The Calendar of Modern Letters

March 1925-July 1927

Edited by
Edgell Rickword and
Douglas Garman

New Impression with a Review in Retrospect by Malcolm Bradbury

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VOLUME I

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A REVIEW IN RETROSPECT

by

MALCOLM BRADBURY

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A REVIEW IN RETROSPECT*

THE three great literary reviews of the 1920s were *The Criterion, The Adelphi* and *The Calendar of Modern Letters*. Of these, the last-mentioned was in many ways much the best, yet it is certainly the least remembered. In 1933 Dr F. R. Leavis edited a selection from its pages, entitled *Towards Standards of Criticism*; he remarked, in his introduction, that the review had commanded the services of 'half a dozen really distinguished critics, each one better than any that finds frequent employment in existing periodicals' and he compared the review with *The Criterion*, remarking on its superior liveliness and its greater critical excellence. Moreover, there was in the founding, in 1932, of *Scrutiny* a strong and conscious debt to *The Calendar*, and perhaps it was the sense of the gap left by the demise of the paper that stirred *Scrutiny* into life. When *The Calendar* died there was left no periodical concerned for the moral and cultural enrichment of literature and none devoted to the exposition of serious critical principles. *The Criterion*, while the most serious and intelligent of contemporary journals, did not seem to the editors of *Scrutiny* to be performing the service required of a literary periodical at this time, and indeed that review never consolidated the distinguished statements on critical matters which Eliot had contributed to its pages early in its career. Thus *The Calendar*, which appeared between March 1925 and July 1927, was able to spread its influence much more widely than its present lack of reputation would suggest. It had much to do with the growth of the modern movement in criticism.

On the whole, the significant activity in the little magazines of the previous decade had been that of accomplishing a literary revolution. The tone of the important journals was *avant garde;* their circulation was small; they were addressed largely to a bohemian-intellectual reading public. Such criticism as appeared in these magazines tended to be written by literary practitioners, like Pound and Eliot, Ford Madox Hueffer and F. S. Flint, and was very much devoted to what Pound called Making It New.

* This essay first appeared in *The London Magazine*, October, 1961.

It was reformatory rather than considered; but it offered many critical insights that subsequent critics sought to pursue with greater precision. The twenties were a period of *critical* revolution. Indeed, it is, perhaps, the development of criticism that forms the most *visible* advance that has been made in the pages of the twentieth-century literary periodical. By the beginning of the century the play of criticism as a serious discipline that had prevailed in the reviews and magazines of the early nineteenth century had almost disappeared. 'Time is ripe for the forging of a weapon of criticism, and for the emphatic assertion of literary standards,' declared Harold Monro in the first number of *The Poetry Review* in January 1912, and elsewhere in the same issue of the same periodical the point was made again:

> Criticism is always with us, yet it has achieved no consistent method by which the true artist can be distinguished from the false with any reliability . . . no standard of taste has yet proved sufficiently comprehensive to essay correctly the merit of a new poet and relegate him, as the critics still futilely attempt to do, to a fitting rank and station among his peers.

These comments, by Arthur K. Sabin, now seem dated; they seem so not because they no longer apply but because they prescribe, with such freshness, the attempt. Nowadays there is no lack of emphatic assertions of literary standards, and there are enough 'consistent methods' and 'comprehensive standards of taste' to require critical study themselves.

But the criticism of the early years of the century was not, by and large, disposed to treat such problems, or to talk of scientific approaches to criticism; it was all a matter of taste. Some had it and some didn't; this was the implication. It was towards the end of the Great War that signs of development appeared. *The Egoist* began to print criticism and, more importantly at the time, discussion of criticism by Eliot and Pound; *The Athenaeum*, in a final burst of glory under the editorship of John Middleton Murry, presented its readers with a succession of book reviews and articles on literature by many of the best minds of the time. With the foundation of reviews like *The Criterion* and *The Calendar of Modern Letters*, which not only criticized but submitted to searching examination the positions from which critical standpoints were made, the critical revival was estab-

lished, and by 1932 it was possible for a review, *Scrutiny*, to appear whose main concern was the revaluation of the whole body of English literature from a central carefully presented critical viewpoint, which had developed under the stimulus of the critical gains of Eliot, Pound, Murry, Richards and the group of *Calendar* critics.

By 1920, the old literary establishment had been more or less ousted by the younger generation that had been coming into prominence since about 1910. Lawrence, Eliot, Pound, Joyce, Katherine Mansfield, Norman Douglas, Wyndham Lewis, Middleton Murry and many others had established themselves over this period; and in 1924 there appeared in print T. E. Hulme's posthumous volume of essays. *Speculations*, which consolidated many ideas which had been active among writers over the previous two decades. In *The Criterion* (XVI, 65) for July 1937, T. S. Eliot remarked, in one of his 'Commentaries':

> The period which may be said to have begun about 1910 had its own critical requirements which were not those of a general assessment of the literatures of the past. What was needed was a critical activity to revise creative writing, to introduce new material and new technique from other countries and other times. The accomplishment of the Imagist movement in verse seems to me, in retrospect, to have been critical rather than creative; and as criticism, very important.

But, he adds, the period after the war seems to him one of less lively interest in the problems of creative writing, one more concerned with esthetics in general, and with psychology. 'For this period, the psychological subtleties of Mr I. A. Richards, and the more general and increasingly political aesthetics of Mr Read seem to provide what is desired.'

The catch-word of the post-war period was Hulme's word, 'classical', with its distrust of the metaphysical attitude and the infinite view. *The Criterion*, *The Calendar of Modern Letters* and *Scrutiny* were all classical in tone, opposed to the Romanticism of Murry's *The Adelphi* and the Dionysianism of Jack Lindsay's *London Aphrodite*. For *The Calendar*, the word 'classicism' had a specific context—'the characteristics of a healthy criticism' wrote Bertram Higgins 'are invariably "classic", tending towards an ever greater rigidity of principle, organizations more explicit, and the canalization of the wide,

shallow stream of taste'. But it was not classicism as the *Criterion* meant it; the same critic complained that in Eliot's review 'neo-classicism' was being used as a repressive instrument of literary criticism, in which religious and ethical preoccupations held too much place. Criticism in *The Calendar* was more carefully poised, but geared always toward some general critical agreement, some implied consent. This was a period concerned to clarify and define; a 'period of consolidation' after the establishment of the modern movement at the beginning of the century. Its spirit *was* distinctively modern. But it was a period concerned to establish a tradition and to develop a sound relationship with other arts and sciences; it was concerned too with the development of what Eliot called 'the European mind'—a whole, wide-ranging cultural responsibility. And this extension of interests paved the way for the political interests of the writers of the 1930s.

II

The Calendar of Modern Letters first appeared in March 1925 as a monthly literary review. Its editor was Edgell Rickword; and Douglas Garman, and later Bertram Higgins, was its assistant editor. It published twelve numbers in monthly form and then, with the issue for April 1926, it became a quarterly, increasing its price by one shilling to half a crown. In this form it continued until it ended its short life with volume four, number two, dated July 1927. During that short period of existence, it published some of the best criticism to appear in any literary review since the decline of the great politico-literary reviews of the nineteenth century. Moreover, it was criticism informed by theory; on the strength of a very small number of articles, clearer formulation of critical ideas was made available to that small body of readers which the review reached (its circulation, according to Edgell Rickword, began at 7–8,000 and dropped over the first year to 2–3,000; it then became a quarterly and its circulation dropped to 1,000).

The circumstances of its foundation, as Edgell Rickword recollected them for me, were these: the paper was the project of a loosely-knit group of young writers feeling their way in London literary journalism. Two of them, Rickword and

Bertram Higgins, who met as undergraduates at Oxford soon after the War, had been publishing verse and criticism in various journals for some years. They were joined in 1923 or 4 by Douglas Garman, a slightly younger friend just down from Cambridge. These three had a good deal in common, including, which was most relevant at this point, a profound dissatisfaction with the current literary scene—particularly so, as Eliot's *Criterion* was, they thought, failing to achieve the critical precision they had expected of it under an editor of such acute critical power. After many discussions, they sketched out an alternative platform for a literary journal.

There the matter might have remained had not a common friend, Ernest Wishart, keenly interested in contemporary literature, undertaken to provide the necessary financial backing.

