

Where is, or was, that fairyland to which Una Bawn and Anna Grace were snatched away? According to Mr. Baring-Gould, there is a legendary sunken island "seven days' sail westward from the coast of Clare." This is the fabled land of perpetual youth. Old Irish

peasants say that "you can buy happiness there for a penny." Perhaps this is the fairies' paradise? But do fairies ever die? "Blake," as Mr. Yeats reminds us, "once saw a fairy's funeral; but in Ireland," he adds, "we think they are *immortal*."

ALLELUIA

BY KATHARINE TYNAN

WITH Windflower now and Daffodil
That bird they call Cuckoo
Goes shouting now o'er vale and hill
His Allelu —
Alleluia!

He feasts him on the Cuckoo's-meat,
The Wood-sorrel so new;
And shouts his grace ere he doth eat —
His Allelu —
Alleluia!

Sith Christ hath left the wormy grave
The world's in green and blue;
This clerk sings piously his stave —
His Allelu —
Alleluia!

Up hearts! for Jesus Christ His sake,
Who by His dying slew
Both sin and death. Here's one awake
Calls Allelu —
Alleluia!

W. C. BROWNELL

BY GEORGE McLEAN HARPER

THE highest function of criticism is to plan those reconstructions that are forever necessary. Matthew Arnold is as clear an example of the professional critic as England produced in the nineteenth century; and between him and other writers, his contemporaries, there was a difference, not so much of power as of position and intention. It was evident from the first that he was trying to create in the minds of his countrymen a certain order; his effort was to broaden the basis of their life and make a new arrangement of its elements, — in a word, to synthesize. The opportunity for synthesis was never more inviting anywhere than it is in America. Here and there we have accomplishment and character. But accomplishment with us is generally dislocated, and character starves for want of a sustaining *milieu*. We are a nation, but scarcely a society. Only now and again have we been effectively touched by the Time-spirit. The German *Aufklärung*, which was educational and religious, failed to enlighten our ancestors, who were still busy on the frontiers and occupied with political organization. The spirit of the French Revolution, a spirit as much social as political, aroused in our young cities a reaction partly religious, partly aristocratic. The historico-critical movement of the last generation in Europe dies when it touches our shore. Every age desires above all things to be interpreted to itself. If such an interpretation of the present age should be granted, it is to be feared that America must be

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left out of the reckoning. We have scarcely begun the work of analyzing and assessing our intellectual resources, which must go before synthesis.

It is my purpose to review the social and literary studies of Mr. William Crary Brownell, a professional critic who has done much to sober our judgments of ourselves, and to make us see the achievements of our best writers in a perspective that may fairly be called cosmopolitan. I shall refer to his art criticism only as it appears to have enriched his equipment and modified his general attitude.

Twenty-one years have elapsed since the publication of his *French Traits*, which is a study no less of American than of French life, and perhaps more safely based on the American side of the comparison. With the publication of his *French Art*, in 1892, he gave evidence of highly specialized knowledge in a sphere of activity peculiarly exacting. Nine years later he gathered into a volume called *Victorian Prose Masters* his essays on Thackeray, Carlyle, George Eliot, Matthew Arnold, Ruskin, and Meredith. And between 1903 and 1909 he has published, in *Scribner's Magazine* and the *Atlantic Monthly*, essays on Hawthorne, Henry James, Cooper, Lowell, Poe, and Emerson, which he has expanded and reprinted as *American Prose Masters*.

It is plainly not Mr. Brownell's chosen task to contribute directly to what would at the present time be the vain labor of synthesis. He commends no social philosophy. He is one of those

who sow the seed of discontent. Such glimpses of his own view of life as he permits us to catch reveal a serene mind which has come to rest securely somewhere; but the effect of his criticism upon his readers is to dissolve false security. In artistic matters we are liable to accept the will for the deed, or at least the effort for the accomplishment. The tendency of our optimism is to overestimate the value of activity, of effectiveness, and to disregard the end. We exhort one another to be enthusiastic; but what is really important is that we should have worthy ideals. Loyalty is preached to us. But loyalty to what? We even hear it proclaimed that faith is in itself a virtue, irrespective of its object. Plainly the first duty of a critic is to question the validity of what the world accepts as true, and the propriety of the world's tastes.

