The McGill Fortnightly Review

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EDITORIAL

ONE has recently heard among McGill students such phrases as the following: "a dignified compliance with the will of the majority", "it is poor sportsmanship to object to a decision reached by the majority", these "issues have become dead, and must cease to be discussed."

There is behind all of these utterances a definite philosophy; a philosophy, which although perhaps not yet systematized in the minds of its adherents, amounts to a complete negation of individualism. Its devotees seek to elevate the will of the majority to an eminence only slightly inferior to that of the Most High; they listen to *Vox Populi* rather than to the "still, small voice."

The fallacy of this pseudo-democratic *staatswissenschaft* lies in fundamentally assuming the possibility of legislating ultimate truth. It is possible that, with the advance of theoretical science, a time may come when man will be face to face with ultimate truth; but, at present, a majority vote is at best a shrewd guess, or a fairly safe bet as to the next dido of the Eternal Flux.

A silent compliance with majority decisions seems to us basically absurd, even if on no other grounds than that opposition is an absolute necessity in the evolution of any system. In a university such as McGill a very intricate system of student polity has evolved,—supposedly by a long series of divisions, the vote of the majority, in every case, deciding in which new direction the evolution would continue. If, however, the decisions of the majority are to be held sacrosanct, free from criticism, and subjected to little, if any opposition, the student polity which is in the course of evolution will lack the strength and vigour that comes of surmounting criticism and opposition. Then again there is the possibility (will any one venture to deny it?) that a majority may be wrong; while in an ignorant community, or among those whose education is in a state of incompletion, it is arguable that the decisions of the majority are more often wrong than right.

We should, then, like to claim for ourselves the right to criticise certain aspects of the present student organization at McGill. Our criticisms will be our sincere opinions. But that they will represent our opinions does not imply that we fail to recognize the opinions of those who see things in a different light, or that we wish to lay claim to any infallibility or occult knowledge.

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WHATEVER sympathy one may feel for the aims of the Canadian Authors' Association and however eagerly one may hope for the creation of a worthy national literature, it is impossible to view the excesses of "Canadian Book Week" in a favorable light. Publicity, advertising and the methods of big business are not what is required to foster the art and literature of a young country such as Canada, while the commercial boosting of mediocre Canadian books not only reduces the Authors' Association to the level of an advertising agency but does considerable hamr to good literature. After all, it is not so much Canadian books that we should like to see the public buy, as *good* Canadian books; and as there are not very many of these latter yet, we should be very well content

with a public that would buy merely good books regardless whether their writers are English, American, German or Japanese.

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STUDENT activities at McGill vary considerably. McGill must indeed be almost an epitome of the whole world to contain within itself both a "Players' Club" and a "Scarlet Key Society."

Those who were at McGill last year will remember with pleasure the first production of the then newborn Players' Club—how, labouring under almost every possible handicap it, was able to offer a presentation which placed it at once in the first rank of local amateur companies.

This year Montreal is to be favoured with two productions by the Club, we learn. The first one, which is opening as we go to press, sounds all that we could hope. The names of Bernard Shaw and Alfred Sutro coupled with the standard of acting of last year, seem to us a guarantee of interesting and pleasant entertaiment. We are not well acquainted with Francis Gribble, author of the third play, but are trusting to the discretion of the producing committee.

It is our opinion that a University should be a dignified and learned Institution. That it may be this, the activities of its Students should show these qualities. Regrettably, such cannot be said of all the doings of McGill students. But, when we are called upon to draw attention to the Players' Club, we have no hesitation in assuring our public that its offerings are truly worthy of a University, and that they may learn from them something of the virtue, which is in McGill.

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"WINTER has arrived," says *The McGill Daily* in its editorial of December 1st. We are glad to see the Daily editorial writers make a definite statement at last. This splendid straightfowardness will henceforth, we hope, be a feature of their constitutionally impartial policy.

The McGill Fortnightly Review is an independent journal of literature, the arts and student affairs edited and published by a group of undergraduates at McGill University.

The editors only are responsible for opinions expressed in the editorial columns, and hope to publish articles on controversial questions by contributors of widely divergent views.

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Thrasymachus and Socrates

A Dialogue

A. Edel

BY Zeus, Socrates, what is wrong today? You are quibbling over every word of mine. When I said Clearchus was a good man, surely I knew what I meant.

You may know, Thrasymachus, but tell me that I too may know, what is this quality in man which we call goodness. Let me share in this common knowledge, if such, indeed, it be.

