it is as the critic of that doctrine and of that school that I have approached the analysis of his writings up to date. (I insert this last time-clause because there is no reason at all to suppose that he may not be influenced in turn by my criticism; and indeed, I hope it may be so, for he would be a very valuable adherent.)

Yet that time-sense is really exasperated in Joyce in the fashion that is in Proust, Dada, Pound or Miss Stein, may be doubted. He has a very keen preoccupation with the Past, it is certain; he does lay things down side by side, carefully dated; and added to that, he has some rather loosely and romantically held notion of periodicity. But I believe that all these things amount to with him is this: I believe that as a careful, even meticulous, craftsman, with a long training of doctrinaire naturalism, the detail—the time-detail as much as anything else—assumes an exaggerated importance for him. And I am sure that he would be put to his trumps to say how he came by much of the time-machinery that he possesses. Until he was told, I dare say that he did not know he had it, even; for he is ‘an instinctive,’ like Pound, in that respect; there is not very much reflection going on at any time inside the head of Mr. James Joyce. That is indeed the characteristic condition of the craftsman, pure and simple.

And that is what Joyce is above all things, essentially the craftsman. It is a thing more common, perhaps, in painting or the plastic arts than in literature. I do not mean by this that he works harder or more thoroughly than other people, but that he is not so much an inventive intelligence as an executant. He is certainly very ‘shoppy,’ and professional to a fault, though in the midst of the amateurism of the day it is a fault that can easily be forgiven.

What stimulates him is *ways of doing things*, and technical processes, and not *things to be done*. Between the various things to be done he shows a true craftsman’s impartiality. He is become so much a writing-specialist that it matters very little to him what he writes, or what idea or worldview he expresses, so long as he is trying his hand at this manner and that, and displaying his enjoyable virtuosity. Strictly speaking, he has none at all, no special point of view, or none worth mentioning. It is such people that the creative intelligence fecundates and uses; and at present that intelligence is political, and its stimuli are masked ideologies. He is only a tool, an instrument, in short. That is why such a sensitive medium as Joyce, working in such a period, requires the attention of the independent critic.

So perhaps it is easy to see how, without much realizing what was happening, Joyce arrived where he did. We can regard it as a diathetic phenomenon partly—the craftsman is susceptible and unprotected. There are even slight, though not very grave, symptoms of disorder in his art. The painful preoccupation with the *exact* place of things in a room, for instance, could be mildly matched in his writing. The *things themselves* by which he is surrounded lose, for the hysterical subject, their importance, or

even meaning. Their position absorbs all the attention of his mind. Some such uneasy pedantry, in a mild form, is likely to assail any conscientious craftsman—especially in an intensive ‘space-time’ atmosphere, surrounded by fanatical space-timeists. The poor craftsman has never been in such peril as to-day, for it is a frantic hornpipe indeed that his obedient legs are compelled to execute. But otherwise Joyce, with his highly developed physical basis, is essentially sane.

The method that underlies *Ulysses* is known as the ‘telling from the inside.’ As that description denotes, it is psychological. Carried out in the particular manner used in *Ulysses*, it lands the reader inside an Aladdin’s cave of incredible, bric-à-brac in which a dense mass of dead stuff is collected, from 1901 toothpaste, a bar or two of Sweet Rosie O’Grady, to pre-nordic architecture. An immense *nature-morte is the result*. This ensues from the method of confining the reader in a circumscribed psychological space into which several encyclopaedias have been emptied. It results from the constipation induced in the movement of the narrative.

The amount of *stuff*—unorganized brute material—that the more active principle of drama has to wade through, under the circumstances, slows it down to the pace at which, inevitably, the sluggish tide of the author’s bric-à-brac passes the observer, at the saluting post, or in this case, the reader. It is a suffocating, mœotic expanse of objects, all of them lifeless, the sewage of a Past twenty years old, all neatly arranged in a meticulous sequence. The newspaper in which Mr. Bloom’s bloater is wrapped up, say, must press on to the cold body of the fish, reverse, the account of the bicycle accident that was reported on the fated day chosen for this Odyssey; or at least this is the idea.

At the end of a long reading of *Ulysses* you feel that it is the very nightmare of the naturalistic method that you have been experiencing. Much as you cherish the merely physical enthusiasm that expresses itself in this stupendous outpouring of *matter*, or *stuff*, you wish, on the spot, to be transported to some more abstract region for a time, where the dates of the various toothpastes, the brewery and laundry receipts, the growing pile of punched ‘bus-tickets, the growing holes in the baby’s socks and the darn that repairs them, assume less importance. It is your impulse perhaps quickly to get your mind where there is nothing but air and rock, however inhospitable and featureless, and a little timeless, too. You will have had a glut, for the moment (if you have really persevered), of *matter*, procured you by the turning on of all this river of what now is rubbish, but which was not *then*, by the obsessional application of the naturalistic method associated by the exacerbated time-sense. And the fact that you were not in the open air, but closed up inside somebody else’s head, will not make things any better. It will have been your catharsis of the objective accumulations that obstinately collect in even the most active mind.

Now in the graphic and plastic arts that stage of fanatic naturalism long ago has been passed. All the machinery appropriate to its production has long since been discarded, luckily for the pure creative impulse of the artist. The

nineteenth-century naturalism of that obsessional, fanatical order is what you find on the one hand in *Ulysses*. On the other, you have a great variety of recent influences enabling Mr. Joyce to use it in the way that he did.

The effect of this rather fortunate confusion was highly stimulating to Joyce, who really got the maximum out of it, with an appetite that certainly will never be matched again for the actual *matter* revealed in his composition, or proved to have been lengthily secreted there. It is like a gigantic victorian quilt or antimacassar. Or it is the voluminous curtain that fell, belated (with the alarming momentum of a ton or two of personally organized rubbish), upon the victorian scene. So rich was its delivery, its pet-up outpouring so vehement, that it will remain, eternally cathartic, a monument like a record diarrhoea. No one who looks at it will ever want to look *behind* it. It is the sardonic catafalque of the victorian world.

Two opposite things were required for this result. Mr. Joyce could never have performed this particular feat if he had not been, in his make-up, extremely immobile; and yet, in contradiction to that, very open to new technical influences. It is the craftsman in Joyce that is progressive; but the *man* has not moved since his early days in Dublin. He is on the side a 'young man' in some way embalmed. His technical adventures do not, apparently, stimulate him to think. On the contrary, what he thinks seems to be of a conventional and fixed order, as though perhaps not to embarrass the neighbouring evolution of his highly progressive and eclectic craftsmanship.

So he collected like a cistern in his youth the last stagnant pumpings of victorian anglo-irish life. This he held stead-fastly intact for fifteen years or more—then when he was ripe, as it were, he discharged it, in a dense mass, to his eternal glory. That was *Ulysses*. Had the twenty-year-old Joyce of the *Dubliners* not remained almost miraculously intact, we should never have witnessed this peculiar spectacle.

That is, I believe, the true account of how this creative event occurred with Joyce; and, if that is so, it will be evident that we are in the presence of a very different phenomenon from proust. Proust *returned to the temps perdu*. Joyce never left them. He discharged it as freshly as though the time he wrote about were still present, because it was *his* present. It rolled out with all the aplomb and vivacity of a contemporary experience, assisted in its slick discharge by the latest technical devices.

6. So though Joyce has written a time-book, he has done it, I believe, to some extent, by accident. Proust, on the contrary, was stimulated to all his efforts precisely by the thought of compassing a specifically time-creation—the *Recherche du Temps Perdu*. The unconscious artist has, in this case, the best of it, to my mind. Proust, on the other hand, romanticizes his Past, where Joyce (whose Present it is) does not.

To create new beauty, and to supply a new material, is the obvious affair of art of any kind to-day. But that is a statement that by itself would convey very little. Without stopping to unfold that now, I will summarize what I

understand by its opposite. Its opposite is that that thrives upon the *time-philosophy* that it has invented for itself, or which has been imposed upon it or provided for it.

The inner meaning of *time-philosophy*, from whatever standpoint you approach it, and however much you paste it over with confusing advertisements of 'life,' of 'organism,' is the doctrine of a mechanistic universe; periodic; timeless, or nothing but 'time,' whichever you prefer; and above all, essentially *dead*. A certain *deadness*, a lack of nervous power, an aversion to anything suggesting animal vigour, characterizes all the art, as has already been pointed out, issuing from this philosophy. Or in the exact mixing in the space-timeist scheme of all the 'matter' and all the 'organism' together, you get to a sort of vegetable or vermiform average. It is very mechanical; and according to our human, aristocratic standards of highly-organized life, it is very dead.

The theoretic truth that the time-philosophy affirms is a mechanistic one. It is the conception of an aged intelligence, grown mechanical and living upon routine and memory, essentially; its tendency, in its characteristic working, is infallibly to transform the living into the machine, with a small, unascertained, but uninteresting margin of freedom. It is the fruit, of course, oft the puritan mind, born in the nineteenth century upon the desolate principles promoted by the too-rapidly mechanized life of the European.