It began with rigorous standards and, even when at the end of its life it seemed it might continue by foregoing some of its strictness, it preferred to fail with its intentions uncompromised. In its last number a statement, entitled 'Valediction Forbidding Mourning', suggests what those intentions were:

> The most natural step for a review to take, if it wishes to survive, is to adopt a 'political' attitude (one, that is, which implies a tendency to judge by expediency) and, though we realize that such an attitude may be almost essential to the achievement of a sound economic status, we cannot consider it as less than an abuse of function. For, in taking such a step, the freedom to exercise an independent judgement on contemporary work will be lost—not in so gross a sense as by commercial obligation, but by the more subtle and more obnoxious distortions required for the continued support of one's own platform. One can have little respect for the periodical which flaunts a pretension to philosophical righteousness and yet makes as many blunders with regard to the actual works of poetry or literature before it as the most unenlightened of its Georgian predecessors.

The value of a review, the article went on, must be judged by its attitude to the living literature of the time, which includes such works of the past as can be absorbed into the contemporary sensibility. A magazine with such standards should be able to draw, in its more regular contributors, on a homogeneity of view—but a vital homogeneity and not 'the placid acceptance of

a body of dogma or prejudices of one superior mind (legitimate only to itself) by some unindividualized members of the *intelligentzia*'. The consensus of *The Calendar* was vital enough, and it seems to have been contemporary also, since many of the opinions expressed passed into critical lore. On the other hand, however, this final editorial did admit a suspicion that its own synthesis had not been in every respect adequate, and it explained that it was partly because of this suspicion that the review was ceasing to function:

> There comes a moment in the creation of a work of art when a new conception interposes itself and makes further revision impossible. A review has quite different functions from a work of art but the parallel may serve to explain the unwillingness of those most closely associated with *The Calendar* to continue it in its present form. . . .

What this new conception was was never made clear, though the appearance of one of the editors in the *The Left Review* in due course may be something of an explanation.

That *The Calendar* was assertive enough about 'standards of criticism' may be gathered from this editorial tone, and some of its aims as a periodical may be clarified by a review it gave to *The New Criterion*—as *The Criterion* was at this period called—in February 1926, in which the question of an organizing principle for a magazine is debated—'not even the bulkiest review can be boundlessly eclectic, and as soon as the element of choice is introduced the question of a principle or a programme becomes paramount'. The reviewer remarks of *The Criterion* that Mr Eliot's 'colours' are 'very faintly painted in' and identifies his position with the intellectualist reaction against 'the intuitionalist debauch'. Bertram Higgins later elaborated the point by remarking that Eliot's 'neo-classicism' was the literary version of a reactionary Latin philosophy, neo-Thomism, which was adapted into a repressive instrument of criticism, whose main aspects were a 'verbal sobriety which disguised its positivism, its calm and socialized demeanour in the midst of the revolutionary concepts by which we are surrounded, and its genuine but exaggerated docility to the world of learning'. *The Calendar* went in for fresher and more pragmatic style, advancing its standards warily and in action. It announced in its first issue:

> We lay down no programme as to *The Calendar's* performance, nor prophecy as to its character, since these things cannot interest our readers till they have a tangible existence, and then we shall be ready to join our own criticism with theirs. A conviction of the value of spontaneous growth (or growth which seems spontaneous to the watching mind) and of unpoliced expression. . . .

It aimed to be of value to those readers who 'wish to keep in touch with the literature which reflects the spirit of the present day', and it promised a series of critical articles entitled 'Scrutinies' which would 'examine the reputations of certain writers who are the object of somewhat indiscriminate admiration'.

The cageyness about standards didn't mean that the paper could claim none, as was evident when the series of 'Scrutinies' began. The series (which is reprinted with revision in the first of two volumes of *Scrutinies*: *Critical Essays* (edited by Edgell Rickword) (London, 1928) is perhaps the main achievement of the review; it demonstrated, by the use of close critical analysis and with a higher skill in exegesis than had been commonly found up to now in any critical paper, positive literary deficiencies in works that had up to the time been held in high esteem. The articles were the first full scale attempt for many years to achieve by close and exacting criticism a scrupulous and considered evaluation of a work of art. The series gave *Scrutiny* its name and something of its method, and may be compared with the series in *Scrutiny* called 'Revaluations', which went on to examine reputations even more soundly established, and to address itself to the task of reconsidering the whole tradition of English literature. *The Calendar* was concerned primarily with the main figures of twentieth-century literature as they appeared at that time. With the rise of Eliot, Pound and the survivors of the Imagist movement, a number of poets and novelists of the earliest part of the century had been challenged. But unlike many magazines intent upon establishing a new era, it did not dismiss easily, working through its argument by close and exacting analysis. Thus the first of the series, an examination by Edgell Rickword of Sir James Barrie, noted 'an essential dramatic deficiency in [Barrie's] failure to separate his figures from his own emotional attitude towards them, a failure to

complete the objectification of feeling which is the condition of art', an observation we would take for granted today but which was far from being familiar in 1925. Rickword's final conclusions elaborate his standard:

> At the end of the play, comedy or tragedy, if it is what we call successful, the level of desirable emotion has been heightened in those characters with whom the writer has decided that we shall identify our sympathies; others are inevitably the poorer. Barrie's peculiar trick, and that which prevents one from receiving any genuine stimulation from his plays, is a confusion of emotional perspective: by this means, emotions or loss and deprivation are made equivalent in value to those of fruition. . . .

This is practical criticism, concerned with technicalities, and concerned with solving artistic problems about design of works of art and the relations of parts to wholes. However, there is also a moral note struck, a willingness to challenge an artist's whole view of life, as when Douglas Garman, in the second of the series, speaks, in discussing Walter de la Mare, of 'the falsity of the values which he supports'. In the third, Bertram Higgins, considering the poetry of John Masefield, hits a note rather like Rickwords', analysing

> the emotional intention which, in all imperfect poetry, perceptibly accompanies the aesthetic achievement. The careless reader is only too likely to mistake the first for the second, and in Masefield this game of substitution assumes the proportions of downright bluff. . . .

C. H. Rickword, in the fifth of the series, pointed out that Bernard Shaw was rather an evangelist than a serious writer; and he pointed out that the artistic consequence of his belief in, and use of, the Life Force was that his plays 'far from attempting a reconciliation of life in the classical manner, are purely romantic flights from reality'. These analyses represent the standpoint of the review; they involve a clear idea of the full dramatic organization of the play, or the artistic organization of the novel, and an awareness of the traits which emasculate the general effect, in terms of failures to answer structural problems thrown up by a work of this kind. The method might be described as Aristotelian, since it presupposes that each work throws up its own rules and probabilities as it advances, and that

offences against these expectations are failures in working. There is also the moral observation, always rooted closely in the literary judgement; when Douglas Garman picks out, in the work of Walter de la Mare, certain lines that 'approximate to the effect he intends but are almost nonsense', he shows the technique at its best—precise and exacting with an awareness of the effect of the whole work on its parts and the effect of the writer's emotional attitude toward his material.

Outside this series *The Calendar* printed a number of articles of high critical importance. There were studies of Poe, James Joyce and—tackling another field ready for criticism, criticism itself—Kenneth Burke. Robert Graves and Laura Riding wrote on anthologies. In an important article, 'The Re-Creation of Poetry' (*Calendar* I, 3, May 1925), Edgell Rickword addressed the problem of analysing the sources of the poetic emotion, observing that 'a poem must, at some point or other, release, enable to flow back to the level of active life, the emotions caught up from life and pent in the aesthetic reservoir', a view that raises evident critical consequences. Perhaps, from the historical point of view, an even more important article was John Crowe Ransom's essay, 'Thoughts on Poetic Discontent' (*Calendar* I, 6, August 1925), one of the earliest salvoes of the American 'new criticism'. Ransom addressed himself to considering irony as a form of poetic control—'Irony may be regarded as the ultimate mode of great minds—it presupposes the others.' Another important issue, the relation of a writer to his society, was aired profoundly by Edwin Muir in an essay on 'The Zeit-Geist' (*Calendar* II, 8, October 1925); Muir argued that the power most solidly obnoxious to the artist is not the public but the intelligentsia. It is the calibre of his resistance to the values and standards presented there that give an artist's work its quality, and the *zeitgeist* nowadays not only encourages that resistance but also 'gives him a new inspiration, once the resistance has been vitally pierced'. Wyndham Lewis was another important contributor, appearing several times; of particular interest is his argument in 'The Dithyrambic Spectator' (*Calendar* I, 2, April 1925 and *Calendar* I, 3, May 1925) where he puts the case (which reappears in his *The Diabolical Principle* (1931)) that the Arts today exist where the need for them is absent, and they are perpetuated for their own sake. D. H.