Mr. Brownell is a master of the art of making distinctions and testing accepted claims. To make distinctions and test claims involves either reference to some canon of value or comparison with examples outside the ken or the sympathy of the ordinary observer. Precept may boast its converts, but example has the more primitive prestige, and has been a thousand times more often triumphant. Again, criticism can be applied from a point inside the circle of things judged, or from a point without. It can be implicated and standardized, or, on the other hand, detached and of protean form. Mr. Brownell's criticism is essentially undomestic, and although far from lawless it is not dogmatic. He realizes that a critical movement related closely to an American standard of taste and limited by an American horizon would be provincial, would be, above all, illusory.

If Mr. Brownell has not been pilloried by a patriotic press for his *French Traits*, he may thank the successful complexity of his style. For the inter-

est of this very candid book, for American readers, lies in its comments on us, and the victory in its war of contrasts falls almost uniformly to France. The French, he says, have accepted the results of the Revolution. They are loyally attached to democratic principles, which they are endeavoring, with characteristic devotion to logic, to apply in detail. One fundamental doctrine of the Revolution is that it shall never cease, because change means health. "How idle it is," he exclaims, "to commiserate them for their instability, when not stability but flux is their ideal." Another leading doctrine of French democracy is that not precedent but reason — contemporary, practical reason — shall be the criterion of movement. "The revolutionary spirit," he tells us, "is the reforming and revising instinct. . . . It has invariably a programme." The application of ideas to life, notably of these two master ideas, is with the French but little obstructed by cant and false sentiment. They trust their principles, and are not afraid to see them at work. What is rational has the best possible guarantee of safety.

Democracy in France, thus loyally recognized and put to use, has become a network of channels by means of which the naturally strong social instinct of the French race has poured itself over the entire field of their life. In France, society is the measure of all things. This fact is in itself a liberation from many forms of narrowness and meanness. It enlarges the national mind, elevates the individual towards and even above the level of the whole, and rationalizes patriotism. Hence the French, despite their proverbial self-satisfaction, their disinclination to travel, their indifference to what is foreign, are not really provincial. Hence, too, art and manners flourish supremely well in France. Art flourishes, because

it is a distinguished branch of public service; manners flourish, because human respect is of their essence.

By way of contrast, Mr. Brownell represents Americans as untrue to their profession of democracy, as inheriting the English empirical habit instead of obeying the dictates of reason, and as suffering from the provincial crudeness that results, in a republic, from hampering the social instinct. Among the preventable causes of our unintelligence and bad manners, there is, he argues, at least this very important one, that our theory of democracy is in large part a pretense.

We are perhaps painfully conscious of our minor faults. To be told that they are not being overcome because we have lost faith in the principles of democracy, — that our manners and our art would be more distinguished if equality were in fact, and not merely in half-hearted profession, our political and social ideal, — this is the new and salutary lesson. Not as we are provincial, but as we are false, do we come behind the French in the art of living. And certainly provincialism, in its own awkward way, has done something to supply color and variety, the lack of which in America depresses foreign observers.

The structural lines in *Victorian Prose Masters* are simple and important, but are likely to be overlooked by a reader whose attention is absorbed by the bewildering multiplicity of views which the book contains. The number of these views, and still more their subtlety, incline one at first to consider them the result of extreme cleverness. But nothing could be more unjust than to regard Mr. Brownell as a clever thinker. He shows himself everywhere ready to sacrifice mere point for the sake of justness, to disregard, for example, the danger of being obscure or of seeming to be commonplace. Ob-

scure he sometimes is, and stands in so far without excuse, but really commonplace he never is. In spite of a superficial appearance to the contrary, these essays are not groups of witty but inconsequential "good things," like Mr. Birrell's *Obiter Dicta*, nor are they a parade of learning and legerdemain, as some of Lowell's essays unquestionably are, — prodigal and even prodigious in their cleverness, and a sort of pedantry, however delightful. What distinguishes Mr. Brownell is something quite incompatible with the desire to shine. This is, it seems to me, his power of restraining and directing a naturally emotional nature by a spirit of judicial coolness.