I will now turn to the scandalous element in *Ulysses*, its supposed obscenity. Actually it appears to me that the mind of Joyce is more chaste than most. Once you admit the license, at the start, Joyce set out to profit by, it is surprising how very little 'sex' matter there is in his pages. What is there is largely either freudian echoes (they had to enter into it), or else it is horse-play of a schoolboy or public-house order. The motif of the house-drani is once and for all put in its place, and not mentioned again. It is the fault of the reader if that page or two dealing with it assume, in retrospect, proportions it has not, as a fact, in Joyce's pages. That passage can be regarded in the light of the reply of Antigonus to the poet Hermodorus, when the latter had described him as the son of the Sun.

I will next take up in turn a few further items of importance, expiscating them one by one. Joyce is not a moralist, but he has a great relish, on the other hand, for politics. Indeed, Lady Bolingbroke's remark about Pope, that he 'played the politician about cabbages and turnips' (or as somebody else remarked, 'he hardly drank tea without a stratagem'), could be applied to the author of *Ulysses*—the mere name suggests a romantic predilection for guile.

He could claim another affinity with Pope—namely, that although a witty writer, he is, as far as his private and personal legend is concerned, a man of one story. 'One apothegm only stands upon record,' Johnson writes of Pope; it was directed at Patrick. Joyce has one story to his credit, and it is at the expense of Yeats. As it is the general custom, even in the briefest account of Joyce, to tell this story, lest I should be regarded as imperfectly documented, I will give it here. When Joyce was about twenty years old he



was very hard up, we are told, and he decided to go to Yeats and see if that gentleman would do anything to help him. He seems to have foreboded the result, and provided himself with a plan of action in the event of a rebuff.. The appointed time arrived. As he entered the room, sure enough he read on the face of Mr. Yeats the determination *not* to help him. Thereupon he bore down on Yeats, bade him good morning, and immediately inquired how old he was. On learning the extent of Yeats' seniority, with a start of shocked surprise, he mournfully shook his head, exclaimed, ' I fear I have come too late! I can do nothing to help you!' and, turning on his heel, left the apartment, the tables neatly turned.

There is perhaps a sequel to that story, and, if so, it is to be sought, in the fact that Joyce himself has shown recently the baselessness of its major implication. He has whitewashed, I think, in one important respect that 'scoundrel' that Mr. Shaw has affirmed 'every man over forty' to be, by displaying in his own person, to this day, an undiminished ability to be influenced by all sorts of people and things, from the jaunty epistolary style of Ezra Pound to the 'compositional' stammerings of Miss Stein. Actually the further he advances the more susceptible to new influences, of a technical order, he becomes. What gives *Ulysses* the appearance of a merging of analects is a record of this. He was rather unenterprising and stationary in his earlier years. The *Dubliners* is written in one style, *Ulysses* in a hundred or so.

7. There are several other things that have to be noted as characteristic of Joyce for a full understanding of a technique that has grown into a very complex, overcharged façade. The craftsman, pure and simple, is at the bottom of his work. I have already insisted upon that, and in that connection it almost appears, I have said, that he has practised sabotage where his intellect was concerned, in order to leave his craftsman's hand freer for its stylistic exercises. That is a phenomenon very commonly met with in the painter's craft. Daring or unusual speculation, or an unwonted intensity of outlook, is not good for technical display, that is certain, and they are seldom found together. The intellect is in one sense the rival of the hand, and is apt with its showing-off, and affords no encouragement to the hand's 'sedulous apeishness'; or so would say the hand.

The extreme conventionality of Joyce's mind and outlook is perhaps due to this. In *Ulysses*, if you strip away the technical complexities that envelop it, the surprises of style and unconventional attitudes that prevail in it, the figures underneath are of a remarkable simplicity, and of the most orthodoxly comic outline. Indeed, it is not too much to say that they are, most of them, walking clichés. So much is this the case, that your attention is inevitably drawn to the evident paradox that ensues; namely, that of an intelligence so alive to purely verbal clichés that it hunts them like fleas, with remarkable success, and yet that leaves the most gigantic ready-made and well-worm dummies enthroned everywhere, in the form of the actual personnel of the book.

A susceptibility to verbal clichés is, however, not at all the same thing as a susceptibility to such a cliché as is represented by a stage Jew (Bloom), a stage Irishman (Mulligan), or a stage Anglo-Saxon (Haines). Clichés of that description thrive in the soil of *Ulysses*. This paradox is an effect of the craftsman-mind which has been described above; that is my reading of the riddle. You could, if you wanted to, reverse the analytical process. The virtuosity would then be deduced from the fact of the resourceful presence of a highly critical intellect, but without much inventiveness, nor the gift of first-hand observation—thriving vicariously, in its critical exercises, upon the masters of the Past. That would be a description of what, in music, is a common phenomenon, namely, the interpretative artist, the supreme instrumentalist.

If you examine for a moment the figures presented to you in the opening of *Ulysses*, you will at once see what is meant by these remarks. The admirable writing will seduce you, perhaps, from attending too closely, at first, to the characterization. But what in fact you are given there, in the way of character, is the most conventional stuff in the world; and the dramatic situation for which they are provided is not even an original one, for it is the situation of *John Bull's Other Island*, picturesquely staged in a Martello-tower, with the author in the principal role.

Haines, the romantic Englishman, or 'Sassenach,' with the 'pale eyes like the ocean wave that he rules,' his extreme woodenness and deep sentimental, callous imbecility, his amateur-anthropologist note-gathering among the interesting Irish natives; and in lively contrast to this dreary, finished 'Saxon' butt (who always says what is expected of him), the jolly, attractive, Wild Irishman (Mulligan), who sees through, makes rings round, the ideally slow and stupid 'creeping Saxon,' while yet remaining 'the servant' with 'the cracked looking-glass' of Stephan's epigram—that is all pure *John Bull's Other Island*. Haines is a stage-'Saxon,' Mulligan is a stage-Irishman; that on one side and the other of the Irish Channel such figures could be found is certain enough; but they are the material of broad comedy; not that of a subtle or average reality at all. They are the conventional reality of one satisfied with the excessive, unusual and ready-made; and they are juxtaposed here on the time-honoured shavian model.

But if they are clichés, Stephan Dedalus is a worse or a far more glaring one. He is the really wooden figure. He is 'the poet' to an uncomfortable, a dismal, a ridiculous, even a pulverizing degree. His movements in the Martello-tower, his theatrical 'bitterness,' his cheerless, priggish stateliness, his gazings into the blue distance, his Irish Accent, his exquisite sensitive, his 'pride' that is so crude as to be almost indecent, the incredible slowness with which he gets about from place to place, up the stairs, down the stairs, like a funeral stage-king; the time required for him to move his neck, how he raises his hand, passes it over his aching eyes, or his damp brow, even more wearily drops it, closes his dismal little shutters against his rollicking Irish-type of a friend (in his capacity of a type-poet), and remains setentiously secluded,

shut up in his own personal Martello-tower—a Martello-tower within a Martello-tower—until he consents to issue out, tempted by the opportunity of making an ideally idiotic background provided by Haines; all this has to be read to be believed—but read, of course, with a deaf ear to the really charming workmanship with which it is presented. Written on a level with its conception, and it would be as dull stuff as you could easily find.

The stage-directions with which the novelist in general pursues his craft are usually tell-tale, and *Ulysses* is no exception to that rule. The stage-directions for getting Stephan Dedalus, the irritating hero, about, sitting him down, giving accent to his voice, are all painfully enlightening.

This is how the hero of *Ulysses* first appears on page 2 of the book :—

‘Stephan Dedalus stepped up, followed him wearily halfway and sat down....’

He does almost everything ‘wearily.’ He ‘sits down’ always before he has got far. He moves with such dignified and ‘weary’ slowness, that he never gets further than half-way under any circumstances as compared with any other less dignified, less ‘weary,’ figures in the book—that is to say, any of the many figures introduced to show off his dismal supremacy. This is where (page 2) Stephan Dedalus first speaks :—

‘...Tell me, Mulligan,’ Stephan said quietly.

In this *quiet* ‘Tell me Mulligan’—(irish accent, please)—you have the soul of this small, pointless, oppressive character in its entirety. You wonder for some pages what can be the cause of this weighty inanity. There is perhaps some plausible reason for it, which will be revealed in the sequel. That would make things a little better. But nothing happens of that sort. You slowly find out what it is. *The hero is trying to be a gentleman!* That is the secret—nothing less, nothing more. The ‘artist as a young man’ has ‘the real Oxford manner,’ you are informed; and you eventually realize that his oppressive mannerisms have been due to in the first instance to an attempt to produce the impression of ‘an Oxford manner,’ you are informed; and you eventually realize that his oppressive mannerisms have been due in the first instance to an attempt to produce the impression of ‘an Oxford manner.’

Let us, starting from the top of page 3, take a few of the clichés having a bearing on the point under consideration :—

(1) Mulligan asks the hero for his handkerchief. ‘Stephan *suffered* him to pull out’ the handkerchief, etc. The word *suffered* and the bathos of the gesture involved in the offering of the pocket, are characteristic.

(2) Buck Mulligan ‘turned abruptly *his great searching eyes* from the sea,’ etc. Great searching eyes of the author, from whom no verbal cliché may escape, when he wrote that?

(3) Mulligan to Stephan: ‘He (Haines) thinks you’re not a gentleman.’ That is what Stephan Dedalus is pursued and obsessed by, the notion of

'being a gentleman'; that is the secret, as has already been said, of most of the tiresome mannerisms that oppress a reader of *Ulysses* wherever Dedalus appears. (Compare 'the Oxford manner,' etc., above.)