Lawrence appeared several times, contributing poems, reviews and the essay 'Morality and the Novel'. Both Lawrence and Lewis were solicited for contributions because of the intrinsic value of their work, not because they supported the 'programme' of the review. The editors had also sought a contribution from James Joyce, but when it arrived (an extract from 'Anna Livia Plurabelle') were frustrated by the quite excessive (even for those days) prudery of their printers, and had to retreat discomfited.*

In this way, and gradually, the review built up a body of opinion, centred around Edgell Rickword, his cousin C. H. Rickword, Bertram Higgins and Douglas Garman, but widening out to include and support Lewis, Lawrence and Edwin Muir, which had a coherent sense to it, a conviction about literature as a field worthy of close exegetical study and yet open to larger issues about its social background and its moral content. Perhaps the best example of the spirit, and the practical success, of the review's thinking and its effect upon those who took the opportunity of the running debate it offered is to be found in two discussions by C. H. Rickword of the criticism of fiction. The occasion of the first discussion was Elizabeth Drew's book, *The Modern Novel*, which C. H. Rickword reviewed (*Calendar* III, 2, July 1926) and which gave him the chance to observe that the critical terminology we had been applying to novels was unreal and dangerous. He gave as an example the singling out of 'character' as a part of the novel:

> . . . whereas rhythm [in poetry] corresponds to an actual excitement in the reader's mind that can be traced to its source in the means employed, character corresponds to nothing so definite. Rhythm is a property of words, character a product that needs analysis before a satisfactory account of its effect can be given in terms of its constituents, and a product, moreover, that invites extra-literary scrutiny. Such scrutiny is fatal to criticism, for, though it may be that the critic's ultimate concern is with the conception of life (the 'values') of which the novel is a vehicle, yet he is only so concerned in so far as that conception is made active through art.

Critics tend moreover to regard character 'as a portrait of an imagined human being' and to prefer the writer who provides the deeper illusion. But, though Raskolnikov is 'deeper' than

Tom Jones, in that more of his interior is directly exposed, he is a figure of different and not great significance. Character is merely the term by which the reader alludes to 'the pseudo-objective image he composes of his responses to the author's verbal arrangements'; and once this image has been composed it can be criticized from many angles and regarded for its political, social or religious significance, as though it possessed actual objectivity. This article is further developed in the next issue of *The Calendar*, when under the title of 'A Note on Fiction' (*Calendar* III, 3, October 1926), C. H. Rickword postulates a more 'organic' approach to fiction. The form of a novel only exists as a balance of response on the part of the reader. 'Only as precipitates from the memory are plot or character tenable; yet only in solution have either any emotional valency.' Such effects are technical devices, effects produced by the novelist; the techniques of the novel are just as symphonic as the technique of the drama and depend upon the dynamic devices of articulation and control of narrative tempo. Thus plot and character exist in solution. Modern opinion has inclined to the view, says Rickword, that plot be determined by, or arise out of, character. It is, he declares, evident however that character arises out of narrative. Further, novels in which character does not seem to dominate give aesthetic satisfaction and one has to look for this by noting a common quality in all great works of literature:

> It is a unity among the events, a progressive rhythm that includes and reconciles each separate rhythm. As manifested in the novel, it resolves, when analysed, chiefly into character and plot in a secondary, schematic sense—qualities that are purely fictitious. Neither is an active element in the whole work in the way that melody and harmony are elements in a piece of music. Perhaps it would be less ambiguous to designate this basic, poetic quality by some such term as rhythm or development; on the other hand, plot or story do indicate its nature—that it is primarily a sequence of events developing in accordance with an inner necessity.

The recognition of this inner necessity (which Rickword uses much as Aristotle uses the notion of plot or myth) constitutes the recognition of value—and it springs ultimately from the

writer's conception of life and the adequacy of his vehicle in presenting that conception.

The article is clearly a seminal one not only for *The Calendar* but for modern criticism generally, both in England and the United States, where the paper circulated. Many modern attitudes toward the criticism of fiction are concentrated in it. There is the assumption that novels are 'wholes', unified conceptions; that they are not just life rendered on the page but verbal constructs with their own laws and their own ways of producing effects on the reader; and that the quality of the author's conception of life plays a substantial part in his invention. While, clearly, there *are* novels invented in terms of that conception of 'plot' and 'character' that Rickword challenges, our reading is richer if we acknowledge that inventions in the novel do usually work to a pattern like the one Rickword describes.

The Calendar's record in creative work is also impressive, though, for obvious reasons, it could not always uphold the standards set by the criticism. It felt a responsibility to do justice to writers of promise who deserved the encouragement of publication and it sought to be of value to those readers who wished to keep in touch 'with literature which reflects the spirit of the present age'. The review had in fact no reason to be modest on this account; the standard was very high indeed. The opening numbers serialized D. H. Lawrence's story 'The Princess', and there were stories from Pirandello, A. E. Coppard, Liam O'Flaherty, Leonid Leonov, William Gerhardi, Stephen Hudson, Douglas Garman and others. Chekov's comedy *The Wood Demon* was serialized. The poetry came from Robert Graves, Siegfried Sassoon. Edgell Rickword, Edmund Blunden, Bertram Higgins and others. There were, too, critical essays which lay rather outside the general theory of the review and are yet of real importance—such essays as E. M. Forster's on 'Anonymity', Samuel Hoare's on Rimbaud and Edwin Muir's on *Ulysses*. One aspect of the review deserves particular attention—it was among the earliest papers to draw attention to the younger American poets and critics who were coming into prominence at this time. Thus there is John Crowe Ransom's essay on irony, and Gorham B. Munson's study of the criticism of Kenneth Burke. In addition the work of three important

young American poets—John Crowe Ransom, Hart Crane and Allen Tate—appeared in its pages.

It is strange, considering its record and its historical importance, that *The Calendar* has not been more widely remembered and, one might add, imitated. There is still room for a review of its sort—eclectic yet with a high critical sophistication and exigence—at the present time. Its blood brothers are in fact American reviews like *The Kenyon Review*; and it is interesting to note that the review did have a strong impact in America, and is still, it seems, better remembered there. Nonetheless, there have always been a few critics and writers who remembered the paper with gratitude. To some minds the paper was over-austere; thus H. P. Collins, reviewing the second volume of *Scrutinies*, spoke of a group of critics, mostly unknown, 'who possess a detachment and capacity for subtle differentiation and analysis which would have been incomprehensible a dozen years ago' together with 'a new degree of sophistication more formidable than the old 'superiority' of the ultra-artistic, a sophistication rather bloodless and probably deplorable, but arising from a mature, if not a deep, culture' (*Criterion* X, 41, July 1931). He was worried by its intellectualism—'at once the apotheosis of Bloomsbury and the dissolvent of Bloomsbury'—and the fact that its criticism was not creative, not concerned even with the society in which art grows. Today we are not so apt to find intellectuality so worrying, and a fresh look at *The Calendar* would show it to be surprisingly modern and enduring.

* See Sylvia Beach, Shakespeare and Company. (Faber, 1960)

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The Princess

BY D. H. LAWRENCE.

TO her father, she was The Princess. To her Boston aunts and uncles she was just *Dollie Urquhart, poor little thing.*

Colin Urquhart was just a bit mad. He was of an old Scottish family, and he claimed royal blood. The blood of Scottish kings flowed in his veins. On this point, his American relatives said, he was just a bit "off." They could not bear any more to be told *which* royal blood of Scotland blued his veins. The whole thing was rather ridiculous, and a sore point. The only fact they remembered was that it was not Stuart.

He was a handsome man, with a wide-open blue eye that seemed sometimes to be looking at nothing, soft black hair brushed rather low on his low, broad brow, and a very attractive body. Add to this a most beautiful speaking voice, usually rather hushed and diffident, but sometimes resonant and powerful like bronze, and you have the sum of his charms. He looked like some old Celtic hero. He looked as if he should have worn a greyish kilt and a sporran, and shown his knees. His voice came direct out of the hushed Ossianic past.

For the rest, he was one of those gentlemen of sufficient but not excessive means, who, fifty years ago, wandered vaguely about, never arriving anywhere, never doing anything, and never definitely being anything, yet well received and familiar in the good society of more than one country.

He did not marry till he was nearly forty, and then it was a wealthy Miss Prescott, from New England. Hannah Prescott at twenty-two was fascinated by the man with the soft black hair not yet touched by grey, and the wide, rather vague blue eyes. Many women had been fascinated before her. But Colin Urquhart, by his very vagueness, had avoided any decisive connection.

Mrs. Urquhart lived three years in the mist and glamour of her husband's presence. And then it broke her. It was like living with a fascinating spectre. About most things he was completely, even ghostlily oblivious. He was always charming, courteous, perfectly gracious in that hushed, musical voice of his. But absent. When all came to all, he just wasn't there. " Not all there," as the vulgar say.