But surely, Socrates, you know what goodness is—goodness in man, in an animal, in an object—let us say in a book. . . .

I am not so sure that I do, Thrasymachus, but since you seem so well informed tell me what is goodness in a book—in short what is a good book?

Why let me see—I would say, and I think you will agree with me, that a good book is one which is of some intellectual value to the reader and is at the same time of aesthetic value, or if you wish, to put it simply, is entertaining in style.

Must a book be both intellectually beneficial and at the same time entertaining in order to be called good?

That is what I said, Socrates.

And then is a text-book, say about the topography of Sicily, or one that is extremely technical, to be regarded as no good by those who, not being interested in the subject, consider it not entertaining?

No, the book may still be a good one.

Then it seems that a book can be called good when only of intellectual, but not of aesthetic, value?

So it seems, Socrates.

Then is it not equally true that a book may be of aesthetic but yet of no intellectual value?

It seems probable, but I do not quite see what you are aiming at.

Let us clear this point up first. A book on a subject which has been fully discussed everywhere—on a subject which is no longer of interest to anyone, is of no intellectual value. But let it be written in a style that you admire and you will call it a good book, will you not?

Certainly.

Then a book of aesthetic value only may still be considered as possessing this quality of goodness. That is certain, is it not?

We agreed on that already, Socrates.

Now consider this, Thrasymachus,—can not a book written in a wonderful style contain ideas that are harmful, just as in cooking a most appetizing and well-flavored dish can contain poison?

That is likely enough.

And is it not possible that this book, by sheer force of style and presentation, may convince the reader that its contents are the true products of reason though, as I have said before, its ideas, if put into practice, be really and truly harmful.

Indeed it may be so.

Then is not the book harmful?

Most certainly it is, if it has a corrupting influence such as you describe.

But we decided before that a book was good even if it was only of aesthetic value. Then is this book both good and bad at the same time?

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Symbolism in Poetry

A. J. M. Smith

SYMBOLISM is as old as the first picture writing or the first spoken guttural, for words themselves are nothing but symbols to which we have agreed to give a certain significance originally as arbitrary as the letters which compose them or the sounds into which they are translated. "It is in and through Symbols", says Carlyle, "that man, consciously or unconsciously, lives, works, and has his being". Symbolism began in Eden when the first man named the creatures of his newly created world; or, before that, in the void, when God separated the light from darkness—"and called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night".

It is in its earliest beginnings, Mr. Arthur Symons declares, that we can see precisely what symbolism in literature really is:—"A form of expression, at the best but approximate, essentially but arbitrary, until it has obtained the force of a convention, for an unseen reality apprehended by the consciousness". In this definition Mr. Symons stresses the importance of the time element in the creation of a symbol, and implies the existence of traditional bonds, the very strength and firmness of which give to the symbolist poet a freedom of expression that can be obtained in no other way. Though a symbol may at first have been arbitrarily chosen, long association has created a hidden correspondence, and traditional usage has endowed it with a mystical significance, changing what was once but an approximate expression to a reflection of the unseen reality for which it stands.

Symbolism, thus, in the more special meaning which it has acquired with time, is an attempt to express the inexpressible, to "hold infinity in the palm of your hand and eternity in an hour". It is the language of Mysticism, which, ever tending toward a more tenuous subtlety, seeks to give an outward form of expression to emotions, intuitions, half-thoughts and gleams which are as shadowy and elusive as a rare perfume or a chord of music. "A Symbol", writes Mr. W. B. Yeats in an essay on William Blake, "is the only possible expression of some invisible essence, a transparent lamp about an invisible flame."

This mystical significance of symbolism was acknowledged by Carlyle, who points out that in the Symbol proper there is always, more or less distinctly and directly, an embodiment and revelation of the Infinite. "In a symbol", he says, "the Infinite is made to blend itself with the Finite, to stand visible, and as it were, attainable there". It is by means of symbols alone that the soul can give some embodiment to the apprehended wisdom that waits upon loneliness, reverie, solitude. "There is a solitude of space", wrote Emily Dickinson:

> "There is a solitude of space,
> A solitude of sea,
> A solitude of death, but these
> Society shall be,
> Compared with that profounder site,
> That polar privacy,
> A Soul admitted to Itself;
> Finite Infinity."