A philosophy, neither vague nor yet obtrusively declared, lies behind these studies, and accounts for their fundamental simplicity. But what concerns us first is the simplicity of Mr. Brownell's method. It is easily possible to apprehend the central thought in each essay. For he is in so far a disciple of Taine that he always delves for the master-trait.

Extraordinary force, self-consciousness, and willfulness, Mr. Brownell marks as the most salient traits of Carlyle. "He did not know what love is." "His mind monopolized his feeling." "It is his thinking, not himself, that is agitated." Is it not possible that Mr. Brownell was still too much affected by the long-time obsessing *Reminiscences*, when he wrote in this strain? Is it not a little petulant to complain that Carlyle was not *good*, an implication that pervades Mr. Brownell's essay, and to note with disapproval his way of obtruding into criticism and history a body of doctrine, which is judged to be rather exiguous after all? For we must take genius as we find it, and a self-effacing, quiet-mannered, disinterested Carlyle would be no Carlyle at all. Whether we disapprove or

not of applying the spirit and method of poetry to philosophical and historical subjects, to such subjects as are treated in *Sartor Resartus*, *Cromwell*, and *Past and Present*, Carlyle specifically works with a poet's purpose and in a poet's manner, by an inner light which is nothing other than personality.

Mr. Brownell, I think, occupies himself too much with Carlyle's origins and temperament, and takes too little account of what Sainte-Beuve calls "a certain contrary," the supplementary and often inconspicuous qualities that count in rounding out a character. Yet there can be no dissentient voice to the judgment which finds excess and caprice to be Carlyle's most crying defects. Nor is Mr. Brownell too severe when he notes "the plebeian antagonism to democracy that leads him to consider the spirit of the time as negligible except as incarnated in the hero." And he is stating an obvious truth when he declares that the two supreme influences of the nineteenth century "found in Carlyle an instinctive and deliberate antagonist: science he neglected, democracy he decried." A much too drastic inference is drawn from this fact, in a passage from which, to represent it fairly, I must make a long citation: "To be out of harmony with one's time and environment is a heavy handicap on energy, which is thus inevitably deflected instead of developed, however it may be intensified by isolation. It is inherently inimical to expansion, and Carlyle may really be said to have devoted his prodigious powers to the endeavor to transform the 'epoch of expansion' in which he passed his life into an 'epoch of concentration,' to adopt Arnold's terminology. Unaided, or aided only by the futile of the intellectual world, the Froudes, the Kingsleys, the Ruskins, such an attempt must be both transitory and incomplete."

It is to the major premise of this syllogism that I take exception, namely, that revolt against one's time and environment is a handicap on energy and inimical to expansion. Rather it is a generator of energy and a mode of expansion. Undoubtedly Carlyle reacted against the scientific and democratic free-thought which was in the end to prevail. Undoubtedly his efforts were not crowned with direct success. But as we look back now upon the fifty years that lie between 1815 and 1865, it seems to be a period marked as deeply by its reactions as by its forward movements. And while specifically reactionary, — but, be it said, not therefore necessarily futile, — the animating spirit of Carlyle's lifework, and its contagious principle, was independence. He wrought upon the youth of his time, not as Newman and Ruskin wrought, in the interest of mediævalism, but all for modernism. He did not underestimate the volume and momentum of the positive movement, the movement of expansion. If he attempted prematurely to synthesize, he limited, of course, his reputation as a prophet, but he also vindicated the immunities of individual thought and feeling. This was his contribution to the side of expansion. Perhaps he was thus more useful to it than if he had joined the hue and cry of optimists who proclaimed that all would soon be well in Zion.