He was the father of the little girl she bore at the end of the first year. But this did not substantiate him the more. His very beauty and his haunting musical quality became dreadful to her after the first few months. The strange echo : he was like a living echo ! His very flesh, when you touched it, did not seem quite the flesh of a real man.

Perhaps it was that he was a little bit mad. She thought it definitely the night her baby was born.

" Ah, so my little princess has come at last ! " he said, in his throaty, singing Celtic voice, like a glad chant, swaying absorbed.

It was a tiny, frail baby, with wide, amazed blue eyes. They christened it Mary Henrietta. She called the little thing *My Dollie*. He called it always *My Princess*.

It was useless to fly at him. He just opened his wide blue eyes wider, and took a childlike, silent dignity there was no getting past.

Hannah Prescott had never been robust. She had no great desire to live. So when the baby was two years old she suddenly died.

The Prescotts felt a deep but unadmitted resentment against Colin Urquhart. They said he was selfish. Therefore they discontinued Hannah's income a month after her burial in Florence, after they had urged the father to give the child over to them, and he had courteously, musically, but quite finally refused. He treated the Prescotts as if they were not

of his world, not realities to him : just casual phenomena, or gramophones, talking-machines that had to be answered. He answered them. But of their actual existence he was never once aware.

They debated having him certified unsuitable to be guardian of his own child. But that would have created a scandal. So they did the simplest thing, after all—washed their hands of him. But they wrote scrupulously to the child, and sent her modest presents of money at Christmas, and on the anniversary of the death of her mother.

To The Princess her Boston relatives were for many years just a nominal reality. She lived with her father, and he travelled continually, though in a modest way, living on his moderate income. And never going to America. The child changed nurses all the time. In Italy it was a *contadina* ; in India she had an *ayah*; in Germany she had a yellow-haired peasant girl.

Father and child were inseparable. He was not a recluse. Wherever he went he was to be seen paying formal calls, going out to luncheon or to tea, rarely to dinner. And always with the child. People called her Princess Urquhart, as if that were her christened name.

She was a quick, dainty little thing with dark gold hair that went a soft brown, and wide, slightly prominent blue eyes that were at once so candid and so knowing, She was always grown up ; she never really grew up. Always strangely wise, and always childish.

It was her father's fault.

"My little Princess must never take too much notice of people and the things they say and do," he repeated to her. "People don't know what they are doing and saying. They chatter-chatter, and they hurt one another, and they hurt themselves very often, till they cry. But don't take any notice, my little Princess. Because it is all nothing. Inside everybody there is another creature, a demon which doesn't care at all. You peel away all the things they say and do and feel, as cook peels away the outside of the onions. And in the middle of everybody there is a green demon which you can't peel away. And this green demon never changes, and it doesn't care at all about all the things that happen to the outside leaves of the person,

all the chatter-chatter, and all the husbands and wives and children, and troubles and fusses. You peel everything away from people, and there is a green, upright demon in every man and woman ; and this demon is a man's real self, and a woman's real self. It doesn't really care about anybody, it belongs to the demons and the primitive fairies, who never care. But, even so, there are big demons and mean demons, and splendid demonish fairies, and vulgar ones. But there are no royal fairy women left. Only you, my little Princess. You are the last of the royal race of the old people ; the last, my Princess. There are no others. You and I are the last. When I am dead there will be only you. And that is why, darling, you will never care for any of the people in the world very much. Because their demons are all dwindled and vulgar. They are not royal. Only you are royal, after me. Always remember that. And always remember, it is a *great secret*. If you tell people, they will try to kill you, because they will envy you for being a Princess. It is our great secret, darling. I am a prince, and you a princess, of the old, old blood. And we keep our secret between us, all alone. And so, darling, you must treat all people very politely, because *noblesse oblige*. But you must never forget that you alone are the last of Princesses, and that all others are less than you are, less noble, more vulgar. Treat them politely and gently and kindly, darling. But you are the Princess, and they are commoners. Never try to think of them as if they were like you. They are not. You will find, always, that they are lacking, lacking in the royal touch, which only you have—."

The Princess learned her lesson early—the first lesson, of absolute reticence, the impossibility of intimacy with any other than her father ; the second lesson, of naïve, slightly benevolent politeness. As a small child, something crystallised in her character, making her clear and finished, and as impervious as crystal.

"Dear child!" her hostesses said of her. "She is so quaint and old-fashioned ; such a lady, poor little mite!"

She was erect, and very dainty. Always small, nearly tiny in physique, she seemed like a changeling beside her big, handsome, slightly mad father. She dressed very simply, usually in blues or delicate greys, with little collars of old Milan

point, or very finely-worked linen. She had exquisite little hands, that made the piano sound like a spinet when she played. She was rather given to wearing cloaks and capes, instead of coats, out of doors, and little eighteenth-century sort of hats. Her complexion was pure apple-blossom.

She looked as if she had stepped out of a picture. But no-one, to her dying day, ever knew exactly the strange picture her father had framed her in, and from which she never stepped.

Her grandfather and grandmother and her Aunt Maud demanded twice to see her, once in Rome and once in Paris. Each time they were charmed, piqued, and annoyed. She was so exquisite and such a little virgin. At the same time so knowing and so oddly assured. That odd, assured touch of condescension, and the inward coldness, infuriated her American relations.

Only she really fascinated her grandfather. He was spell-bound ; in a way, in love with the little faultless thing. His wife would catch him brooding, musing over his grandchild, long months after the meeting, and craving to see her again. He cherished to the end the fond hope that she might come to live with him and her grandmother.

" Thank you so much, grandfather. You are so very kind. But Papa and I are such an old couple, you see, such a crochety old couple, living in a world of our own."

Her father let her see the world—from the outside. And he let her read. When she was in her teens she read Zola and Maupassant, and with the eyes of Zola and Maupassant she looked on Paris. A little later she read Tolstoi and Dostoevsky. The latter confused her. The others, she seemed to understand with a very shrewd, canny understanding, just as she understood the Decameron stories as she read them in their old Italian, or the Nibelung poems. Strange and *uncanny*, she seemed to understand things in a cold light perfectly, with all the flush of fire absent. She was something like a changeling, not quite human.

This earned her, also, strange antipathies. Cabmen and railway-porters, especially in Paris or Rome, would suddenly treat her with brutal rudeness, when she was alone. They seemed to look on her with sudden violent antipathy. They sensed in her curious impertinence, an easy, sterile impertinence

towards the things *they* felt most. She was so assured, and her flower of maidenhood was so scentless. She could look at a lusty, sensual Roman cabman as if he were a sort of grotesque, to make her smile. She knew all about him, in Zola. And the peculiar condescension with which she would give him her order, as if she, frail, beautiful thing, were the only reality, and he, coarse monster, were a sort of Caliban floundering in the mud on the margin of the pool of the perfect lotus, would suddenly enrage the fellow, the real Mediterranean who prided himself on his *beauté mâle*, and to whom the phallic mystery was still the only mystery. And he would turn a terrible face on her, bully her in a brutal, coarse fashion —hideous. For to him she had only the blasphemous impertinence of her own sterility.

Encounters like these made her tremble, and made her know she must have support from the outside. The power of her spirit did not extend to these low people, and they had all the physical power. She realised an implacability of hatred in their turning on her. But she did not lose her head. She quietly paid out money and turned away.

Those were dangerous moments, though, and she learned to be prepared for them. The Princess she was, and the fairy from the North, she could never understand the volcanic phallic rage with which coarse people could turn on her in a paroxysm of hatred. They never turned on her father like that. And quite early she decided it was the New England mother in her whom they hated. Never for one minute could she see with the old Roman eyes, see herself as sterility, the barren flower taking on airs and an intolerable impertinence. This was what the Roman cabman saw in her. And he longed to crush the barren blossom. Its sexless beauty and its authority put him in a passion of brutal revolt.

When she was nineteen her grandfather died, leaving her a considerable fortune in the safe hands of responsible trustees. They would deliver her her income, but only on condition that she resided for six months in the year in the United States.

" Why should they make me conditions ? " she said to her father. " I refuse to be imprisoned six months in the year in the United States. We will tell them to keep their money."

"Let us be wise, my little Princess, let us be wise. No, we are almost poor, and we are never safe from rudeness. I cannot allow anybody to be rude to me. I hate it, I hate it!" His eyes flamed as he said it. "I could kill any man or woman who is rude to me. But we are in exile in the world. We are powerless. If we were really poor, we should be quite powerless, and then I should die. No, my Princess. Let us take their money, then they will not dare to be rude to us. Let us take it, as we put on clothes, to cover ourselves from their aggressions."