It is of this intense subjectivity, this inner solitude, that Symbolism is the interpreter. It is somewhat like prayer in being a communion of the microcosm with the macrocosm, the ego with the Infinite, the individual soul with God. George Herbert has a sonnet which is an attempt to define Prayer in a series of more or less subtle and metaphysical phrases. He calls it, among other things, "the Church's banquet", "the Soul in paraphrase", "reversèd thunder", "a kind of tune", "exalted Manna", "Heaven in ordinary", "man well dressed", "the bird of Paradise", "Church's bells beyond the stars heard", "the soul's blood"; then in conclusion comes a phrase, the simplicity, charm and exquisite rightness of which stir the emotions as the cleverness of the others pleases the intellect. The final phrase is: "something understood". Here, at last, prayer is truly and beautifully defined. To bring out the analogy between prayer and symbolism, I can do no better than define the latter as "something *almost* understood".

The element of mystery, indeed, is one that is ever present in symbolism. There is a sense of far horizons, of an undiscovered country, of a beauty we can only signify, not describe. A symbol has, in fact, been characterized as "a representation which does not aim at being a reproduction". Originally, the word was used by the Greeks to denote the two halves of the tablet which they divided among themselves as a pledge of hospitality. Later it was used for every sign or rite by which those initiated in a mystery made themselves known to each other; gradually, however, the word extended its significance until it came to mean the representation of idea by form, of the unseen by the visible, of the Infinite by the finite. "In a symbol", to quote *Sartor Resartus* again, "there is concealment yet revelation: hence, therefore, by Silence and by Speech acting together, comes a double significance". A certain amount of obscurity, evocation, and suggestion is implied in all symbolist poetry. "The essential characteristic of symbolist art", says Jean Moréas, "consists in never going so far as the conception of the idea in itself". The reader or hearer thus becomes a partner in the poet's task. He must bring with him some gift of interpretation, sometimes of divination and is allowed by the poet "the delicious joy of believing he creates".

A representation, then, rather than a reproduction, and mingling in its speech something of silence, a Symbol is the ritual of a mystery. It is something "almost" understood; yet in that one word "almost" lurks all the added beauty of a loveliness partially hidden. The "almost" qualifying the "understood" is the veil which adds a subtle charm to a woman's face, or the thin drapery that makes the shadowy limbs of the dancer more beautiful, more haunting, than final nude.

This element of suggestion rather than direct statement is, perhaps, the chief characteristic of the Symbolist poets who arose in France at the close of the last century, and whose methods and ideals are in much of the work of Mr. W. B. Yeats. In Mr. Yeats, symbolism is a definite repudiation of the spirit of his age, a rejection of the scientific materialism, the bleak morality and the easy objectivity of much of the literature of the later nineteenth century. "The scientific movement", he writes, "brought with it a literature which was always tending to lose itself in externalities of all kinds, in opinion, in declamation, in picturesque writing, in word-painting. . . ." A reaction was inevitable, however, "and now", he continues, "writers have begun to dwell upon the element of evocation, of suggestion, upon what we call the symbolism of great writers".

It is not, of course, to be imagined that symbolism

is a new thing, a creation or fad of the Nineties. The religious ritual of the Greek mysteries is full of symbolism. The cross is a symbol; so is the crown of thorns, the purple robe, the sponge, the bowl, the spear and the nails for hands and feet. Mediaeval architecture is almost wholly symbolic. Dante is a symbolist; so is Blake; so is the Hebrew poet who wrote of the pitcher broken at the well, the golden bowl shattered, and the silver cord loosened.

What *is* new, however, is the use of a conscious technique based on evocation and suggestion, and the deliberate determination not to tell all. One of the earliest and best expositions of this symbolist technique is found in Verlaine's *Art Poétique*. "De la musique avant toute chose", cries this most musical of the *Symbolistes*,

"Et pour cela préfère l'Impair
Plus vague et plus soluble dans l'air,
Sans rien en lui qui pèse ou qui pose."

The emphasis upon suggestion and evocation is strong: "Rien de plus cher que la chanson grise où l'Indécis au Précis se joint." The image or idea is likened to "des beaux yeux derrière des voiles." There is to be no emphasis on colour: "Pas la couleur, rien que la nuance." The importance of rhyme, greatly overestimated by the Romantics and Parnassians alike, is to be reduced to its more appropriate level.

Verlaine's music lies not only in his very subtle use of rhyme, the placing of unemphatic words in the rhyme position and the use of assonance and half rhymes, but in the harmonious variation of the vowel sounds within the line, and the frequent use of an internal rhyme. The result was, in the words of Coppée, a poetry, "at once naive and subtle, made up of fine shades, evoking the most delicate vibrations of the nerves, the most fleeting impressions of the heart... poetry in which the verse, still verse, and exquisite verse, is already music".