(4) "Then what is it?" Buck Mulligan asked impatiently. "Cough it up." Stephan freed his arm quietly' (page 7). Stephan does everything 'quietly,' whether he 'quietly' touches Mulligan on the arm or 'quietly' frees his own. He is a very quiet man indeed.

(5) On page 19 Mulligan has chanted a popular theological ditty. Haines says to Stephan: 'We oughtn't to laugh, I suppose. He's rather blasphemous. I'm not a believer myself, that is to say. Still his gaiety takes the harm out of it somehow, doesn't it? What did he call it? Joseph the Joiner?'

This is a good example of the Saxon (*John Bull's Other Island* model) talking. Provided with such a foil, Stephan goes on replying 'dryly,' 'quietly,' or with 'pained' superiority, to the end of the chapter. Such is your introduction in *Ulysses* to some of the principal characters.

It is unnecessary to quote any further; the reader by referring to the opening of *Ulysses*, can provide himself with as much more as he requires; these few extracts will enable anybody to get a more concrete idea of what is under discussion. It would be difficult, I think, to find a more lifeless, irritating, principal figure than the deplorable hero of the *Portrait of the Artist* and of *Ulysses*.

The method of the growth for these books may be partly responsible for it, the imperfect assimilation of the matter-of-fact naturalism of the *Dubliners* to the more complex *Ulysses*. But the fact remains that in the centre of the picture, this mean and ridiculous figure remains—attitudinizing, drooping, stalking slowly, 'quietly' and 'bitterly' from spot to spot, mouthing a little Latin, 'bitterly' scoring off a regiment of conventional supers.

All you have got to do is to compare the frigid prig—hoping that his detestable affectations will be mistaken for 'an Oxford manner,' trusting that the 'quiet' distinction of his deportment will reassure strangers on the burning question of whether he is a *gentleman* or not—with one of the principal heroes of the Russian novels, and a spiritual gulf of some sort will become apparent between the ardent, simple and in some cases truly heroic figures on the one side, and the drooping, simpering, leering, 'bitter' and misunderstood, spoilt-child conscious of its meanness and lack of energy, on the other, on that of Joyce.

The Russian scene, which stood as a background for the great group of nineteenth-century Russian writers, was mediaeval, it is true, an east on more elemental lines than anything that has existed in the West since the days of Elizabeth. But the author of the *Dubliners* was alighting himself from the French as much as were the last of the Russians, and Dublin as much as Moscow would be for a French contemporary of Flaubert a savage place. Historically the work of Joyce will probably be classed with books dealing with that last burst of heroic, pre-communist, European life.

What induced Joyce to place in the centre of his very large canvas this

grotesque figure, Stephan Dedalus? Or having done so, to make it worse by contrasting it the whole time (as typifying 'the ideal') with the gross 'materialism' of the Jew, Bloom? Again, the answer to that, I believe, is that things *grew* in that way, quite outside of Joyce's control; and it is an effect, merely, of a confusion of method.

Joyce is fundamentally autobiographical, it must be recalled; not in the way that most writers to some extent are, but scrupulously and naturalistically so. Or at least that is how he started. The *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* was supposed to give you a neat, carefully-drawn picture of Joyce from babyhood upwards, in the result like an enlarged figure from the *Dubliners*. You get an accurate enough account, thereupon, of a physically-feeble, timid, pompous, ill-tempered, very conceited little boy. It is interesting, honest, even sometimes to naïveté—though not often that; but it is not promising material for anything but the small, neat naturalism of *Dubliners* would one day become the author of the big blustering *Ulysses*.

The effort to show Stephen Dedalus in a favourable, heightened light throughout, destroys the naturalism, and at the same time certainly fails to achieve the heroic. Yet the temper of *Ulysses* is to some extent an heroic one. So you are left with a neat little naturalist 'hero,' of the sort that swarms humorously in Chekov, tiptoeing to play his part in the fluid canvas of an ambitious *Ulysses*, unexpectedly expanding beneath his feet; urged by his author to rise to the occasion and live up to the rôle of the incarnation of the immaterial, and so be top-dog to Poldy Bloom. As it is, of course, the author, thinly disguised as a middle-aged Jew tout (Mr. Leopold Bloom), wins the reader's sympathy every time he appears; and he never is confronted with the less and less satisfactory Dedalus (in the beau rôle) without the latter losing trick after trick to his disreputable rival; and so, to the dismay of the conscientious reader, betraying the principles he represents. It is a sad affair, altogether, on that side.

Turning to Mr. Bloom, we find an unsatisfactory figure, too, but of an opposite sort and in a very different degree. He possesses all the recognized theatrical properties of 'the Jew' up-to-date—he is more feminine than *la femme*, shares her couvade, the periodicity of her intimate existence is repeatedly mildly in his own; he counts the beer bottles stacked in a yard he is passing, computing with glee the profit to be extracted from that commerce; but such a Jew as Bloom, taken altogether, has never been seen outside the pages of Mr. Joyce's book. And he is not even a Jew most of the time, but his talented Irish author.

In reality there is no Mr. Bloom at all, of course, except at certain moments. Usually the author, carelessly disguised beneath what other people have observed about Jews, or yet other people have believed that they have seen about Jews, or yet other people have believed that they have seen, is alone performing before us. There is no sign throughout the book that he has ever directly and intelligently observed any *individual* Jew. He has merely out of books and conversations collected facts, witticisms and generalizations

about Jews, and wrapped up his own kindly person with these, till he has bloated himself into a thousand pages of heterogenous, peculiarly unjewish, matter. So he has certainly contributed nothing to the literature of the Jew, for which task he is in any case quite unsuited.

This inability to observe directly, a habit of always looking at people through other people's eyes and not through his own, is deeply rooted within Joyce. Where a multitude of little details or some obvious idiosyncrasy are concerned, he may be said to be observant; but the secret of an *entire* organism escapes him. Not being observant where entire people (That is, people at all) are concerned, he depicts them conventionally always, under some general label. For it is in the fragmentation of a mood, or time-self—that you arrive at the mechanical and abstract, the opposite of the living. This, however, leaves him free to achieve with a mass of detail a superficial appearance of life; and also to exercise his imitative talents without check where the technical problem is concerned.

8. In the above account of the value of the figures to which the opening of *Ulysses* introduces us, I have given the direct impression received upon a fresh reading of it for the purposes of this essay. Had I undertaken to write a general criticism of the work of Joyce I should not have passed on this impression uncensored—in its native sensational strength—but have modified it, by associating it with other impressions more favourable to the author. As it is, however, it is my object to obtain the necessary salience for an aspect of Joyce's mind that is of capital importance to what I have to say on the subject of the time-mind, as I have called it.

The radical conventionality of outlook implied throughout *Ulysses*, and exhibited in the treatment of the characters, isolated from their technical wrapping, has the following bearing upon what I have said elsewhere. This conventionality (which leaves, as it were, lay figures underneath, upon which the technical trappings can be accumulated at leisure with complete disregard for the laws of life) is the sign that we are in the presence of a craftsman rather than a creator. That sort of effect is invariably the sign of the simple craftsman—an absence of meaning, an emptiness of philosophic content, a poverty of new and disturbing observation. The school of *nature-morte* painters in Paris, who made a fetish of Cezanne's apples; and indeed the *deadness* that has crept into all painting (so that whether it is people or things that are depicted, they all equally have the appearance of dead things or of dolls), is the phenomenon to which this other conventional deadness must be assimilated.

In *Ulysses* you have a deliberate display, on the grand scale, of technical virtuosity and literary scholarship. What is underneath this overcharged surface, few people, so far, have seriously inquired. In reality it is rather an apoloquical than a real landscape; and the two main characters, Bloom and Dedalus, are lay-figures (the latter a sadly ill-chosen one) on which such a mass of dead stuff is hung, that if ever they had any organic life of their own,

it would speedily have overwhelmed in this torrent of matter, of *nature-morte*.

This torrent of matter is the einsteinian flux. Or (equally well) it is the duration-flux of Bergson—that is its philosophic character, at all events. (How the specifically ‘organic’ and mental doctrine of the time-philosophy can result in a mechanism that is more mechanical than any other, I shall be considering later.) The method of doctrinaire naturalism, interpreted in that way, results in such a flux as you have in *Ulysses*, fatally. And into that flux it is you, the reader, that are plunged, or magnetically drawn by the attraction of so much matter as is represented by its thousand pages. That is also the strategy implied by its scale.

But the author, of course, plunges with you. He takes you inside his head, or, as it were, into a roomy diving-suit, and, once down in the middle of the stream, you remain the author, naturally, inside whose head you are, though you are sometimes supposed to be aware of one person, sometimes of another. Most of the time you are being Bloom or Dedalus, from the inside, and that is Joyce. Some figures for a moment bump against you, and you certainly perceive them with great distinctness—or rather some fragment of their dress or some mannerism; then they are gone. But, generally speaking, it is *you* who descend into the flux of *Ulysses*, and it is the author who absorbs you momentarily into himself for that experience. That is all that the ‘telling from the inside’ amounts to. All the rest is literature, and dogma; or the dogma of the time-literature.