There began a new phase, when the father and daughter spent their summers on the Great Lakes, or in California, or in the South-West. The father was something of a poet, the daughter something of a painter. He wrote poems about the lakes or the red-wood trees, and she made dainty drawings. He was physically a strong man, and he loved the out-of-doors. He would go off with her for days, paddling in a canoe and sleeping by a camp-fire. Frail little Princess, she was always undaunted; always undaunted. She would ride with him on horseback over the mountain trails till she was so tired she was nothing but a bodiless consciousness sitting astride her pony. But she never gave in. And at night he folded her in her blankets on a bed of balsam-pine twigs, and she lay and looked at the stars unmurmuring. She was fulfilling her rôle.

People said to her as the years passed, and she was a woman of twenty-five, then a woman of thirty, and always the same virgin dainty Princess, "knowing" in a dispassionate way, like an old woman, and utterly intact:

"Don't you ever think what you will do when your father is no longer with you?"

She looked at her interlocutor with that cold, elfin detachment of hers:

"No, I never think of it," she said.

She had a tiny, but exquisite little house in London, and another small, perfect house in Connecticut, each with a faithful housekeeper. Two homes, if she chose. And she knew many interesting literary and artistic people. What more?

So the years passed imperceptibly. And she had that quality of the sexless fairies, she did not change. At thirty-three she looked twenty-three.

Her father, however, was ageing, and becoming more and more queer. It was now her task to be his guardian in his private madness. He spent the last three years of life in the house in Connecticut. He was very much estranged, sometimes had fits of violence which almost killed the little Princess. Physical violence was horrible to her; it seemed to shatter her heart. But she found a woman a few years younger than herself, well educated and sensitive, to be a sort of nurse-companion to the mad old man. So the fact of madness was never openly admitted. Miss Cummins, the companion, had a passionate loyalty to the Princess, and a curious affection, tinged with love, for the handsome, white-haired, courteous old man, who was never at all aware of his fits of violence once they had passed.

The Princess was thirty-eight years old when her father died. And quite unchanged. She was still tiny, and like a dignified, scentless flower. Her soft brownish hair, almost the colour of beaver fur, was bobbed, and fluffed softly round her apple-blossom face, that was modelled with an arched nose like a proud old Florentine portrait. In her voice, manner and bearing she was exceedingly still, like a flower that has blossomed in a shadowy place. And from her blue eyes looked out the Princess's eternal laconic challenge, that grew almost sardonic as the years passed. She was the Princess, and sardonically she looked out on a princeless world.

She was relieved when her father died, and at the same time, it was as if everything had evaporated around her. She had lived in a sort of hot-house, in the aura of her father's madness. Suddenly the hot-house had been removed from around her, and she was in the raw, vast, vulgar open air.

Quoi faire ? What was she to do ? She seemed faced with absolute nothingness. Only she had Miss Cummins, who shared with her the secret, and almost the passion for her father. In fact the Princess felt that her passion for her mad father had in some curious way transferred itself largely to Charlotte Cummins during the last years. And now Miss Cummins was the vessel that held the passion for the dead man. She herself, the Princess, was an empty vessel.

An empty vessel in the enormous warehouse of the world.

Quoi faire? What was she to do? She felt that, since she could not evaporate into nothingness, like alcohol from an unstoppered bottle, she must *do* something. Never before in her life had she felt the incumbency. Never, never had she felt she must *do* anything. That was left to the vulgar.

Now her father was dead, she found herself on the *fringe* of the vulgar crowd, sharing their necessity to *do* something. It was a little humiliating. She felt herself becoming vulgarised. At the same time she found herself looking at men with a shrewder eye: an eye to marriage. Not that she felt any sudden interest in men, or attraction towards them. No. She was still neither interested nor attracted towards men vitally. But *marriage*, that peculiar abstraction, had imposed a sort of spell on her. She thought that *marriage*, in the blank abstract, was the thing she ought to *do*. That *marriage* implied a man she also knew. She knew all the facts. But the man seemed a property of her own mind rather than a thing in himself, another being.

Her father died in the summer, the month after her thirty-eighth birthday. When all was over, the obvious thing to do, of course, was to travel. With Miss Cummins. The two women knew each other intimately, but they were always Miss Urquhart and Miss Cummins to one another, and a certain distance was instinctively maintained. Miss Cummins, from Philadelphia, of scholastic stock, and intelligent but untravelled, four years younger than the Princess, felt herself immensely the junior of her "lady." She had a sort of passionate veneration for the Princess, who seemed to her ageless, timeless. She could not see the rows of tiny, dainty, exquisite shoes in the Princess's cupboard without feeling a stab at the heart, a stab of tenderness and reverence, almost of awe.

Miss Cummins also was virginal, but with a look of puzzled surprise in her brown eyes. Her skin was pale and clear, her features well modelled, but there was a certain blankness in her expression, where the Princess had an odd touch of Renaissance grandeur. Miss Cummins' voice was also hushed almost to a whisper; it was the inevitable effect of Colin Urquhart's room. But the hushedness had a hoarse quality

The Princess did not want to go to Europe. Her face seemed turned west. Now her father was gone, she felt she would go west, westwards, as if for ever. Following, no doubt, the March of Empire, which is brought up rather short on the Pacific coast, among swarms of wallowing bathers.

No, not the Pacific coast. She would stop short of that. The South-West was less vulgar. She would go to New Mexico.

She and Miss Cummins arrived at the Rancho del Cerro Gordo towards the end of August, when the crowd was beginning to drift back east. The ranch lay by a stream on the desert some four miles from the foot of the mountains, a mile away from the Indian *pueblo* of San Cristobal. It was a ranch for the rich; the Princess paid thirty dollars a day for herself and Miss Cummins. But then she had a little cottage to herself, among the apple-trees of the orchard, with an excellent cook. She and Miss Cummins, however, took dinner at evening in the large guest-house. For the Princess still entertained the idea of *marriage*.

The guests at the Rancho del Cerro Gordo were of all sorts, except the poor sort. They were practically all rich, and many were romantic. Some were charming, others were vulgar, some were movie people, quite quaint and not unattractive in their vulgarity, and many were Jews. The Princess did not care for Jews, though they were usually the most interesting to *talk* to. So she talked a good deal with the Jews, and painted with the artists, and rode with the young men from College, and had altogether quite a good time. And yet she felt something of a fish out of water, or a bird in the wrong forest. And *marriage* remained still completely in the abstract. No connecting it with any of these young men, even the nice ones.

The Princess looked just twenty-five. The freshness of her mouth, the hushed, delicate-complexioned virginity of her face gave her not a day more. Only a certain laconic look in her eyes was disconcerting. When she was *forced* to write her age, she put twenty-eight, making the figure two rather badly, so that it just avoided being a three.

Men hinted marriage at her. Especially boys from college suggested it from a distance. But they all failed before the

look of sardonic ridicule in the Princess's eyes. It always seemed to her rather preposterous, quite ridiculous, and a tiny bit impertinent on their part.

The only man that intrigued her at all was one of the guides, a man called Romero—Domingo Romero. It was he who had sold the ranch itself to the Wilkiesons, ten years before, for two thousand dollars. He had gone away, then reappeared at the old place. For he was the son of the old Romero, the last of the Spanish family that had owned miles of land around San Cristobal. But the coming of the white man and the failure of the vast flocks of sheep, and the fatal inertia which overcomes all men, at last, on the desert near the mountains, had finished the Romero family. The last descendants were just Mexican peasants.

Domingo, the heir, had spent his two thousand dollars, and was working for white people. He was now about thirty years old, a tall, silent fellow, with a heavy closed mouth and black eyes that looked across at one almost sullenly. From behind he was handsome, with a strong, natural body, and the back of his neck very dark and well-shapen, strong with life. But his dark face was long and heavy, almost sinister, with that peculiar heavy meaninglessness in it, characteristic of the Mexicans of his own locality. They are strong, they seem healthy. They laugh and joke with one another. But their physique and their natures seem static, as if there were nowhere, nowhere at all for their energies to go, and their faces, degenerating to misshapen heaviness, seem to have no *raison d'être*, no radical meaning. Waiting either to die or to be aroused into passion and hope. In some of the black eyes a queer, haunting mystic quality, sombre and a bit gruesome, the skull-and-crossbones look of the Penitentes. They had found their *raison d'être* in self-torture and death-worship. Unable to wrest a *positive* significance for themselves from the vast, beautiful, but vindictive landscape they were born into, they turned on their own selves, and worshipped death through self-torture. The mystic gloom of this showed in their eyes.