One of the futile of the intellectual world — this is the clue to Mr. Brownell's delving for the master-trait of Ruskin. As in the case of Carlyle, he finds it to be a too confident release of personality, or, to look upon the matter from another point, a too unquestioning reliance upon the inner light. Ruskin was characterized by the "predominance of the emotional sense over the thinking power." He was "a pure sentimentalist." It is unusual and per-

haps salutary to behold Ruskin treated with a complete lack of reverence by one who is as free as possible from the bondage of philistinism. He is treated, of course, without a trace of levity, in this case. Mr. Brownell leaves him little except a wonderful, though unclassical and vitiated style, philanthropic motives, and the distinction of having been "the most attentive, the most affectionate, the most eloquent, the most persuasive apostle of nature." He denies him any fitness to write about art; "he neither recognized its limitations, nor acquiesced in its office, nor apprehended its distinction." Naturally this contention opens the way to a treatment of the claims of art for art's sake, and the respective demands of the senses and of reason, including morals and utility, in contemplating works of art. And nowhere are Mr. Brownell's judicial fairness and the generous maturity of his spirit better shown than in this debate.

Again, he finds Ruskin's social and economic preaching futile. But we should not judge too pragmatically the foiled searchers, the shocked reactionaries, of the Victorian period. As Carlyle's prophecies made, in the long run, for independence and for strength of will, so I believe Ruskin's rhapsodies made, on the whole, for truthfulness, and that too in a sphere with which Englishmen were indisposed to associate the idea of truthfulness at all. Art meant nothing to Ruskin except as it illustrated nature or edified man. These two objectives Ruskin kept steadily in view, not only in his art criticism, but equally in his economic exhortations; and I see no reason to hold that the moment was ill-chosen for preaching truth to nature, and utility to the whole man, as criteria in art and politics.

Arnold is a classic, in a sense in which Ruskin and Carlyle are not. He

is a classic because of the unfailing harmony between his impulses, his equipment, his object, and his medium. If to a certain class of minds he makes but an ineffectual appeal, a class of minds that require above all a forcible impact, and generally an obviously emotional one, the cause is perhaps disclosed in what Mr. Brownell acutely finds to be the formula of his harmony, namely, that "he directed his nature, as well as he directed his work, in accordance with the definite ideal of reason." Readers of the very numerous class to which I refer associate the idea of literary genius not so much with definiteness and with reason, as with power, somewhat vaguely composed and irresponsibly set in motion.

More and more the preëminence of Arnold among English critics is coming to be acknowledged, because time is bringing into relief the soundness of his views, the sincerity of his purpose, and the excellence of his style. "The critical sense is so far from frequent," says Mr. Henry James, "that it is absolutely rare, and that the possession of the cluster of qualities that minister to it is one of the highest distinctions. It is a gift inestimably precious and beautiful." Mr. James appears to regard curiosity and sympathy, quickness to appreciate and take fire, in a word, sensitiveness to impressions, as the mistress of these qualities. But if, as Mr. Brownell affirms, Arnold stands alone among English critics, he does so because his whole nature was symmetrically cultivated, and because no other has "his faculty of extracting their application from the precedents indicated by culture."

The most effective service of Mr. Brownell's essay is to explain the nature and resources of Arnold's art as a critic, and to place in a true light his theological writings. Arnold's criticism is not impressionistic, not "the irresponsible

exercise of the nervous system, however attuned to taste and sensitized by culture." It has behind it a body of doctrine. I wish I could agree with Mr. Brownell in thinking that Arnold almost escaped the perils of didacticism, that he had an eminent gift for seeing things as they really are, and for penetrating the personalities of other men. It seems to me that in none of these respects was he conspicuously well endowed by nature, and that his distinction lies in the centrality, the classical quality of his culture, and in the art by which he applied its lessons. For example, one cannot be sure that his picture of Falkland is a true picture. His achievement in this case is to have been guided by his culture to find an historical figure who could, by an infusion of his own purpose, be made to serve as a rebuke to our age. Culture determined his choice of a figure, as it opened his eyes to the evil of contentiousness and a warlike spirit. His art showed itself in the cunning simplicity with which he composed the picture, in the deft turn of its application, and in his pure and memorable language.