The Symbolist conception of the purpose of rhythm and music in poetry has been well summed up by Mr. Yeats. "The purpose of rhythm, it has always seemed to me," he says, "is to prolong the moment of con-

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BOOKS

One Increasing Purpose

By A. S. M. Hutchinson

Toronto: Musson Book Company.

THIS is one of those unfortunate books on which the gods of commerce smile at birth. Every one knows of Mr. Hutchinson; everyone, with the exception of a small number of the discriminating, awaited with interest the arrival of this, his latest child. And now we have it. The multitudes are rushing to the crib, to behold—what? An *enfant horrible*, formless, tabid, and unwell.

The story is the story of three brothers, Andrew, Charles and Simon Paris. Two of them are used but as literary foils, whose lives set off to better advantage the character of the third, the chosen one; and being mere foils, and afflicted with no purpose, increasing or upsetting, they lead intelligible lives, and Mr. Hutchinson draws them with fair skill and imagination. Linda Paris, Andrew's wife, is particularly well done. The third brother, Simon Paris, is he upon whom the Purpose has fallen. He has escaped through five years of active service in the war, and the seemingly miraculous fact of his survival, when so many of his fellows were destroyed, convinces him that his life has become essential to the working out of some divine plan; that he has, in fact a purpose. In a manner faintly reminiscent of Bentham in Mr. Wells' 'Research Magnificent', and dangerously near to a plagiarism of that same author's Mr. Britling, the now inspired Simon proceeds to search for the answer to the very fundamental and disturbing questions that are moving him. What is this Purpose? What is this thing for which not only himself, but all this post-war generation is seeking? Where can be found the panacea for the spiritual ills of the age?

Had Mr. Hutchinson something to offer us in the way of a solution to the eternal problems which he raises, he might have made of this novel a message or a profession of faith, and thus have atoned in some degree for the other faults—such as the execrable style of the book. But not so, Simon's mind (and therefore, we may not unfairly presume, Mr. Hutchinson's) is barren of anything more intellectual than vague questioning, and anything more emotional than what might be termed a generous sympathy, ever bordering upon the sentimental. So the increasing Purpose does not occupy much space in the body of the book. The domestic affairs of the two other brothers are treated at great length, and with constant recapitulation: Charles, morbid and self-centred, we accompany from childhood to a timely suicide, and Andrew we follow through all the usual uncertainties of an upper-class marriage to the hackneyed climax of the discovery of love through suffering. The unfolding of the Purpose takes place in between these other more popular scenes. And when at last we attain to it (if our patience has held out so long) what have we? Simon, working from the discovery of the lack of Christian charity in most human relationships, becomes a convert to that unstable form of Christianity which is three parts sentiment and one part philanthropy, and which is well expressed by one of the minor characters: "I went to Church with my mother as a kid; I shall be buried by the Church; in between I am dashed if I scoff at the Church". And then (and this is the crowning banality) just as Simon seems on the point of making a genuine sacrifice in order that he may go forth as an itinerant preacher, dedicated to his newfound Purpose, along comes the woman of his love, and we have this typically cinematographical ending: "Go, (she says), unfettered, with no thoughts except thought of your Purpose, just for one year.... If with so much then done and learnt all that remains can more easily be done with me to help you—why, then—". And they embrace.

We think that one year is a fair estimate of the time that Simon's Purpose—and Mr. Hutchinson's novel —will last.

F. R. S.

The Cry of A Wandering Gull

THE cry of a wandering gull,
And the far cry in the lonely air
Of the crows in the cool
Of the evening, share
With the boom of the tide
On the hollow shore
All the sorrowful words I cried
And thought to cry no more.

—Vincent Starr

Sentimentalism in Education

"Vespasiano"

DICKENS, though never an artist, cut a fair figure as a social reformer. He was one of those who voiced humanitarian doctrines through the medium of sentimentalism. Unfortunately his spiritual descendants have become a mere rag, tag and bobtail, and among them emphasis has gravitated wholly and solely to the sentimental. They now achieve little beyond downright harm, and in the realm of education that harm is perhaps a more serious menace than elsewhere. Since Dickens' time the trend has been to make education more pleasant. It has taken two directions, the first to make education more interesting and alluring in itself, and the second to make the extrinsic inducements to learn kinder and more humane. Unfortunately both these tendencies are being carried to extremes.