But as a rule the dark eyes of the Mexicans were heavy and half-alive, sometimes hostile, sometimes kindly, often with the fatal Indian glaze on them, or the fatal Indian glint.

Domingo Romero was *almost* a typical Mexican to look at, with the typical heavy, dark, long face, clean-shaven, with an almost brutally heavy mouth. His eyes were black and Indian-looking. Only, at the centre of their hopelessness was a spark of pride, of self-confidence, of dauntlessness. Just a spark in the midst of the blackness of static despair.

But this spark was the difference between him and the mass of men. It gave a certain alert sensitiveness to his bearing and a certain beauty to his appearance. He wore a low-crowned black hat, instead of the ponderous head-gear of the usual Mexican, and his clothes were thinnish and graceful. Silent, aloof, almost imperceptible in the landscape, he was an admirable guide, with a startling quick intelligence that anticipated difficulties about to arise. He could cook, too, crouching over the camp-fire and moving his lean, deft brown hands. The only fault he had was that he was not forthcoming, he wasn't chatty and cosy.

"Oh, don't send Romero with us," the Jews would say. "One can't get any response from him."

Tourists come and go, but they rarely *see* anything, inwardly. None of them ever saw the spark at the middle of Romero's eye, they were not alive enough to see it.

The Princess caught it one day, when she had him for a guide. She was fishing for trout in the canyon, Miss Cummins was reading a book, the horses were tied under the trees, Romero was fixing a proper fly on her line. He fixed the fly and handed her the line, looking up at her. And at that moment she caught the spark in his eye. And instantly she knew that he was a gentleman, that his "demon," as her father would have said, was a fine demon. And instantly her manner towards him changed.

He had perched her on a rock over a quiet pool, beyond the cotton-wood trees. It was early September, and the canyon already cool, but the leaves of the cotton-woods were still green. The Princess stood on her rock, a small but perfectly-formed figure, wearing a soft, close grey sweater and neatly-cut grey riding breeches, with tall black boots, her fluffy brown hair straggling from under a little grey felt hat. A woman? Not quite. A changeling of some sort, perched in outline there on the rock, in the bristling wild canyon. She knew

perfectly well how to handle a line. Her father had made a fisherman of her.

Romero, in a black shirt and with loose black trousers pushed into wide black riding boots, was fishing a little further down. He had put his hat on a rock behind him; his dark head was bent a little forward, watching the water. He had caught three trout. From time to time he glanced upstream at the Princess, perched there so daintily. He saw she had caught nothing.

Soon he quietly drew in his line and came up to her. His keen eye watched her line, watched her position. Then, quietly, he suggested certain changes to her, putting his sensitive brown hand before her. And he withdrew a little, and stood in silence, leaning against a tree, watching her. He was helping her across the distance. She knew it, and thrilled. And in a moment she had a bite. In two minutes she had landed a good trout. She looked round at him quickly, her eyes sparkling, the colour heightened in her cheeks. And as she met his eyes a smile of greeting went over his dark face, very sudden, with an odd sweetness.

She knew he was helping her. And she felt in his presence a subtle, insidious male *kindliness* she had never known before, waiting upon her. Her cheek flushed, and her blue eyes darkened.

After this, she always looked for him, and for that curious dark beam of a man's kindliness which he could give her, as it were, from his chest, from his heart. It was something she had never known before.

A vague, unspoken intimacy grew up between them. She liked his voice, his appearance, his presence. His natural language was Spanish; he spoke English like a foreign language, rather slow, with a slight hesitation, but with a sad, plangent sonority lingering over from his Spanish. There was a certain subtle correctness in his appearance; he was always perfectly shaved; his hair was thick and rather long on top, but always carefully groomed behind. And his fine black cashmere shirt, his wide leather belt, his well-cut, wide black trousers going into the embroidered cowboy boots had a certain inextinguishable elegance. He wore no silver rings or buckles. Only his boots were embroidered and decorated at the top with an

inlay of white *suède*. He seemed elegant, slender, yet he was very strong.

And at the same time, curiously, he gave her the feeling that death was not far from him. Perhaps he too was half in love with death. However that may be, the sense she had that death was not far from him made him "possible" to her.

Small as she was, she was quite a good horsewoman. They gave her at the ranch a sorrel mare, very lovely in colour, and well-made, with a powerful broad neck and the hollow back that betokens a swift runner. Tansy, she was called. Her only fault was the usual mare's failing, she was inclined to be hysterical.

So that every day the Princess set off with Miss Cummins and Romero, on horseback, riding into the mountains. Once they went camping for several days, with two more friends in the party.

"I think I like it better," the Princess said to Romero, "when we three go alone."

And he gave her one of his quick, transfiguring smiles.

It was curious no white man had ever showed her this capacity for subtle gentleness, this power to *help* her in silence across a distance, if she were fishing without success, or tired of her horse, or if Tansy suddenly got scared. It was as if Romero could send her *from his heart* a dark beam of succour and sustaining. She had never known this before, and it was very thrilling.

Then the smile that suddenly creased his dark face, showing the strong white teeth. It creased his face almost into a savage grotesque. And at the same time there was in it something so warm, such a dark flame of kindliness for her, she was elated into her true Princess self.

Then that vivid, latent spark in his eye, which she had seen, and which she knew he was aware she had seen. It made an inter-recognition between them, silent and delicate. Here he was delicate as a woman in this subtle inter-recognition.

And yet his presence only put to flight in her her *idée fixe* of "marriage." For some reason, in her strange little brain, the idea of *marrying* him could not enter. Not for any definite reason. He was in himself a gentleman, and she had plenty

of money for two. There was no actual obstacle. Nor was she conventional.

No, now she came down to it, it was as if their two "demons" could marry, were perhaps married. Only their two *selves*, Miss Urquhart and Señor Domingo Romero, were for some reason incompatible. There was a peculiar subtle intimacy of inter-recognition between them. But she did not see in the least how it would lead to marriage. Almost she could more easily marry one of the nice boys from Harvard or Yale.

The time passed, and she let it pass. The end of September came, with aspens going yellow on the mountain heights, and oak-scrub going red. But as yet the cotton-woods in the valley and canyons had not changed.

"When will you go away?" Romero asked her, looking at her fixedly, with a blank black eye.

"By the end of October," she said. "I have promised to be in Santa Barbara at the beginning of November."

He was hiding the spark in his eye from her. But she saw the peculiar sullen thickening of his heavy mouth.

She had complained to him many times that one never saw any wild animals, except chipmunks and squirrels, and perhaps a skunk and a porcupine. Never a deer, or a bear, or a mountain lion.

"Are there no bigger animals in these mountains?" she asked, dissatisfied.

"Yes," he said. "There are deer—I see their tracks. And I saw the tracks of a bear."

"But why can one never see the animals themselves?" She looked dissatisfied and wistful like a child.

"Why, it's pretty hard for you to see them. They won't let you come close. You have to keep still, in a place where they come. Or else you have to follow their tracks a long way."

"I can't bear to go away till I've seen them: a bear, or a deer—"

The smile came suddenly on his face, 'ndulgent.

"Well, what do you want? Do you want to go up into the mountains to some place, to wait till they come?"

"Yes," she said, looking up at him with a sudden naïve impulse of recklessness.

And immediately his face became sombre again, responsible.

"Well," he said, with slight irony, a touch of mockery of her. "You will have to find a house. It's very cold at night now. You would have to stay all night in a house."

"And there are no houses up there?" she said.

"Yes," he replied. "There is a little shack that belongs to me, that a miner built a long time ago, looking for gold. You can go there and stay one night, and maybe you see something. Maybe! I don't know. Maybe nothing come."

"How much chance is there?"

"Well, I don't know. Last time when I was there I see three deer come down to drink at the water, and I shot two raccoons. But maybe this time we don't see anything."

"Is there water there?" she asked.

"Yes, there is a little round pond, you know, below the spruce trees. And the water from the snow runs into it."

"Is it far away?" she asked.

"Yes, pretty far. You see that ridge there"—and turning to the mountains he lifted his arm in the gesture which is somehow so moving, out in the West, pointing to the distance—"that ridge where there are no trees, only rock"—his black eyes were focussed on the distance, his face impassive, but as if in pain—"you go round that ridge, and along, then you come down through the spruce trees to where that cabin is. My father he bought that place, claim from a miner who was broke, but nobody ever found any gold or anything, and nobody ever goes there. Too lonesome!"

The Princess watched the massive, heavy-sitting, beautiful bulk of the Rocky Mountains. It was early in October, and the aspens were already losing their gold leaves; high up, the spruce and pine seemed to be growing darker; the great flat patches of oak-scrub on the heights were red like gore.