In like manner, it was the centrality of his culture, his success, partly from fortune and partly from careful habit, in keeping close to the best line of tradition and yet free of access to the *Zeitgeist*, that enabled him so early among men of English speech to see that the vital quality of Christianity depends not on prophecy, or on miracles, or on metaphysics. He never underestimated the distinctive features of Christianity, though as a humanist he was incapable of exaggerating them. Mr. Brownell admirably says: "Nearly the whole thinking world, save that portion of it committed to the defense of dogma, has practically, if insensibly, come to adopt his view that the sanction of religion is its natural truth." When we ask ourselves what theory

or what faculty drew him to the study of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, acquainted him with Renan, impelled him to an attitude of discipleship toward Sainte-Beuve and Scherer, and turned him to the contemporary German exponents of the critico-historical method, we shall be perhaps no further advanced. The simple fact is that his education opened these lines to him and enabled him to see their correlation. No one exercised a more direct and practical influence upon him than Sainte-Beuve, to whom he was indebted for at least half of the subjects treated in the original edition of *Essays in Criticism*. And of Sainte-Beuve also it may be said that his unique quality was the generality of his literary and historical culture, uniting and covering all salient traits.

Mr. Brownell's theory of criticism derives from Taine; his manner, in so far as it is not original, derives from Mr. Henry James. Naturally therefore he seems less conscious of the peculiarities of Mr. James's manner than of his theory. It is not surprising that the subtlest element in his essay on Mr. James is his comment on the doctrine of "disinterestedness," of which Mr. James is so distinguished an adept. "It is," remarks Mr. Brownell, "not precise enough to say that Mr. James's mind is essentially critical, and that therefore his attitude is essentially detached. There are two sufficiently distinct varieties of the critical mind, the philosophical and the scientific. Mr. James's is the latter. . . . So far as fiction is a criticism of life, it is so because it exhibits a philosophy of life, in general or in some particular. It is far more the scientific habit of viewing life and its phenomena that Mr. James illustrates." This penetrating statement goes far to account for Mr. James's aridity, and to justify the very general opinion that his art savors too much of

virtuosity. To be disinterestedly curious — if anybody can be so indeed — is felt not to be an interesting attitude. This is the measure of the immense sacrifice Mr. James makes to his theory. While Mr. Brownell eminently appreciates Mr. James's achievement, he manages, with much fine discrimination, to express a profound misgiving as to the direction he has pursued.

The literary work of James Russell Lowell has never before been subjected to a perfectly unflinching analysis. The brightness of his personal charm has hitherto made scrutiny blink. Mr. Brownell, in an essay which is as direct and simple as the essay on Mr. James is perplexed, reaches a conclusion in regard to Lowell's prose which is as just as it is disillusioning. "The critical temperament is a reflective one," he says; and Lowell was "temperamentally energetic, but reflectively indolent." Starting from this remark, which is nothing if not clairvoyant, it would be possible, though ungracious to a rich personality which is yet a living memory, to insist upon the unsatisfactory elements of Lowell's essays, their wearying crackle of puns and quotations, their baffling want of composition, their aimless force and ineffectual fire, their purely literary inspiration. Given a superlatively energetic temperament and the bubbling humor of Mr. Lowell, both insufficiently restrained by reflection, and we have too often a tiresome smartness. In this, as well as in some of his noblest qualities, he was more typically a New Englander than a representative American. Quick, sententious, conclusive, not to say specious and dogmatic, the New England mind outruns the slower wits of the "average American." It is only after an interval that one perceives the cause of a vague, but very real, sense of discomfort in reading Lowell. It is that one has been too smartly dealt with.