The first may be seen in its worst form in the schools, unfortunately on the increase every day, in which some "patent" method of instruction has been adopted. A large class is that in which the pupils are carefully protected from receiving instruction in any subject which they dislike. There are some which go so far as to require pupils to work only when they feel disposed to do so. The advocates of these palpable idiocies commonly justify them on the ground that they enable the pupil to develop his natural capacity for subjects for which he is adapted, and save him the irksomeness of labouring fruitlessly at subjects for which he has no ability.

At this two criticisms may be levelled. In the first place very few people are able to find vocations, which require of them exercise only of their natural capacities; the best they may hope for in our present age is a vocation which requires the exercise more of their capacities than of their incapacities. If the latter are wholly undeveloped, then they are effectually prevented from succeeding in any vocation whatever. This is viewing the question on the surface; the obverse side of it provides a deeper criticism. No man can ever hope to achieve anything unless he is ready and able to face and overcome difficulties within himself. Unless he is prepared to grapple with that element of his occupation which draws upon his incapacities, he will arrive nowhere. As our moralists would say, he is a weak man. And this is precisely what the "patent" schools are doing; they are turning out weak men, and adding to the coming generation a quota of low moral fibre.

The fact of the matter is plain. Children must be taught how to do what they do not like; otherwise they will be utterly unable to meet the demands adult life will make upon them.

Now as to the question of softening the means of compulsion. This of course makes a plainer and more obvious appeal to the sentimentalist and consequently its abuse is more widespread. Flogging such as Dickens decried is doubtless brutal, but to condemn it on that ground is about as sensible as to condemn the extraction of decayed teeth because the operation is painful. The practice must be judged by its results. These results are, however, somewhat obscure, and a more general and philosophical verdict is safer.

In order to arrive at this, let us take account also of more modern conditions. Corporal punishment has become in general lighter and less frequent, and other punishments have decreased in proportion. Can it be said that the modern youth is more pleasant and capable than his father and grandfather? Perhaps one of the best gauges of social conditions in England is our contemporary "Punch". It has no true equivalent on this continent, but conditions, at least in such broad matters as this, are much the same both here and in England. A current which has appeared in "Punch" in the last twenty years and was not to be found there before, is concerned with the precocity, superficiality, and general nastiness of the modern youth. One's own experience bears this out. His interests lie chiefly in exaggerations—sure sign of decadence—license of the sex impulse, particularly in its indirect forms, an instance of which may be found in the simultaneous increase and sensualisation of dancing; immense enthusiasm for sports, which have now universally degenerated into mere professional gladiatorial shows; and so on ad libitum. And the main cause of all these things is that the modern youth has never been taught to control his appetites, whether physical or spiritual.

Now the question is as to the remedy. George Bernard Shaw, having observed that the cat, if left alone, will always clean itself, but, once washed by external agency, will never again perform its own ablutions, concluded that the best way to induce a cat to clean itself was to throw a bucket of mud over it. But dear Mr. Shaw has such a logical mind: Nature has not. It sounds very well to say with Mr. Shaw that the best way to produce an efficient student is to offer him only those tasks which are completely and utterly impossible to him; but unfortunately experience shows that the result of this is that he emerges a poltroon and an ignoramus. Likewise the boy who has been flogged until he cannot sit down with comfort for the rest of his life, does not acquire the stamina to apply himself to unpleasant things, but only a distorted common sense, which prompts him to run away from everything.

The solution is plainly an equable balance. By all means take pains to develop inherent ability in its own direction, but by no means omit the all-round basis which is essential for every occupation; let the patent schoolmen run down a steep place into the sea. Punish to the extent, and with the physical directness, necessary to teach decent restraint, but avoid persecution so brutal as to crush out all active ambition. Moderation in all things.

Miniature

YOU move so slowly down the room,
Stopping awhile to smell a flower
And pluck a leaf off, or assume

A pensive look before you shower
Your kisses on the Pekinese—
As though you knew he had the power

To share your grief—and then you seize
A chair's back with those thin, strain'd hands,
And gaze toward the distant trees

That fringe familiar meadow-lands.
And none would fancy from your pose
That death had strewn his shifting sands

About your home; and left a lonely rose
Longing to share in that last, dread repose.

R. S.

Mystic

Candles of heaven
Shining through,
Prayers for Mary,
Blessed Mary,
Little gold Mary in her mantle blue.

Mists above the river with its weary song,
Mists to veil the eyes
Lest they grow too wise,
Eyes of holy sisters chanting all night long.