I say, ‘naturalism interpreted in this way’ has that result, because there are so many varieties of naturalism. Some scientific naturalism does deal with things from the outside, indeed, not of softness. But the method of *Ulysses* imposes a softness, flabbiness and vagueness everywhere in its bergsonian fluidity. It was in the company of that old magician, Sigmund Freud, that Joyce learnt the way into the Aladdin’s cave where he manufactured his *Ulysses*; and the philosophic flux-stream has its source, too, in that magical cavern.

The claim to be employing the ‘impersonal’ method of science in the presentment of the personnel of *Ulysses* can be entirely disregarded. If there were any definite and carefully demarcated personality—except in the case of Dedalus, or here and there we see a casual eprson for a moment—it would be worth while examining that claim. But as there are no persons to speak of for the author to be ‘impersonal’ about, that can at once be dismissed. *Ulysses* is a highly romantic self-portrait of the mature Joyce (disguised as a Jew) and of his adolescent self—of Bloom and Dedalus. Poldy Joyce, luckily for him, is a more genial fellow than Stephan Joyce—else the *Portrait of the Artist* stage would never have been passed by James.

Another thing that can be dismissed even more summarily is the claim that Bloom is a creation, a great *homme moyen sensuel* of fiction. That side of Bloom would never have sexisted had it not been for the Bouvard and Pécuchet of Flaubert, which very intense creation Joyce merely takes over, spins out, and translates into the relaxed medium of anglo-irish humour.

Where Bloom is being Bouvard and Pécuchet, it is a translation, nothing more.

Nor really can the admirable Goya-like fantasia in the middle of the book, in which all the characters enjoy a free metaphysical existence (released from the last remnants of the nineteenth-century restraint of the doctrine of naturalism), be compared for original power of conception with the *Tentation*. As to the homeric framework, that is only an entertaining structural device or conceit.

9. In *The Art of Being Ruled* (chap. vi. part xii.), I have analysed in passing one aspect of 'the telling from the inside' method, where that method is based upon a flaubertian naturalism, and used by an English writer brought up in the Anglo-Saxon humorous tradition. There my remarks were called forth by the nature of the more general analysis I was at the time engaged upon, which included what I described as 'the sort of gargantuan mental stutter' employed by Miss Stein, in the course of her exploitation of the processes of the demented. I shall now quote what is essential to my present purpose from that chapter relative to Mr. Joyce :—

...the repetition (used by Miss Stein) is also in the nature of a photograph of the unorganized word-dreaming of the mind when not concentrated for some logical functional purpose. Mr. Joyce employed this method with success (not so radically and rather differently) in *Ulysses*. The thought-stream or word-stream of his hero's mind was supposed to be photographed. The effect was not unlike the conversation of Mr. Jingle in *Pickwick*.

The reason why you get this Mr. Jingle effect is that, in *Ulysses*, a considerable degree of naturalism being aimed at, Mr. Joyce had not the freedom of movement possessed by the more ostensibly personal, semi-lyrical utterances of Miss Stein. He had to pretend that we were really surprising the private thought of a real and average human creature, Mr. Bloom. But the fact is that Mr. Bloom was abnormally wordy. He thought in words, not images, for our benefit, in a fashion as unreal, from the point of view of the strictest naturalist dogma, as a Hamlet soliloquy. And yet the pretence of naturalism involved Mr. Joyce in something less satisfying than Miss Stein's more direct and arbitrary arrangements.

For Mr. Joyce's use of Miss Stein's genial method the following passage will suffice (it is of the more genial, Mr. Jingle, order):

'Provost's house. The reverend Dr. Salmon: tinned salmon. Well tinned in there. Wouldn't live in it if they paid me. Hope they have liver and bacon today. Nature abhors a vacuum. There he is: the brother. Image of him. Haunting face. Now that's a coincidence. Course hundreds of times you think of a person, etc.

'Feel better. Burgundy. Good pick-me-up. Who distilled first. Some chap in the blues. Dutch courage. That *Kilkenny People* in the national library: now I must.'

Here is Mr. Jingle, from *Pickwick* :—

'Rather short in the waist, ain't it? Like a general postman's coat—queer coats those—made by contract—no measuring—mysterious dispensation of Providence—all the short men get the long coats—all the long men short ones

'Come—stopping at Crown—Crown at Muggleton—met a party—flannel jackets—white trousers—anchovy sandwiches—devil'd kidneys—splendid fellows—



glorious

So by the devious route of a fashionable naturalist device—that usually described as ‘presenting the character from the *inside*’—and the influence exercised on him by Miss Stein’s technique of picturesque dementia—Mr. Joyce reaches the half-demented crack figure of traditional English humour.

The clowning and horseplay of English humour play a very important part in the later work of Joyce. In *Ulysses* Rabelais is also put under contribution to reinforce this vein, though it is the matter of Rabelais that is parodied, and the matter of that unusual profound writer is not very much disturbed. Since *Ulysses* (but still in the manner of that book) Mr. Joyce has written a certain amount—the gathering material of a new book, which, altogether almost, employs the manner of Nash—though again somewhat varied with echoes of Urquhart’s translations. He has fallen almost entirely into a literary horseplay on the one side, and Steinesque child-play on the other.

As to the Nash factor, when read in the original, the brilliant rattle of that Elizabethan’s high-spirited ingenuity can in time grow tiresome, and is of a stupefying monotony. What Nash says, from start to finish, is nothing. The mind demands some special substance from a writer, for words open into the region of ideas; and the requirements of that region, where it is words you are using, must somehow be met. Chapman, Donne or Shakespeare, with as splendid a mastery of language, supply this demand, whereas Nash does not.

But Nash is a great prose-writer, one of the greatest as far as sheer execution is concerned, and in that over-ornate bustling field. Yet his emptiness has resulted in his work falling into neglect, which, if you read much of him, is not difficult to understand. His great appetite for words, their punning potentialities, along with a power of compressing them into pungent arabesques, is admirable enough to have made him more remembered than he is. But certainly some instinct in Posterity turned it away from this *too* physical, too merely high-spirited and muscular, verbal performer. He tired it like a child with his empty energy, I suppose.

Nash appears to be at present the chief source of Joyce’s inspiration—associated with his old friend Rabelais, and some of the mannerisms of Miss Stein, those easiest assimilated without its showing. There is a further source now, it appears; he has evidently concluded that the epistolary style of Ezra Pound should not be born to blush unseen, but should be made a more public use of than Pound has done. So in it has gone with the rest.

I am not able to give parallel examples of Pound’s epistolary style and those parts of Joyce’s recent prose that derive from it; but a passage from Nash and one from a recent piece by Joyce I can. Here is Nash :—

There was a herring, or there was not, for it was but a cropshin, one of the refuse sort of herrings, and this herring, or this cropshin, was sensed and thurified in the smoke, and had got him a suit of durance that would last longer than one of Erra Pater’s almanacs, or a constable’s brown bill: only his head was in his tail, and that made

his breath so strong that no man could abide him. Well, he was a Triton of his time, and a sweet-singing calendar to the state, yet not beloved of the showery Pleiades, or the Colossus of the sun: however he thought himself another *Tumidus Antimachus*, as complete an Adelantado as he that is known by wearing a cloak of tuffed taffety eighteen years...etc.

Here is another piece from Nash where Joyce and Nash meet on the common ground of Rabelais :—

The posterior Italian and German cornugraphers stick not to applaud and canonize unnatural sodomitry, the strumpet errant, the gout, the ague, the dropsy, the sciatica, folly, drunkenness and slovenry. The *galli gallinacei*, or cocking French, swarm every pissing-while in their primer editions, *imprimeda jour duy*, of the unspeakable healthful conducibility of the *gomorrihan* great *poco*, a *poco*, their true countrymen every inch of him, the prescript laws of tennis or balonne...the commodity of hoarseness, blear eyes, scabbed hams, threadbare cloaks, poached eggs, and panados.

Here is the opening of an Extract from Work in Progress by James Joyce :—

Shem is as short for Shemus as Jem is joky for Jacob. A few toughnecks are still getatable who pretend that aboriginally he was of respectable stemming (an inlaw to Capt. the Hon. and Rev. Mr Bbyrdwood de Trop Blogg was among his most distant connections) but every honest to goodness man in the land of the space of today knows that his back life will not stand being written about in black and white.

Again:—

...a ladies tryon hosiery raffle at liberty, a sewerful of guineagold wine with brancomongepadenopie and sickcylinder oysters worth a billion a bite, an entire operahouse of enthusiastic noblewomen flinging every coronetcrimsoned stitch they had off at his probscenum, one after the others, when, egad, sir, he sang the topsquall in Deal Lil Shemlockup Yellin (geewhiz, jew ear thatfar! soap ewer! juice like a boyd!) for fully five minutes infinitely better than Barton Mc. Guckin with a scrumptious cocked hat and three green trinity plumes on his head and a dean's crozier that he won for falling first over the hurdles, madam, in the odder hand, , but what with the murky light, the botchy print, the tattered cover, the jigjagged page, the fumbling fingers, the foxtrotting fleas, the lieabed lice, the scum on his tongue, the drop in his eye, the lump in his throat, the drink in his pottle, the itch in his palm, the wail of his wind, the grief from his breath, the fog of his brainfag, the tic of his conscience, the height of his rage, the gush of his fundament, the fire in his gorge, the tickle of his tail, the rats in his garret, the hullabaloo and the dust in his ears, since it took him a month to steal a march, he was hardset to memorize more than a word a week.