Mr. Brownell judges Lowell's poetry very favorably. His praise of the *Commemoration Ode* seems even extravagant, and is not justified by the stanza he quotes and challenges the world to match.

One of the most honorable opportunities that can come to a man must be that of recalling to public attention the value and interest of a writer whose fame has begun to suffer an undeserved decline, especially if this neglect has been due primarily to the censorious, who have despised the verdict of the humble. To read Mr. Brownell's remarks on Cooper's "massive and opulent work" is very pleasant. But it seems to me that he does not really base his high estimate on a relish for Cooper's romances as romances, but rather on extraneous considerations. He finds Cooper manly, and a knower of men. He finds him well-informed and sound in judgment. He praises his aversion to sectionalism, and his preference for Episcopacy as compared with the sectarian rawness of his day. Cooper's vision embraced the whole country, and his sympathies were for what was most conservative, most productive of amenity, and most comforting to a craving for historic continuity. His politics, we are told, were "rational, discriminating, and suggestive," and he was a great publicist. Mr. Brownell also regards Cooper as a fertile creator of characters. Thus far it is possible to agree with him. But not until it has been shown that Cooper's style is a facile and charming medium, will it appear likely that people beyond the age of twenty will read him with the interest his large outlook and historical position in themselves deserve.

Hawthorne evidently exasperates Mr. Brownell, and the resulting essay is the least engaging and the least convincing in the volume. Still, no other more impressively demonstrates the critic's

power of psychological analysis. It is his most elaborate study. The disintegration proceeds over the entire surface of Hawthorne's character and of his work, as if some vigorous plant were insinuating its myriad tentacles into the crevices of a wall. The results are as follows:—

Hawthorne cultivated his fancy to the neglect of his imagination; and he neglected his imagination because he shrank from reality. By nature he was hard-headed, and a lynx-eyed observer, but he made, in his novels, little or no use of his faculty for seeing things as they are. His mysticism was not temperamental, but deliberate and cold-blooded. Even when he was at work with real objects, his preference for allegory led him to symbolical expression. "The insubstantiality he sought was to consist in the envelope, not in the object," but he ended by "evaporating both." Being prone to reverie, he was not energetically reflective, and he had very little to brood over. Being self-centred, he applied the measure of his own tastes even to painting and sculpture, of which he knew next to nothing, and even to history, to which he was indifferent. "The value of culture, even to a writer of pure romance," is proved by the fact that "he succeeded in the main when he dealt with the Puritans, and almost invariably failed when he did not"; for the early life of New England was the only period he had studied. "There he had a background, material, and a subject of substance." When he traveled abroad, his frame of mind was not unlike that of our "humorists," who, in their favorite phrase, find "nothing that can beat God's Country." Being a fatalist, he blandly considered that his genius had been once for all delivered to him and was not to be diverted, enlarged, or transformed. From the influences of culture "he protected him-

self with signal perversity and success. His imagination was not nurtured, because his mind was not enriched. . . . Hawthorne"—and here is Mr. Brownell's most cruel discovery—"cared nothing for people in life and made extraordinarily little of them in his books. In no other fiction are the characters so little characterized as in his, where in general their *raison d'être* is what they illustrate, not what they are."

I suppose Mr. Brownell deserves our gratitude for expressing these negations, which in themselves are true. But his two or three pages of praise for *The Scarlet Letter*—"our one prose masterpiece," he calls it—by no means restore the balance or exhaust all the good that might be said of Hawthorne. Much indeed ought to have been said about that noble severity, that unity of tone, which denote Hawthorne's mastery of himself and of his material, such as it is, in more than one or two of his romances. Mr. Brownell has made no confident attempt to explain the sources of Hawthorne's undeniable fascination. To say that his fame is kept alive by national superstition, by his being part of the required reading of youth and the indulgent memory of maturity, is to despise the judgment of many competent readers and the general opinion. It is not "letting the world judge." Absolutely correct as is the general theory that the substance even of romance should be real, we may still contemplate with admiration the result achieved by an artist working with defective material. Hawthorne is perhaps our only classic. No element of literary art is so preservative as its medium. And Hawthorne's style has the clearness, the refinement, the elevation, the sufficiency, and the restraint of classic style.