I was alone, alone and alone,
High in a birch tree on a little hill,
With a dew bead rosary,
Calling to St Anthony,
Grey bearded Anthony,
When all the earth was still.

Find ye, find ye,
Winds to blow her back to me,
Tear the white moon from above,
Halo her, halo her,
Let me build a woodland shrine,
Acorn cups of faerie wine,
For my love, for my love.

Margaret Amy Ross

ART

The Royal Canadian Academy

JUST why painting alone of the Arts should have deigned to take a firm root in our native Canadian soil it would be difficult to determine. But that it has so taken root few who visit this exhibition will be bold enough to question. It is true there are no canvasses here which one could designate as great, and many are (to speak kindly) simply immature; but there undoubtedly are enough possessing originality and genuine quality to stir the imagination and even enthusiasm of those who are interested in the artistic development of this country.

The cold splendor of Harold Beament's "The Mountain", at the head of the entrance stairway, is a proper introduction to the winter landscapes which as a group are the most distinctive element in the exhibition. All the loneliness and brooding silence of the northern hills are here. In a less rugged form these qualities are to be found also in the only Cullen, a picture whose beauty is no whit diminished by our familiarity with this *genre*. Mr. J. W. Beatty's work is an interpretation of a similar sort, though less convincing; we doubt if such rich foliage as he has put in his "Madawaska Valley" can be found after that depth of snow has fallen. But of all the pictures of this class there is none to rival, in boldness of colour and design, the "Lake McArthur" of J. E. H. Macdonald, who seems to have captured here all the strength and grandeur of the Rockies.

What may be called the domestic winter scene (our Dutch Interior) can be viewed to happy advantage in "Noontime in the Hills", by A. H. Robinson, in A. Y. Jackson's "Early Spring", P. C. Sheppard's "Blue Sleigh", and numerous others. The excellent view of Quebec from Levis, by R. W. Pilot, shows that artist in his most capable mood. One realises the difficulties to be mastered in these snow scenes when even Mr. Gagnon in his typical "Laurentian Homestead" seems to have been slightly overcome by the magnitude of his snow-piles.

Among the portraits that of Gordon Payne by Manly Macdonald is worthy of attention; it possesses a liveliness and vigour not to be found to such a degree in the two polished and almost annoyingly clever Jongers. Mr. Forbes' portrait of his wife may be truthfully and adequately described as charming, a term applicable also to Miss Vicaji's "Elaine". Number 209 of the catalogue can be safely passed by.

No Canadian exhibition would be complete without a seascape by Horne Russel, and the two now on view are very fine examples of his work. "The Clamdigger" is the better of the two; it has well caught the shimmer of a wet beach beneath a watery sky. One cannot mention the water scenes, however, without thinking with admiration of that delightful bit of colour, "Sea Craft", by F. H. McGillivray.

Suzor-Coté fills a lacuna with his able studies in the nude, all of whom turn their backs to the onlooker as if ashamed of their undrapery. It is strange that our Canadian painters are paying so little attention to the human form; possibly this is a sign of immaturity, which time will remedy. But what a contrast to a Parisian Salon!

R. S.

A Miniature Republic

F. R. Scott

THE Republic of Andorra is a miniature state that lies tucked away in the midst of the Pyrenees. In many ways it is the most extraordinary country in Europe: certainly no other part of the Western Continent is so inaccessible, so unexplored, so untouched by modern civilization or governed under so ancient and exceptional a form of constitution. Rarely, indeed, can a person be found who has heard so much as the name of the place; Baedeker's guide-books, where everything the European traveller can wish to know is compactly tabulated, dismiss the subject in a few lines of the smallest print, while even the Encyclopaedia Britannica—which takes cognizance of most of the affairs of mice and men—finds something less than a page ample space for its description. But as both these authorities indicate that Andorra possesses no roads other than mule-tracks, and no railway station within 40 miles of its frontier, perhaps this general poverty of information is not to be wondered at.

Rumours of the unique character of the country, from a friend who had been in the vicinity, decided a small party of us who were intending to visit Southern France to include Andorra in our itinerary. We foregathered in Paris one September afternoon, having come from various parts of England, and that same evening took the P. L. M. train for Avignon. From that starting point, after seeing the Palace of the Popes (a veritable fortress which gave the term "Babylonish Captivity" a new significance), we progressed by easy stages through Arles, Nimes and Narbonne to Carcassonne, from whose embattled heights we could make out the dim outline of the mountains of our pilgrimage. We were now but 50 miles from the boundary of Andorra; but no trains, of course, were of much use to us, and to our delight even the clerk in the tourist-office of Carcassonne could give us no information as

to how we should reach our destination. Truly, we said to ourselves, the Republic must be well hidden when people so close know so little about it.