"Can I go over there?" she asked, turning to him and meeting the spark in his eye.

His face was heavy with responsibility.

"Yes," he said, "you can go. But there'll be snow over the ridge, and it's awful cold, and awful lonesome."

"I should like to go," she said, persistent.

"All right," he said. "You can go if you want to."

She doubted, though, if the Wilkiesons would let her go ; at least alone with Romero and Miss Cummins.

Yet an obstinacy characteristic of her nature, an obstinacy tinged perhaps with madness, had taken hold of her. She wanted to look over the mountains into their secret heart. She wanted to descend to the cabin below the spruce trees, near the tarn of bright green water. She wanted to see the wild animals move about in their wild unconsciousness.

" Let us say to the Wilkiesons that we want to make the trip round the Frijoles canyon," she said.

The trip round the Frijoles canyon was a usual thing. It would not be strenuous, nor cold, nor lonely : they could sleep in the log house that was called an hotel.

Romero looked at her quickly.

" If you want to say that," he replied, " you can tell Mrs. Wilkieson. Only I know she'll be mad with me if I take you up in the mountains to that place. And I've got to go there first with a pack-horse, to take lots of blankets and some bread. Maybe Miss Cummins can't stand it. Maybe not. It's a hard trip."

He was speaking, and thinking, in the heavy, disconnected Mexican fashion.

" Never mind ! " The Princess was suddenly very decisive and stiff with authority. " I want to do it. I will arrange with Mrs. Wilkieson. And we'll go on Saturday."

He shook his head slowly.

" I've got to go up on Sunday with a pack-horse and blankets," he said. " Can't do it before."

" Very well ! " she said, rather piqued. " Then we'll start on Monday."

She hated being thwarted even the tiniest bit.

He knew that if he started with the pack on Sunday at dawn he would not be back until late at night. But he consented that they should start on Monday morning at seven. The obedient Miss Cummins was told to prepare for the Frijoles trip. On Sunday Romero had his day off. He had not put in an appearance when the Princess retired on Sunday night, but on Monday morning, as she was dressing, she saw him bringing in the three horses from the corral. She was in high spirits.

The night had been cold. There was ice at the edges of the irrigation ditch, and the chipmunks crawled into the sun and lay with wide, dumb, anxious eyes, almost too numb to run.

"We may be away two or three days," said the Princess.

"Very well. We won't begin to be anxious about you before Thursday, then," said Mrs. Wilkieson, who was young and capable: from Chicago. "Anyway," she added, "Romero will see you through. He's so trustworthy."

The sun was already on the desert as they set off towards the mountains, making the greasewood and the sage pale as pale-grey sands, luminous the great level around them. To the right glinted the shadows of the adobe *pueblo*, flat and almost invisible on the plain, earth of its earth. Behind lay the ranch and the tufts of tall, plumy cottonwoods, whose summits were yellowing under the perfect blue sky.

Autumn breaking into colour in the great spaces of the South-West.

But the three trotted gently along the trail, towards the sun that sparkled yellow just above the dark bulk of the ponderous mountains. Sideslopes were already gleaming yellow, flaming with a second light, under the coldish blue of the pale sky. The front slopes were in shadow, with submerged lustre of red oak-scrub and dull-gold aspens, blue-black pines and grey-blue rock. While the canyon was full of a deep blueness.

They rode single file, Romero first, on a black horse. Himself in black, he made a flickering black spot in the delicate pallor of the great landscape, where even pine-trees at a distance take a film of blue paler than their green. Romero rode on in silence past the tufts of furry greasewood. The Princess came next, on her sorrel mare. And Miss Cummins, who was not quite happy on horseback, came last, in the pale dust that the others kicked up. Sometimes her horse sneezed, and she started.

But on they went, at a gentle trot. Romero never looked round. He could hear the sound of the hoofs following, and that was all he wanted.

For the rest, he held ahead. And the Princess, with that black, unheeding figure always travelling away from her, felt strangely helpless, withal elated.

They neared the pale, round foot-hills, dotted with the round dark piñon and cedar shrubs. The horses clinked and clattered among stones. Occasionally a big round grease-wood held out fleecy tufts of flowers, pure gold. They wound into blue shadow, then up a steep stony slope, with the world lying pallid away behind and below. Then they dropped into the shadow of the San Cristobal canyon.

The stream was running full and swift. Occasionally the horses snatched at a tuft of grass. The trail narrowed and became rocky, the rocks closed in, it was dark and cool as the horses climbed and climbed upwards, and the tree-trunks crowded in in the shadowy, silent tightness of the canyon. They were among cottonwood trees that ran up straight and smooth and round to an extraordinary height. Above, the tips were gold, and it was sun. But away below, where the horses struggled up the rocks and wound among the trunks, there was still blue shadow by the sound of waters, and an occasional grey festoon of old-man's-beard, and here and there a pale, dipping cranesbill flower among the tangle and the debris of the virgin place. And again the chill entered the Princess's heart as she realised what a tangle of decay and despair lay in the virgin forests.

They scrambled downwards, splashed across stream, up rocks and along the trail on the other side. Romero's black horse stopped, looked down quizzically at the fallen trees, then stepped over lightly. The Princess's sorrel followed, carefully, But Miss Cummins's buckskin made a fuss, and had to be got round.

In the same silence, save for the clinking of the horses and the splashing as the trail crossed stream, they worked their way upwards in the tight, tangled shadow of the canyon. Sometimes, crossing stream, the Princess would glance up-wards, and then always her heart caught in her breast. For high up, away in heaven, the mountain heights shone yellow, dappled with dark spruce firs, clear almost as speckled daffodils against the pale turquoise blue lying high and serene above the dark-blue shadow where the Princess was. And she would snatch at the blood-red leaves of the oak as her horse crossed a more open slope, not knowing what she felt.

They were getting fairly high, occasionally lifted above the canyon itself, in the low groove below the speckled, gold-

sparkling heights which towered beyond. Then again they dipped and crossed stream, the horses stepping gingerly across a tangle of fallen, frail aspen stems, then suddenly floundering in a mass of rocks. The black emerged ahead, his black tail waving. The Princess let her mare find her own footing ; then she too emerged from the clatter. She rode on after the black. Then came a great frantic rattle of the buckskin behind. The Princess was aware of Romero's dark face looking round, with a strange, demon-like watchfulness, before she herself looked round, to see the buckskin scrambling rather lamely beyond the rocks, with one of his pale buff knees already red with blood.

"He almost went down ! " called Miss Cummins.

But Romero was already out of the saddle and hastening down the path. He made quiet little noises to the buckskin, and began examining the cut knee.

"Is he hurt ? " cried Miss Cummins anxiously, and she climbed hastily down.

"Oh, my goodness ! " she cried, as she saw the blood running down the slender buff leg of the horse in a thin trickle. "Isn't that *awful* ? " She spoke in a stricken voice, and her face was white.

Romero was still carefully feeling the knee of the buckskin. Then he made him walk a few paces. And at last he stood up straight and shook his head.

"Not very bad ! " he said. "Nothing broken."

Again he bent and worked at the knee. Then he looked up at the Princess.

"He can go on," he said. "It's not bad."

The Princess looked down at the dark face in silence.

"What, go on right up here ? " cried Miss Cummins. "How many hours ? "

"About five," said Romero simply.

"Five hours ! " cried Miss Cummins. "A horse with a lame knee ! And a steep mountain ! Why-y ! "

"Yes, it's pretty steep up there," said Romero, pushing back his hat and staring fixedly at the bleeding knee. The buckskin stood in a stricken sort of dejection. "But I think he'll make it all right," the man added.

"Oh!" cried Miss Cummins, her eyes bright with sudden passion of unshed tears. "I wouldn't think of it. I wouldn't ride him up there, not for any money."

"Why wouldn't you?" asked Romero.

"It *hurts* him."

Romero bent down again to the horse's knee.

"Maybe it hurts him a little," he said. "But he can make it all right, and his leg won't get stiff."

"What! Ride him five hours up the steep mountains?" cried Miss Cummins. "I couldn't. I just couldn't do it. I'll lead him a little way and see if he can go. But I *couldn't* ride him again. I couldn't. Let me walk."

"But Miss Cummins, dear, if Romero says he'll be all right?" said the Princess.

"I know it hurts him. Oh, I just couldn't bear it."

There was no doing anything with Miss Cummins. The thought of a hurt animal always put her into a sort of hysterics.

They walked forward a little, leading the buckskin. He limped rather badly. Miss Cummins sat on a rock.

"Why, it's agony to see him!" she cried. "It's *cruel*!"

"He won't limp after a bit, if you take no notice of him," said Romero. "Now he plays up, and limps very much, because he wants to make you see."