These were qualities of his nature, too. His detachment, which kept him aloof from his surroundings, saved him

from contemporary vagaries. His rare and pure genius, which shut him off from the sympathy of prying neighbors, whether philosophers or common village intruders, has lifted him into companionship with thousands who are, perhaps perversely, satisfied with a less rigorous definition of fiction than that it shall be invariably a criticism of life based upon observation. They imagine at least that the dreams of Hawthorne are a kind of experience.

With Poe the case is different. His dreams are not so certainly as Hawthorne's the play of a sound and candid mind. Nor do his writings, whether prose or verse, possess the warrant of an invariably excellent style. The tales had the good luck to accord with a taste for horrors and extravagance, and a taste for decorative description, that flourished for a while in France. That they obtained a considerable vogue throughout Europe is not particularly significant, for it was thus they obtained it. We have in this matter thought too much of "European recognition." We shall do better to judge Poe's tales for what they are. There is no denying that through sectional incompatibility Poe never had sympathy and support from his contemporaries in New England. If he is now the object of a cult, it is the *revanche*. On any other grounds a Poe cult would be absurd. But nothing is less absurd than the instinct to right a wrong.

Mr. Brownell's temperate article has provoked many a hot controversy. But what does he really say? He declares that Poe was "the solitary artist of our elder literature," and endeavors to establish this high claim—too high, when we remember Irving and Hawthorne—by strict attention to Poe's technic. He avoids what Poe's admirers tremblingly deprecate: he never confuses the technical and the moral. But of course the two cannot be kept apart

when the choice of subject, or any one of several other essentials, comes to be considered. And I fancy that the first words that give umbrage occur when he says that Poe's "most characteristic limitation as an artist is the limited character of the pleasure he gives." The question of technic disposed of, he makes bold to declare that the effect of Poe's personality is always unpleasant, that he was fascinated by the false, and that his tales lack substance. They have, he tells us, no human interest, because humanity did not in the least interest Poe. And fiction without human characters is, to say the least, abnormal. It is difficult to see how any one can gainsay all this. Yet to accept it is to reject almost every claim for Poe as a prose-writer.

The fact is that the intellectual life of America in Poe's time was too meagre to provide sufficient substance for the imagination, which deals with reality, and both Poe and Hawthorne were thrown back upon the fancy, which feeds on a more vapory diet. And Poe, perhaps more of an artist than Hawthorne, was less disciplined and consequently less cultured. Hawthorne, moreover, as Mr. Brownell has pointed out, was only negatively perverse; he simply did not turn his face toward life. Poe's perversity was positive and acute; he falsified life.

Two little poems, haunting, melodious, will long preserve Poe's name, the lines *To Helen*, and *To One in Paradise*. The name of Lovelace has been borne down to us from the seventeenth century on two such azure wings. That he will share the literary fate of Lovelace is possibly the most we can hope for Poe. And the famous cavalier songs, be it observed, come closer home to common sympathy, while not less elevated in feeling or elegant in form than Poe's two pieces of magic.

It is to be regretted that in his latest

essay, on Emerson, Mr. Brownell's ordonnance or composition is as complex as in his earlier works, and that his style makes the same severe demands on the reader. He rarely appeals to the eye and never to the ear. He has no instinct for metaphor. No writer of his class is so abstruse. It may well be a matter of principle with Mr. Brownell to address himself only to the judicious, to utter his inmost thought regardless of the unintelligent; but an abstraction invariably gains by being precipitated into sensuous language, and it is often surprising how a complicated statement can be simplified without the loss of anything worth saving. One is puzzled as to what Mr. Brownell really thinks about Emerson. The essay opens with exaggeration and ends in faint denial.