The close similarity in every way of those passages that I have quoted will be evident. In the first of the extracts from Joyce, curiously enough, he reveals one of the main preoccupations of the hero of *Ulysses*, namely, that arising from the ravages of the gentleman-complex—the Is he or isn't he a gentleman?—the phantom index-finger of the old shabby-genteel typical query pursuing the author. In this instance, as he is not writing about himself,

we are given to understand that the figure in question is not. His gargantuan villain-of-the-piece is not even allowed to be very closely connected with the noble *de Trop Bloggs*. But the implicit theme of the entire piece, what moves Joyce to churn up the English tongue in a mock-elizabethan frenzy, is the burning question still of his shabby-genteel boyhood, namely, To be a 'toff,' or not to be a 'toff.'

In the respectable, more secluded corners of the Anglo-Saxon world, every one has at some time met keepers of tiny general-shops in provincial towns, char-ladies, faded old women in lodging-houses and so on, whose main hold upon life appears to be the belief that they have seen better days; and that really, if every one had their due, they, like their distant relatives, the *de Bloggs*, would be rolling in their Royces, and Ritzing it with the best. Because we do not usually associate this strange delusion with eminent authors, that is not a reason why, nevertheless, they should not secretly be haunted by it; especially if, as with Joyce, they issue from a similar shabby-gentility and provincial snobbishness. In spite of this necessary reflection it is always with a fresh astonishment that you come upon this faded, cheerless subject-matter.

But there is one thing that it will be well to note about this type of preoccupation, namely, that it is essentially the Victorian poor or the country people or provincials, still Victorian, who display that obsession, not the metropolitan poor of to-day, certainly. It was Thackeray's world, or the denizens of the books of Dickens, who felt in that manner; and whether for better or worse, no such intense and maundering shabby-genteel snobs are any more manufactured in urban England, and I doubt if they are even in Ireland. So in the emotive psychology of these burlesques, even, Joyce is strangely of another day or, on the principle of the time-philosophy, provincial. To read him where that emotion is in the ascendant is like listening to a contemporary of Meredith or Dickens (capering to the Elizabethan hornpipe of Nash perhaps—as interpreted by Miss Stein).

10. The *Portrait of the Artist* is an extremely carefully written book; but it is not technically swept and tidied to the extent that is *Ulysses*. For instance, this passage from the opening of chapter II, would not have remained in the later book :—

Every morning, therefore, uncle Charles repaired to his outhouse, but not before he had greased and *brushed scrupulously* his back hair, etc.

People *repair* to places in works of fiction of the humblest order or in newspaper articles; and *brushed scrupulously*, though harmless certainly, is a conjunction that the fastidious eye would reject, provided it had time to exercise its function. But elsewhere in the *Portrait of the Artist*, in the scene on the seashore with the bird-girl, for instance, the conventional emotion calls to itself and clothes itself with a conventional expression; which, however merely technically pruned, leaves a taste of well-used sentiment in the mind,

definitely of the cliché order. The more full-blooded humour of *Ulysses* prevents that from happening so often.

It is in tracking this other sort of cliché—the cliché of feeling, of thought, and in a less detailed sense, of expression—that you will find everywhere beneath the surface in Joyce a conventional basis or framework. And until you get down to that framework or bed, you will not understand what is built over it, nor realize why, in a sense, it is so dead.

From this charge Joyce would probably attempt to escape by saying that with Dedalus he was dealing with a sentimental young man. But that unfortunately does not explain his strange fondness for his company, nor his groundless assumption that he will be liked by us. We do not find such a young man in Flaubert's *Education Sentimentale*, nor in any of the other modern masters of fiction. That is probably because they were in the truest sense less personal.

Into *Ulysses* a great many things have been mixed, however. You will find many traces of it in the influence of T.S. Eliot and of Pound's classical, romance and anglo-saxon scholarly enthusiasms, not to be met with in earlier books. *The Enemy of the Stars*, a play written and published by me in 1914, obliterated by the War, turned up, I suspect, in Zurich and was responsible for the manner here and there of Joyce's book. Then the viennese school of psychology made Molly Bloom mutter, 'What are they always rooting about up there for, to see where they come from, I wonder?' or words to that effect. No Irish Molly—however much of an 'eternal feminine' abstraction—would have ever soliloquized in that manner but for Sigmund Freud. Miss Stein can only be used—owing to the restrictions imposed by the naturalist method—when a character is half asleep, day dreaming, its mind wandering, or, in short, in such circumstances as justify, naturalistically, the use of Miss Stein's technique. *Ulysses* is, however, able to come to an end as follows :—

the jessamine and geraniums and cactuses and Gibraltar as a girl where I was a  
Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used  
or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought  
well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then  
he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around  
him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his  
heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.

That is the conclusion of *Ulysses*. This is Miss Stein (from *Saints in Seven*)  
:—

He comes again. Yes he comes again and what does he say he says do you know this  
do you refuse no more than you give. That is the way to spell it do you refuse no more  
than you give.

I have been gathering together all those factors in the mind of Joyce which make it, I am able to show, a good material for a predatory *time-philosophy*, bearing down upon it and claiming his pen as its natural servant.

Social snobbery (for instance) suggests that he will probably be susceptible to merely fashionable hypnotisms; for more than any other thing it is the sign of the herd-mind. What Schopenhauer said of the jingo, that 'if a man is proud of being "a German," "a Frenchman," or "a Jew," he must have very little else to be proud of,' can equally well be applied to class. For one man that is proud of being a person, there are a hundred thousand who are compelled to content themselves with being vain about being somebody else, or a whole dense abstract mass of somebody elses—their nation, their class.

Joyce expresses the same idea as Pound in the quotation I have given (beginning, 'It is dawn at Jerusalem') in the *Portrait of the Artist* :—

Stephanos Dedalos! Bous Stephanoumenos! Bous Stephaneforous!

Their banter was not new to him....Now, as never before, his strange name seemed to him a prophecy. So timeless seemed the grey warm air, so fluid and impersonal his own mood, that all ages were as one to him.

So we arrive at the concrete illustrations of that strange fact already noted—that an intense preoccupation with *time* or 'duration' (the psychological aspect of time that is) is wedded to the theory of 'timelessness.' It is, as it were, in its innate confusion in the heart of the reality, the substance and original of that peculiar paradox—that so long as time is the capital truth of your world it matters very little if you deny time's existence, like the einsteinian, or say there is nothing else at all, like Bergson; or whether space-time (with the accent on the *time*) is your god, like Alexander. For all practical purposes you are committed to the same world-view. *Practically* it will impose on you the same psychology; but further than that, if you wished to pursue it, you would find that the purely physical theory of Einstein is of such an order that, though it sets out to banish the mental factor altogether and to arrive at a purely physical truth, it nevertheless cannot prevent itself turning into a psychological or spiritual account of things, like Bergson's. For the mind of Einstein, like that of Bergson, or like that of Proust, is not a *physical* mind, as it could be called. It is psychologic; it is mental.

Beyond this rough preliminary statement it is not possible to go without much more elaboration, which I wish to avoid in this part of my essay. But a few further observations may be added to the foregoing, further to elucidate, upon this plane of discussion, the direction of my analysis, and its object as applied to the art-forms I have chosen to consider.

Most people have seen spirit-drawings—or drawings done, says the subject, under the influence of supernatural agencies. Whatever they may be like otherwise, they are generally characterized by a certain cloudiness, a misty uncertainty.

The processes of creative genius, however, are not so dissimilar to those of the spirit-draughtsman. A great artist falls into a trance of sorts when he creates, about that there is little doubt. The act of artistic creation is a trance or dream-state-, but very different from that experienced by the entranced medium. A world of the most extreme and logically exacting physical

definition is built up out of this susceptible condition in the case of the greatest art, in contrast to the cloudy phantasies of the spiritist.

It is a good deal as a pictorial and graphic artist that I approach these problems; and a method that does not secure that definition and logical integrity that, as a graphic artist, I require, I am, I admit, hostile to from the start. But no doubt what made me, to begin with, a painter, was some propensity for the exactly-defined and also fanatically it may be, the physical or the concrete. And I do not think that you have to be a painter to possess such inclinations. Many painters, indeed, have no repugnance, it would appear, for the surging ecstatic featureless chaos which is being set up as an ideal, in place of the noble exactitude and harmonious proposition of the European, scientific, ideal—the specifically Western heaven.

What I am concerned with here, first of all, is not whether the great *time-philosophy* that overshadows all contemporary thought is viable as a system of abstract truth, but if in its application it helps or destroys our human arts. With that is involved, of course, the very fundamental question of whether we should set out to transcend our human condition (As formerly Nietzsche and then Bergson claimed that we should); or whether we should translate into human terms the whole of our datum. My standpoint is that we are creatures of a certain kind, with no indication that a radical change is imminent; and that the most pretentious of our present prophets is unable to do more than promise 'an eternity of intoxication' to those who follow him into less physical, more 'cosmic,' regions; proposals made with at least equal eloquence by the contemporaries of Plato. On the other hand, politically it is urged that a-thousand-men is a better man than one, because he is less 'conscious' and is bigger. It seems to me, on the contrary, that the smaller you are, the more remarkable. So as far as all that side for the argument is concerned—of ecstatic propaganda, of plunges into cosmic streams of flux or time, of miraculous baptisms, of the ritual of time-gods, and of breathless transformations—I have other views on the subject of attaining perfection. I prefer the chaste wisdom of the Chinese or the Greek, to that hot, tawny brand of superlative fanaticism coming from the parched deserts of the Ancient East, with its ineradicable abstractness. I am for the physical world.