There was a small town in the mountains to the east of Andorra, named Puigcerda, which was quite easily approached by means of an electric train and a motor-bus. Towards this we made our way, for we felt sure that once there we should find out the details about the rest of the journey. It still delights and terrifies me to think back upon that motor ride amongst the gorges of the Pyrenees, through which our driver dashed at reckless speed, one hand on the wheel and the other winding a feeble horn, while we looked fearfully at the cliffs on the one side and the chasms on the other. On reaching Puigcerda we soon discovered the information we desired; but it came as a shock to us. A daily bus service to Andorra was in operation.

This news, while it solved the transportation problem, was indeed a blow to the members of our party. The Romance of Andorra seemed shattered. What! A daily char-a-banc running to the Hidden Republic! Across our minds flashed visions of idle globe trotters, tweed-clad tourists, and all other banes that busses bring. We were dejected; we looked sorrowfully at one another. But being optimists we reserved our seats for the following day.

That ride to Vieille-Andorra, as the capital of the country is called, re-created the romance of Andorra in our minds. Our way lay for 70 miles along the bottom of deep valleys, and although the bridle-path of the guide-books had been replaced by a road, there were places where we wondered how anything on wheels could ever pass along it. Numerous mountain streams ran over instead of under the roadway, and each, in proper streamlet fashion, had worn for itself a small gully over which we had to drive. Only the marvellous springing of the Hispano-Suiza bus saved the machine—and ourselves—from breaking down. As we swayed about hour by hour inside the vehicle, in company with the strangest assortment of peasants, priests and village folk, with the rain falling in torrents on the roof and dark clouds lending a sombre aspect to the lofty hills about us ,the disillusionment of the previous day rapidly gave place to a new faith in the inaccessability and aloofness of the country we had come to visit,—a faith the stronger because we realized that this was the only road connecting the capital of Andorra with the outside world.

Despite this foretaste of discomfort we found very passable accommodation at the one inn which the capital possessed. The food, though plain, was always eatable (if I except the one occasion when a complete chicken's head appeared in a stew) and the beds were free from "pulex tyrannus", that "great Continental bugbear," as it has been called. Our host appeared a trifle surly and persisted in wearing his hat while waiting on us at table, but his wife and family were most agreable and showed a great interest in our doings. And when we moved from the capital to a little village called Escaldas we were even better housed, for the "hotel" at that place had been enterprising enough to tap a hot spring that bubbled from the mountain side and so provided gratis splendid warm baths at any hour of the day or night,—a most unusual state of affairs for Europe.

We discovered many interesting facts about the constitution and customs of the state. Andorra lacks absolute independence; she is obliged to pay in alternate years 960 francs to the French Government and 460 francs to the Bishop of Urgel in Spain, and these two powers each appoint a "viguier" or overseer to command the Andorran militia and administer criminal justice. As there are no written laws the decisions of the viguiers are simply personal judgments. But apart from these limitations, which were fixed by a document drawn up in 1278, Andorra rules herself. A President is at the head of affairs, assisted by a Council of 24 delegates elected from the six parishes which compose the state. Two special magistrates advise the viguiers and keep them from infringing the customs of the country. The official language is Catalan, the coinage Spanish, and the post-office sells French or Spanish stamps according to the destination of the letter.

The character of Andorra was most vividly portrayed in the "Casa de la Vall," which for lack of a better term I must call the seat of Government. It was a rude two-storey stone building. We were ushered into it one morning with all due solemnity (after a small boy had been despatched to find the key) by an old woman as humble and rustic in appearance as her surroundings. She unlocked and opened the solitary door; we entered—and found ourselves in a stable. "For the horses of the Councillors," our guide hastened to explain. We then mounted a stairway and were shown a school-room with desks for about 20 pupils; such children as cared to seek it were given free instruction. Immediately opposite was a banqueting hall, by far the best room in the building. We passed from this to the Council Chamber itself. Here were the robes of the Councillors, hanging on pegs behind dingy curtains; here in a cupboard let into the wall, the door of which could only be unlocked when the head Councillors from each of the six parishes were present with their keys, were kept the state documents,

Continued on next page.