"I don't think there can be much playing up," said Miss Cummins bitterly. "We can *see* how it must hurt him."

"It don't hurt much," said Romero.

But now Miss Cummins was silent with antipathy.

It was a deadlock The party remained motionless on the trail, the Princess in the saddle, Miss Cummins seated on a rock, Romero standing black and remote near the drooping buckskin.

"Well!" said the man suddenly at last. "I guess we go back, then."

And he looked up swiftly at his horse, which was cropping at the mountain herbage and treading on the trailing reins.

"No!" cried the Princess. "Oh no!" Her voice rang with a great wail of disappointment and anger. Then she checked herself.

Miss Cummins rose with energy.

"Let me lead the buckskin home," she said, with cold dignity, "and you two go on."

This was received in silence. The Princess was looking down at her with a sardonic, almost cruel gaze.

"We've only come about two hours," said Miss Cummins. "I don't mind a bit leading him home. But I *couldn't* ride him. I *couldn't* have him ridden with that knee."

This again was received in dead silence. Romero remained impassive, almost inert.

"Very well, then," said the Princess. "You lead him home. You'll be quite all right. Nothing can happen to you, possibly. And say to them that we have gone on and shall be home to-morrow—or the day after."

She spoke coldly and distinctly. For she could not bear to be thwarted.

"Better all go back, and come again another day," said Romero—non-committal.

"There will never *be* another day," cried the Princess. "I want to go on."

She looked him square in the eyes, and met the spark in his eye.

He raised his shoulders slightly.

"If you want it," he said. "I'll go on with you. But Miss Cummins can ride my horse to the end of the canyon, and I lead the buckskin. Then I come back to you."

It was arranged so. Miss Cummins had her saddle put on Romero's black horse, Romero took the buckskin's bridle, and they started back. The Princess rode very slowly on, upwards, alone. She was at first so angry with Miss Cummins that she was blind to everything else. She just let her mare follow her own inclinations.

(*To be continued next month.*)

Poems

By ROBERT GRAVES.

The Clipped Stater.

He, Alexander, had been deified
By loud applause of the Macedonian phalanx,
By sullen groans of the wide worlds he had vanquished.
Who but a God could have so hacked down their pride ?

He would not take a Goddess to his Throne
In the elder style, remembering those disasters
That Juno's jealous eye brought on her Consort.
Thäis was fair ; but he must hold his own.

Nor would he rank himself a common god
In fellowship with those of Ind or Egypt
Whom he had shamed : even to Jove his father
Paid scant respect (as Jove stole Saturn's Nod).

Now meditates " No land of all known lands
Has offered me resistance, none denies me
Infinite power, infinite thought and knowledge :
What now awaits the assurance of my hands ? "

He weeps : the occasion, documented well,
Begins my now for the first time recorded
And philosophic tale of *The Clipped Stater*
(Though how it came to me, I must not tell).

Alexander in a fever of mind
Reasons " Omnipotence by its very nature
Is infinite possibility and purpose,
Which must embrace, *that it can be confined*."

Then Finity is true Godhead's final test,
Nor does it shear the grandeur from Free Being ;
" I must fulfil my self by self-destruction."
The curious phrase renews his conquering zest.

THE CALENDAR

He assumes man's flesh. Djinn catch him up and fly
To a land of yellow men beyond his knowledge,
And that he does not know them, he takes gladly
For surest proof he has put his Godhead by.

In Macedonia shortly it is said
"Alexander, our God, has died of a fever:
Demi-gods parcel out his huge dominions."
So Alexander, as God, is duly dead.

But Alexander the Man, whom yellow folk
Find roving naked, armed with a naked cutlass,
Has Death, which is the strangers' fate, excused him.
Joyfully he submits to the alien yoke.

He is enlisted for the frontier guard
With gaol-rogues and the press-gang's easy captures;
Where captains who have felt the Crown's displeasure
But have thought suicide too direct and hard,

Teach him a new tongue and the soldier's trade
To which the trade *he* taught has little likeness,
So that he glories in his limitations:
At every turn his hands and feet are stayed.

"Who was your father, friend?" He answers "Jove,"
"His father?" "Saturn." "And *his* father?" "Chaos."
"And *his?*" Thus Alexander loses honour
Ten fathers is the least that a man should prove.

Stripes and bastinadoes, famine and thirst,
All these he suffers, never in resolution
Wavering, nor in his heart enquiring whether
God can be by his own confines accursed.

And he grows grey and eats his frugal rice;
Endures his watch on the fort's icy ramparts,
Staring across the uncouth wildernesses,
And cleans his leather and steel; and shakes the dice.

He will not dream Olympicly, nor stir
To enlarge himself with comforts or promotion,
Nor evade punishment when, sour of temper,
He has pulled the corporal's nose and called him "cur."

His comrades mutinously demand their pay.
" We have had none since the Emperor's Coronation.
At one gold piece a year there are fifteen owing.
One-third that sum would bribe us free," say they.

The pay-sack came at length, when hope was cold,
But much reduced in bulk since the first issue
By the Royal Treasurer ; and he, be certain,
Kept back a half of the silver and all the gold.

Every official hand had dipped in the sack
And the frontier captains, themselves disappointed
Of long arrears took every doit remaining,
But from good feelings put a trifle back.

Telling their men " since no pay has come through
We will advance from our too lavish purses
To every man of the guard, a piece of silver.
Let it be repaid when you have your overdue."

The soldiers grumbling but much satisfied
By thoughts of a drink and a drab, accept the favour,
And Alexander advancing to the pay-desk
Salutes and takes his earnings with no pride.

The coin is bored, to string with the country's bronze
On a cord, one side is scraped to glassy smoothness
And the Head, clipped of its hair and neck, bears witness
That it had a broad, more generous mintage once.

And Alexander gazing at it then
Knows it well for a Silver Alexander
Coined from the bullion taken at Arbela.
How is it current among these slant-eyed men ?

He stands in a troubled reverie of doubt
Till a whip stings his shoulders and a voice bellows
" Are you dissatisfied, you scum of the ditches ? "
So he salutes again and turns about.

But he cannot fathom what the event may mean.
Was his lost Empire, then, not all-embracing ?
And how does the stater, though defaced, owe service
To a God that is as if he had never been ?

Is he still God ? No, truly. Then all he knows
Is he must keep the course he has resolved on ;
He spends the coin on a feast of fish and almonds,
And back to the ramparts briskly enough he goes.

Essay on Knowledge.

Be assured, the Dragon is not dead,
Who once more from the pools of peace
Shall rear his fabulous green head.

The flowers of innocence shall cease
And like a harp the wind shall roar
And the clouds shake an angry fleece.

" Here, here is certitude," you swore,
" Below this lightning-blasted tree.
Where once it strikes, it strikes no more."

(Fool !) And you sang " Here is a Three
And in this Three love lives unshaken
As now, so must it always be."

You sang with harsh notes to awaken
That ancient toad who sits immured
Within your hearth-stone, light-forsaken.

He knows that limits long endured
Must open out in vanity.
That gates by bolts of gold secured
Must open out in vanity.

That thunder bursts from the blue sky,
That gardens of the mind fall waste.
That age-established brooks run dry.
That age-established brooks run dry.

A Letter from Wales.

Richard Rolls to his friend, Captain Abel Wright. *

This is a question of identity
Which I can't answer. Abel, I'll presume
On your good-nature, asking you to help me.
I hope you will, since you too are involved
As deeply in the problem as myself.
Who are we? Take down your old diary, please,
The one you kept in France, if you *are* you
Who served in the Black Fusiliers with me.
That is, again, of course, if I am I—
This isn't Descartes' philosophic doubt
But as I say a question of identity
And practical enough.—Turn up the date,
July the twenty-fourth, nineteen-sixteen,
And read the entry there.
"*To-day I met*
Meredith, transport-sergeant of the Second.
He told me that Dick Rolls had died of wounds.
I found out Doctor Dunn, and he confirms it;
Dunn says he wasn't in much pain, he thinks."

Then the first draft of a verse-epitaph
Expanded later into a moving poem.
"Death straddled on your bed : you groaned and tried
To stare him out, but in that death-stare died."

Yes, died, poor fellow, the day he came of age.
But then appeared a second Richard Rolls
(Or that's the view that the facts force on me)
Showing Dick's features to support his claim
To rank and pay and friendship, Abel, with you.
And you acknowledged him as the old Dick,
Despite all evidence to the contrary,
Because, I think, you missed the dead too much.
You came up here to Wales to stay with him
And I don't know for sure, but I suspect

*The characters and incidents are unhistorical.