## CONCLUSION TO BOOK I

I HAVE advanced throughout this essay a carefully constructed body of criticism against various contemporary literary and other modes of thought and methods of expression. I have chosen for discussion for the most part strongly established leaders, of mature talent; and have examined individual work in some detail. This hostile analysis in its entirety has been founded upon those wider considerations that I shall now at least adumbrate.

I will revert to a few of the instances chosen and once more pass them rapidly in review, in the light of this last and more general phase of my argument. Miss Stein I have dealt with at some length, but not because she seems to me a writer of any great importance; rather, living comfortably at the heart of things, and associated with all the main activities of the time, she is a rallying point that it was convenient to take. In her recent pieces her attack upon the logical architecture of words is in its result flat and literally meaningless, I think. Her attempt to use words as though they were sounds purely or 'sound-symbols,' or as though their symbolism could be distorted or suppressed sufficiently to allow a 'fugue' being made out of a few thousand of them, is a technical mistake, I believe. It is only doing what the musician has been doing for three centuries, but doing it poorly, because the instrument of speech on the one hand, and the verbal symbolism on the other, will not, in the case of words, yield such a purity of effect.

Again, Pound seems in somewhat the same difficulty as Miss Stein—lost half-way between one art and another. Pound's desertion of poetry for music may mean that music is really his native art; and having been misled early in life into the practice of an art in which he had nothing whatever to say, he is now painfully attempting to return to the more fluid abstract medium of musical composition. To put it another way, the form of life, the norm, which he represents, 'has nothing to say'—reason is not its way of reaching its goal, but always sensation. A pure sensational expression is what it naturally clothes itself in; it is essentially hostile to the arts of the intellect. It can sue them to admiration; but it is usually only in order to betray them to sensation. And Miss Stein, like Pound, seems to have a hankering for an art which technically she does not possess.

The psychology of the different arts—of the visual, static arts, of the art of pure sound, of literature with its apparatus of intellectual symbolism, and so on—has been attended to very little. It may be that as a painter I find it easier to be logical and, at least in writing, to remain technically intact, and do not make allowance enough for the itch, so often found in the writer, to do a little painting in words, or to play the musician. I do not propose to go into that question here. But for our present purposes let us imagine a person so complexly talented that he could with equal effect express himself in musical composition, painting, sculpture or writing—Samuel Butler's ideal person. I think, then, that we should find that the person's writing would show little tendency to divest words of their symbolism, or to distort them, nor to do

imitational or 'literary' music, nor to tell stories in paint. The rather shallow 'revolutionism' that consists in a partial merging of two or more arts would be spared him. He would achieve such a complete revolution every time he dropped from one of his accomplishments into the other, that he would have no incentive to hybrid experiment. He would be the purest possible artist in each of his arts. It is even quite possible to affirm that no artist with only one art in which to express himself, can keep that one art entirely intact and pure.

The powerful impressionism of *Ulysses*, constructed on the most approved 'time'-basis—that is, a basis of the fluid material gushing of undisciplined life—I have chosen as in some ways the most important creation so far issued from the 'time' mint. The approved 'mental' method—dating from the publication of *Matière et Mémoire* or of the earliest psycho-analytic tracts—leads, as it is intended to lead, to a physical disintegration and a formal confusion. A highly personal day-dream, culminating in a phantasmagoria of the purest dream-order, is the result in *Ulysses*. It is a masterpiece of romantic art: and its romance is of the sort imposed by the 'time' philosophy. Whimsically, but like much romantic art, it is founded on a framework of classical antiquity—about which its author is very romantic indeed.

But if I had to choose a book that would entirely fill all the requirements, as a literary paradigm, for my criticism of the 'time'-motion school, it would not be to *Ulysses* that I should go. I should go to another literary form altogether, namely, history; and I should find in Spengler's *Decline of the West* my perfect model of what a time-book should be. Of that in the second part of this essay I provide an analysis.

Before closing this part of my essay I will examine for a moment one aspect of the literary problem that I have neglected; namely, the politics of style, as it might be called.

In literature it should always be recalled that what we read is the speech of some person or other, explicit or otherwise. There is a style and tone in any statement, in any collection of sentences. We can formulate this in the following way: *There is an organic norm to which every form of speech is related. A human individual, living a certain kind of life, to whom the words and style would be appropriate, is implied in all its utterance.*

A great many writers to-day are affecting, by their style, to be children. What is implicit in much of the writing of Miss Stein, and, of course, of Miss Loos, is the proposition: 'I am a child.' Another thing that is also very prevalent is a choice of idiom, and of delivery, that is intended to reassure the reader of the mass-democracy that all is well, and that the writer is of the crowd; a Plain-Man, just another humble cell in the vast democratic body like anybody else; not a detested 'highbrow.' This is so much the case that occasionally you meet in american papers the remark, in the review of a book, that so and so is 'a gentleman writer.' This evidently means that a certain absence of slavishness, of gleeful and propitiatory handrubbing, of slang, of a hundred tricks to put the Democracy at its ease, is absent from the work in question. This absence of what is expected of a writer has caused a shock of



astonishment in the reviewer. He registers his surprise.

There are as many ways of expressing yourself as there are days in the year; there are all the varieties of stammer and maunder of the idiot, there is all the range of the 'quaint' naïveté of childhood; all the crabbed dialects of toil, the slang of a hundred different 'sets' and occupations, the solecisms and parodies of the untaught; there is the pomp of the law and the polish of the aristocratic heyday of European letters. There is the style of the *code Napoléon*, which was Stendhal's model. And in any language is that most lucid, most logical rendering of the symbols of speech which people employ when they wish to communicate anything as clearly as possible, and are very anxious to be understood. The latter is, after all, the best guarantee you can have that affectation and self-consciousness will be absent from the style in which you are to be addressed. There you get the minimum of fuss or of mannerism. When the mind is most active it is least personal, least mannered.

The psychology at the back of the various styles or modes we have been considering is to that extent political, therefore, in that sense that the *child-cult* is a political phenomenon, and without the child-cult men and women of letters would not be expressing themselves in the language and with the peculiarities of infancy; and certainly 'journalese' is as much as the subject-matter of a newspaper report, contingent upon the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number.' It is a perfidious flattery of the multitude, though whether it is really appreciated or indeed necessary at all, is open to question.

A seventeenth-century writer would express himself as a matter of course as grandly as he could. He was not afraid of the 'grand style,' and more than a painter was; he was only concerned perhaps as not being grand enough. No figure was too high or too magnificent to accommodate his language. The Roman Senate was the sort of assembly he had in his mind's eye. A Cicero, an Aristides, an orator of the aristocratic Roman or Athenian caste, was the organ implicitly for which the words were destined. How does Milton write his *Areopagitica*? This is the way he addresses you—or the 'civil and gentle greatness' of the Lords and Commons of England:

I might defend myself with ease, if any should accuse me of being new or insolent, did they but know how much better I find ye esteem it to imitate the old and elegant humanity of Greece, than the barbaric pride of a Hunnish and Norwegian stateliness.

That is certainly 'stately' enough, we should say; and we should acquit him of being 'new and insolent'; and any Parliament to-day would be very surprised to be addressed in such 'parliamentary' language. But it is a very curious question indeed to what extent the political atmosphere of the day must modify written speech, or even break it up altogether.

Can language hold out in any degree against politics, when politics are so extremely fluid, and, inevitably, so indifferent to the arts engendered in words? It would be a pity if we were prevented from communicating lucidly and grammatically with each other. There I must leave that question, its

applications to the work I have been discussing will be immediately apparent.

For any intelligent European or American the point has certainly been reached where he has to summon whatever resolution he may possess and make a fundamental decision. He has to acquaint himself first of all with the theory of, and then decide what is to be his attitude towards, the time-cult, which is the master-concept of our day. This essay may, I hope, provide him with an adequate conspectus of the positions and source of the issues involved; and it has the initial advantage of not being an arbitrary or frivolous statement, nor one that can be represented as put forward just in order to be 'contrary,' since it embodies the practical reactions of a worker in one of the great intellectual fields, threatened by the ascendancy of such a cult.

## APPENDIX TO BOOK I

**T**O build up a critical organism, composed of the most living material of observed fact, which could serve as an ally of the new creative effort—something like an immense watch-dog trained to secure by its presence the fastness of the generally ill-protected theoretic man, guaranteed suitably to protect such minds, as cared to avail themselves of it—that was the kind of thing I had in mind in starting to write my recent book, *The Art of Being Ruled*. The present volume will show more clearly, I think, at what ultimately I was aiming. Critical estimates in the field in which I am mainly interested, namely, art, literature and philosophy, it was with them that I was concerned.