The Woman in the Samovar

THE woman in the samovar
spreads webs of deft desire
more maculate than jaguar,
and offers them for hire

on stalls of oranges and figs,
bananas, cocoanuts and Roquefort cheese,
and other necessary things, as wigs,
wax candles, brassieres and bees.

She pleads in vain, and stubs her toe,
muttering curses to a parakeet:
the nebula whose name is Joe
excuses awkwardness of feet;

perching precipitously on the roof
he strums Stravinsky on a table-spoon,
returns to don a waterproof,
recedes against a background of the moon,

while Hero and Leander meet
beside the leafy Hellespont
at corner of each dusty street,
before each Christian font,

and feel the bawdy music surge
in green and crescent wave,
and spread warm arms to breast the urge
to coalescent grave.

Michael Gard

including the all-important charter of 1278; and here we were shown a gruesome steel instrument which proved on examination to be a garotte,—still the legal method of executing criminals, but, needless to say, never required today. Opening from this chamber (which by, the way, is also the only law court in the country) was a miniature chapel, and it was delightfully typical of everything we had seen that the President's ceremonial hat should be kept in a white band-box on a bench in a corner, and that our conductress should insist with childish eagerness that each of us should try it on.

Our party had a farewell dinner at Escaldas, and the following morning myself and two others set out for Puigcerda. The bus had stopped running while we were at Andorra, the summer season being over, so we were compelled to take a small horse-diligence that left at 5.00 A.M. We were the only passengers when we started. It appeared to us that four people inside the conveyance, with one outside by the driver, would be the utmost it could carry, but before we reached the end of the journey to Urgel where we were to connect with another line of buses, there were eight people with their luggage (including one squirrel in a cage) squeezed into the interior, while two more were sitting out in front.

THRASYMACHUS AND SOCRATES

(*Continued from page 10*)

It can not be both anyhow, Socrates, but the fact is we have become quite confused in our reasoning.

No, Thrasymachus, it is not that—the original definition which leads us to such conclusions must be wrong.

What then do you call a good book?

I may call a certain book good, my friend, and you may not. I may derive benefit from reading it. Someone else may not. I may like the style and admire the writer's skill—others may not. The same book, then, does not appear to all to have the same degree of goodness. Its goodness is what we admire in the book, and it is a good book, more or less, as our admiration of it outweighs our objection to its defects. So, my friend, to go over our old examples, a text-book is considered good if the knowledge we gain from it more than compensates for its defects in style and other points; a book of doubtful intellectual value, only if its good qualities outweigh the inferior ones. And in each case the individual is the judge, but a book is generally considered good when the majority approve it, or those outstanding literary men whose opinions the public follows. Do you agree then that goodness in a book is nothing more or less than the sum total of the qualities which we admire in it, its intellectual and aesthetic qualities, its individual appeal and so forth?

I think you speak rightly, Socrates.

Then let us pass on to goodness in man. Is this the same thing?

It is a very interesting problem, Socrates, but I must be going. I do not want to miss that rugby game this afternoon. What is the time, by the way?

That is too easy a question to answer. Better ask 'What is time?'

Anyhow, if I do not see you for a few days or weeks the subject will not grow old in such a short time.

That is the truest thing you have said today, Thrasymachus—such problems never grow old.

SYMBOLISM IN POETRY

(*Continued from page 12*)

templation, the moment when we are both asleep and awake, which is the one moment of creation, by hushing us with an alluring monotony, while it holds us waking by variety, to keep us in that state of perhaps real trance, in which the mind liberated from the pressure of the will is unfolded in symbols".

To quote from Mr. Yeats on this subject is inevitable. He has said the last word upon it, and in a prose as beautiful as any written in this century. "If people were to accept the theory that poetry moves us because of its symbolism," he asks, "what change should one look for in the manner of our poetry?" His own poetry compared with that of Tennyson or Browning would provide the answer, had he not himself supplied it in his essays. "A return to the way of our fathers", he answers, "a casting out of descriptions of nature for the sake of nature, of the moral law for the sake of the moral law, a casting out of all anecdotes and of that brooding over scientific opinion that so often extinguished the central flame in Tennyson, and of that vehemence that would make us do or not do certain things.... With this change of substance, this return to imagination, this understanding that the laws of art, which are the hidden laws of the world, can alone bind the imagination, would come a change of style, and we would cast out of serious poetry those energetic rhythms....which are the invention of the will with its eyes always on something to be done or undone; and we would seek out those wavering, meditative, organic rhythms, which are the embodiment of the imagination."