In a period of such obsessing political controversy as the present, I believe that I am that strange animal, the individual without any 'politics' at all. You will find neither the politics of Communism nor those of the militant Right here. How, then, can I include politics at all in my debate? you may ask. I can discuss them only on the ideal plane evidently. In a platonic commonwealth I should be a politician, for then politics would be identical with my deepest interests. Here they are not. Here I could not be a politician without ceasing to be other things which their profession would contradict.

So any one reading my recent book as a politician would necessarily find it 'inconclusive,' as he would probably term it. It has been described as 'a hostile analysis of contemporary society,' which no doubt it is; but its 'hostility had no party label. If had, if anything, the badge of an art, but not of any political party. But the obligation that obtains for everybody to contribute to the general intolerance, and to exercise his right to the most violent partisanship possible, is never foregone. Many opposite forms of militancy were scornful and offended by my unexpected unpartisan analysis of society.

Whether politicians or not, the affairs of art, literature or science cannot be treated by us as though hung somewhere in a state of enchantment, in the air. But there is more than that. If you want to know what is actually occurring inside, underneath, at the centre, at any given moment, art is a truer guide than 'politics,' more often than not. Its movements represent, in an acuter form, a deeper emotional truth, though not discursively. *The Brothers Karamazov*, for example, is a more cogent document for the history of its period than any record of actual events. The parallel political displays, too, are only intended for the very simple as things are to-day; whereas the art-displays do often provide a little intelligent amusement.

So if art has a directer access to reality, is truer and less artificial and more like what it naturally grows out of, than are politics, it seems a pity that it should take its cure from them. The artist is relieved of that obligation of the practical man to lie. Why not retain this privilege to be one of the 'truthful ones' of nietzschean myth?

Some of the adversaries of my recent book affected to think that I was

aiming a blow at human freedom in its pages. On the contrary, I was setting in a clear light a group of trivial and meaningless liberties, which, in the pursuit of their small claims, obstructed freedom—in any sense in which that word is worth using. My criticism of ‘democracy,’ again, was of ‘democracy’ as that is understood to-day; and it was based on the conviction that democracy is neither free, nor permits of freedom. If you must have it, however, it is better to organize unfreedom; so you get communism, another very elastic term, it appears.

About a year ago an essay by Mr. Haldane appeared on Gas-Warfare. It was an apology for the men of science engaged in the manufacture of poison-gas: the idea was that by their efforts they would make ‘the next war’ of such a terrible nature that it would ‘end war.’ In *The Art of Being Ruled* one of my objects was to provide a substitute for Mr. Haldane’s method. I had been triumphantly demonstrated, I showed, that these democratic masses could be governed without a hitch by suggestion and hypnotism—Press, Wireless, Cinema. So what need is there, that was my humane contention, to slaughter them? To that argument no answer was given, for there is no answer. The chemists and their employers are engaged in a quite gratuitous activity; that I consider I have shown.

In the endeavour to prove my humane thesis I was led to what appeared, it seems, a cynical acceptance of the processes I advocated—in preference, it was to be understood, to wholesale destruction of our kind. My book was described in one quarter as a ‘Bill of Hate’ directed against mankind. What a strange misunderstanding! For Mr. Haldane’s essay was everywhere received with gratitude, and I have seen no accusation brought against it of the sort with which mine was impugned.

I have somewhat modified my views since I wrote that book as to the best procedure for ensuring the true freedom of which I have just spoken. I now believe, for instance, that people should be compelled to be freer and more ‘individualistic’ than they naturally desire to be, rather than that their native unfreedom and instinct towards slavery should be encouraged and organized. I believe they could with advantage be compelled to remain absolutely alone for several hours every day; and a week’s solitary confinement, under pleasant conditions (say in mountain scenery), every two months, would be an excellent provision. That and other coercive measures of a similar kind, I think, would make them much better people. Perhaps this slight change of approach will be apparent in the present volume.

2. To-day everybody without any exception is revolutionary. Some know they are, and some do not; that is the only difference. Some, indeed very many people, actually believe that they are Tories, for instance. They really imagine that. As it is in nobody’s interest, of consequence, to unseal their eyes, and let them know themselves for the humdrum conservative little revolutionaries they are, they remain undisturbed in that belief. So they stay locked in a close embrace with the dullest form of Revolution, convinced all

the time that they are defending the great and hoary traditions of their race.

But again, many people who are aware that they are revolutionaries, yet have an imperfect notion as to what exactly they are engaged. The following summary account may be of assistance to them.

Revolution is first a technical process; only after that is it a political creed or a series of creeds, and of adjunct heresies. The technical aspect of Revolution is of capital importance for a thorough understanding of it. The obsession of a mechanical betterment, proceeding without ceasing, is natural to industrial man; the 'progress' of the engineer, the rapid changes and improvements of the technique of industry, make it natural for him to regard everything in terms of change and improvement, and to think that he can apply to himself or to other men the methods proper to machinery. I will quote at this point from my elaborate account of this phenomenon in my recent book: these words are Marx's :—

Modern industry never looks upon and treats the existing form of a process as final. The technical basis of that industry is therefore revolutionary, while all earlier modes of production were essentially conservative. By means of machinery, chemical process, and other methods, it is continually causing changes, not only in the technical basis of production, but also in the functions of the labourer, and in the social combinations of the labour process...it...also revolutionizes the division of labour within the society and incessantly launches masses of capital and of workpeople from one branch of production to another.

The technical basis of production, the technique of industry, then, the engineer and his machine, is the true source of the inevitably 'revolutionary' conditions subsisting to-day, apart from any political creed. It is the opportunist political mind that has seized on these highly favourable conditions, merely, to launch and to sustain a creed of political change, backfiring in a series of passionate revolts. So it is that every one to-day, in everything, is committed to Revolution; all serious politics to-day are revolutionary, as all science is revolutionary.

But, to continue to quote, rather than rewrite these formulae :—

There are two kinds of revolution—there is permanent revolution, and there is an impermanent, spurious, utilitarian variety....A sorting out or analysis is necessary to protect as many people as have the sense to heed these nuances. A great deal of the experimental material of art and science, for instance, is independent of any destructive function. Reactionary malice or stupidity generally confuses it with the useful but not very savoury chemistry of the Apocalypse.

Will-to-change, induced by rapid evolution of technique, is then what we call Revolution, and accept as a political dogma. Nature we attempt to control; but regarding ourselves as an impulsive, non-automatic, rational being, a nature that issues from us, in the form machinery, is of course above criticism or control. So it is that we get the good and the bad in natural science, our new 'nature,' merged in one confusing mass. But what we are attempting here is not a definition of Revolution that would be acceptable to a hard-worked, hard-headed, fanatical class-warrior, for whom is Marx is Mahomet. This is a philosophic statement, not a specialist or technical one. What

we have to bring out clearly is this: Revolution, to-day, in its most general definition, is modern positive science, and the incessant and radical changes involved by that. Without science there would be no Revolution, but only revolutions. Another thing to which it is necessary to draw attention is this: namely, the very small number of men responsible for this immense ferment. A distinguished contemporary man of science has just underlined this aspect of the matter as follows :—

Everywhere the idea that the few thousand, at most, active creative workers in science can really be exercising an important influence on the destinies of great nations, and that, without these, and the ferment they have introduced, present civilization would probably not be different from that of previous epochs, has yet to receive due political recognition.

It will have to wait a long time for that, but the facts are demonstrably thus. Poincaré, in his *Science et Méthodé*, says :—

It is only necessary to open your eyes in order to see that the achievements of industry which have enriched so many practical persons would never have come to pass if those practical persons had been the only kind of men in the world; if they had not, that is, been preceded by disinterested madmen (*des fous désintéressés*) who died poor; who never gave a thought to what was useful; and who, all the same, had a different guide than mere caprice.

What I am trying to show by these remarks is that what we call Revolution, whose form is spectacular change of the technique of life, of ideas, is not the work of the majority of people, indeed is nothing at all to do with them; and further, is even alien to their instincts, which are entirely conservative. From one century to the next they would remain stationary if left to themselves. And, again, all the up-to-date, 'modernist' afflatus consists of catchwords, and is a system of parrot-cries, in the case of the crowd. Even so they are vulgarizations, of the coarsest description, of notions inaccessible to the majority in their original force and significance. The cheap, socially available simulacrum bears little resemblance to the original. And all the great inventions reach the crowd in the form of toys (crystal-sets, motor-cars) and it is as helpless children that, for the most part, it participates in these stirring events. (That it is as children, as resolute and doctrinaire Peter Pans indeed, that most people wish to live, is equally true; but that is not here the issue.)

That a very small number of inventive, creative men are responsible for the entire spectacular ferment of the modern world is then the fact. In the course of democratic vulgarization, the energy of these discoveries is watered-down and adapted to herd-consumption. As fashion—and politically or socially 'revolution' is itself a fashion—we get the reflections of energies in their scope and ultimate implications unguessed at by the majority.

In an essay entitled *Creatures of Habit and Creatures of Change*, I have elaborated this aspect of matter sufficiently, and will now quote this résumé :—

In an attempt to get our minds clearer on this matter (namely, that of the reality of

progress; and how the idea of progress is the rival and opposite of standardless change) it will be best to fix our attention on a spectacle with which we are all quite familiar. Let us take the spectacle of the alleged progress in social life from day to day, and decade to decade. And let us take sex as the most central and characteristic expression of it, the life-expression at its plainest. (This Belphégor could at least be the rebus of the Demolisher's and Excavator's trade.)

...The woman to-day says to herself, 'My mother was not so free as I should like to be. I shall be more free than my mother.' The daughter will be more 'free' than she is, and so forth.

A constant source of simple-hearted amusement on the English Stage or in the newspapers—a theme that is of the nature of an institution—is the bewilderment of the petrified parent at the dashing slang of the child; her hands in her pockets, for instance, the Eton-cropped actress taking the juvenile lead will address her father as a Top or a Bean, and the suffocating laughter of the house from roof to pit will ensue. The very orchestra will smile. For this theater is full of children, young and old, involved in the *vas Panchesque* joke of the 'young idea.' The rougher life reflected don the music-hall stage has for generations existed on the latchkey of the young lady of eighteen. Her utterances of certain bloodcurdling up-to-date tags (suggesting horrors of premature intimacy) are the stock-in-trade of those who cater for the widest English middle-class audience.

Here the 'progress' implied is always a progress towards the shaking-off of a parental control or inherited religious compulsion; and in a tremendously wise, cool, insouciant, slangy and rather wicked state of 'modern' up-to-dateness, unashamed nakedness, sweet 'scientific' reasonableness, removing all veils, fig-leaves and fusty obstructions, a weakest-go-to-the-wall, healthy middle-class, animal Utopia is predicted. The modernist mother, with a perhaps ungraceful shoppiness, introduces her child of eight or ten to the chamber of horrors of sex with both pride and delight. The fact that she herself is the chamber of horrors out of which they have popped adds a picquancy to the demonstration.

So the only true 'revolutionary' is in the melodramatic or political sense not a revolutionary at all. He is to be sought in those quarters where the shocks originate, with those who make Revolution, in all its phases, possible; stimulating with subversive discoveries the rest of the world, and persuading it to move a little.. The man-of-science could certainly exclaim, I am Revolution! If when it moves, it moves violently and clumsily and destroys itself, that is certainly its own doing and not his. But the change effected upon the social plane, with a wealth of cackling and portentous self-congratulation, is neither what interests the mind of Revolution, nor yet the political directorate, naturally. Neither it, nor yet the current doctrines of social reform or economic class-war, bear much relation, either in the magnitude or intensity, to the forces released at the fountainhead.

The legislation, again, that is stimulated by scientific advance is, like the surface-movements of the social life, by no means always the true reflection of the thing from which it derives. Sir Henry Maine defined this very well, and I cannot do better than quote him :—

It is quite true that, if Progress be understood with its only intelligible meaning, that is, as the continued production of new ideas, scientific invention and scientific discovery are the great and perennial sources of these ideas. Every fresh conquest of

Nature by man...generates a number of new ideas... (But) experience shows that innovating legislation is connected not so much with Science as with the scientific air which certain subjects, not capable of exact scientific treatment, from time to time assume.

Sir Henry Maine noticed, in short, at the time he wrote his *Popular Government*, that revolutionary legislation usually arose on the plane of vulgarization, where common things are coloured with Science; and not where Science is made, that is where the impulse originates.

If we turn to art, we find that experiment in the arts, or revolutionary experiment, if that word is desired, has almost ceased since the War. By experiment I mean not only technical exercises and novel combinations, but also the essentially new and particular mind that must underlie, and should even precede, the new and particular form, to make it viable.

Very few people, it is probable, belong other than quite superficially to what is 'new' in present life. It is very with it, rather than the thing itself, which attracts them. If you take a new popular art-form like jazz, it is doubtful if the majority of English-people or Frenchmen, if they had dozen other forms—from the viennese waltz to the hornpipe, breton gavotte, or sardana—would choose it rather than the others. The same people would take to any of the forms just as readily, that is what I mean; not that, once it is there, they do not enjoy it. A few musicians and artists are more fundamentally attracted to it, and to similar new forms (or new at all events to the European); but the dancing mass conforms, because jazz is there, being exclusively supplied to it, and because it has had the advertisement to start with of a novel and experimental fashion in music.

It would be possible, of course, to go much farther than this, and to say that the average European or American is fond of jazz, for instance, because of its strangeness; that it is only as a sort of permanent novelty, as it were, that such a musical form (so out of key, or out of time, with the rest of his beliefs and habits, inherited through many generations) can exist.

3. Whereas it is generally Industry that betrays and distorts scientific invention in the course of its exploitation, it is usually in the distorting medium of social life that artistic invention is falsified. When a great creation or invention of art makes its appearance, usually a short sharp struggle ensues. The social organism is put on its metal. If it is impossible quite to overcome the work in question, it is (After the short sharp struggle) accepted. Its canonization is the manner of its martyrdom. It is at all events robbed of its effect by a verbal acquiescence and a little crop of course imitations. Nothing really ugly or powerful, in most instances, has been at all disturbed.

All the revolutionary idealism of the European has by this time suffered the same dilution, and, not canonization, but promotion to the status of an eminently respectable, millionaire article. In the millionaire, and progressive middle-class, Atlantic World, the general temper of revolutionary change



has already been thoroughly absorbed. This has very curious results. The phenomenon of the 'revolutionary rich,' of a gilded Bohemia whose members disport themselves as though they were already in the Millennium—as, indeed, as far as they are concerned, they are—makes its appearance. I cannot here provide a substitute for the very detailed analysis of these things that I have given elsewhere. But I can briefly sketch the more salient features.'

All the 'smart-set' life of any Western capital to-day is a kind of Trianon existence, passed in the midst of a fabulous private luxury, the traditional 'bohemian' manners of the poor artist borrowed—along with the term 'bohemian'—to cover the glimpses the man-in-the-street may have of this excess. What a picturesque necessity for the needy members of Mürger's sub-world of art, irresponsible freedom of the revolutionary rich of to-day. Thus when some magnate in mufti (he is possibly a labour-member in 'real' life, or he may be an armament magnifico) is observed with a brilliant party issuing from a Rolls-Royce, and making for one of those 'quiet little bohemian restaurants' which are at least twice as expensive as the Ritz, it is not as a magnate or a 'swell,' at all, but as a mere 'bohemian,' that he is regarded by Mr. Citizen gaping at this lucky dog (an artist probably, thinks he, probably like one of those 'artists' on the film, in a velvet jacket, palette in hand, in some semi-asiatic palace, the most expensive screen-star in America posing upon the sumptuous heavily-upholstered 'throne'). And indeed Mr. Citizen would not be so entirely wrong; for any studio that is big enough to paint in is occupied by a millionaire, or by some member of this new tribe of debonair, millennial, bohemian magnates. What has happened to art and its practitioners it is unnecessary even to inquire.

This situation, which I have so hastily outlined, is, of course, a dream-come-true. It is a pity that some of the dreamers cannot return to witness it. It is (on a relatively small scale) the William Morris', tolstoyan, or other utopist dream of a millennium in which no one would have to work too much; and in which every one would be an 'artist'—singing, painting, composing, or writing, as the case might be, and in which a light-hearted 'communism' should reign in the midst of an idyllic plenty. This has to-day been achieved by a section of the community, as I have indicated. In their political opinions these people are all, without exception, orthodoxly 'revolutionary' or 'radical.' Several even have become militant socialists. Others are dramatists, others 'great painters,' or 'great composers,' many act or dance professionally, or are keepers of luxury-shops. Wistfully, but, oh, so bravely! they exclaim, Times have changed, we must all do something! And, of course, a great many people still possess the means required for such 'little socialist experiments,' as open of these pathetic people described what he was doing—for this thrilling type of idyllic work, the necessary capital to return to the Feudal Age as a romantic 'craftsman,' even if that return cannot be effected in the rôle of chatelain.

What results from this situation is, of course, that the audience, in the widest sense, becomes professional, or, worse, semi-professional (whatever may happen upon the stage), and the employer turns into a rival of his

employee. The argument for 'amateurism' of any kind is that 'professionalism' is the drabdest, most mechanical and sordid affair; which, of course, is true; as it is true that most 'professionals' are incompetent, untalented, hacks. But that is a one-sided argument; the assumption at this point always is that the amateur is a fresh, capricious and carefully-sheltered plant, and as such is relieved of the distorting necessities that dog the professional. So, romantically, all amateurs tend to become, for the sentimental utopian enthusiast of 'amateurism,' a kind of gifted eternal-child, their naïveté never blemished by that odious 'power' that knowledge brings or by dark necessities of a bread-and-butter order. The truth is very different from that. Almost without exception the amateur in real life—not in utopian theory—is an imitation-professional. If he is not that, he is a faux-naïf of the most blood-curdling description. There are no more true naïfs among amateurs than among professionals.

But it is the results and not the causes that we are concerned with here. And the proof of that millennial pudding that we have eaten is there for everybody to observe, in the world of art at least. The merging of the spectator and the performer—for that is the technical definition of amateurism in its wildest implication—can scarcely be expected in art or social life to have a more satisfactory upshot than the same process applied in politics or industry.

But as we look around us, and observe the rich bohemianism in which all social power is concentrated to-day, we should recognize that we are in the presence of an installment of the millennium, in full-flower, That privilege should be made the fullest use of, and we should draw the necessary conclusions. Our opportunity for practical first-hand observation is a unique one.