There are some contradictory personalities who must be treated trenchantly, even at the risk of incompleteness. Arnold's incisive and consistent lecture remains in memory as one of the possible views of Emerson, while Mr. Brownell's complex of cross-lights is already dim when one has read the last page. Singleness, one would think, was Emerson's most winning trait. It was also, of course, his most serious limitation. Mr. Brownell perceives both aspects of this quality. Furthermore, he calls attention to the predominance in Emerson of pure intellect. These are the main lines of his essay. Valuable as are the many secondary thoughts, they should not have been allowed to obscure these.

In so far, he departs from his general practice. For if I were asked what Mr. Brownell's own master-trait was, I should reply, a trained desire, perhaps originally an instinct, but now certainly a disciplined instinct, to estimate details with regard to the wholes that they help to constitute; or, in brief, a sense of relative values. His mind be-

longs to the small family of the resolutely judicial, not of the legal, but of the equitable type, who see truth as an artist sees his material, with a primary regard for congruity and proportion.

If he has a body of doctrine, its first tenet is the now almost undisputed one that literature is valuable in proportion to the amount and quality of effective truth it conveys. With him realism is fundamental. He seeks in plastic and in literary art their significance, their expression; but he takes for granted, with not so much as a question, that the only sound basis is experiential reality.

And another principle with him is the duty of accepting and rationalizing the immense fund of optimism that is one of our national assets. His work is often destructive, but always in the interest, and in a spirit, of cheerfulness. His standards are not of this year; yet what he cares most for is the present. "To an intelligence fully and acutely alive," he says, "its own time must, I think, be more interesting than any other."

He is not so devoted to the ideal of detachment that he does not, upon occasion, perform an act of taste; and to perform an act of taste, as Sainte-Beuve remarked, requires courage. At least in a critic so modest as Mr. Brownell it requires courage.

His methods are painstaking in the extreme, and his manner is often recondite and difficult; yet there is nothing esoteric in his aim or in his substance. "The business of intelligent criticism," he avows, "is to be in touch with everything." And yet he holds fast to these principles, not with the inhuman and almost inconceivable "disinterestedness" of which we hear so much, but with the very evident patriotic purpose of promoting centrality and urbanity of taste.

JOHN DUTTON'S FINANCES

A DISCUSSION OF THE COST OF LIVING

BY W. MARTIN SWIFT

To those who take the 9.49 express from Brockton to Boston, it is apparent that John Dutton, the veteran conductor, is failing in health. Thirty years ago Dutton lived in the little town of Holbrook, a suburb of Brockton, on the Old Colony Railroad, and was engaged with his father, then a man of fifty-five, in the manufacture of custom-made shoes in a little shop in one corner of their house. The family income was small, amounting to only about nine hundred and sixty dollars per annum, as compared with twelve hundred and eighty which Dutton himself now receives as a conductor on the New Haven Railroad.

The conditions of that time, however, differed radically from those now existing. Massachusetts did not then produce one hundred and twenty million dollars' worth of boots and shoes per annum; nor were there then any mammoth shoe-factories in the city of Brockton, nor was the Old Colony Railroad a mere branch of an immense transportation system capitalized at \$385,000,000; nor was our manufacturing business over-stimulated by the world's annual flood of gold, amounting to \$450,000,000; nor had our great cities drawn from the farms the flower of their population. Life was much simpler than it is now. Our business organization was less complex, and while our industrial achievements were less striking, we were more than com-

pensated by the larger significance of the home, the greater freedom from worry, and the lower cost of living.

These, however, are studies quite beyond the sphere of John Dutton's thought and activity. He is chiefly concerned in the rearing of his family, the education of his children, and the attempt to make ends meet. To the casual observer, Dutton with his twelve hundred and eighty dollars per annum seems a fortunate individual, especially in view of the fact that the average income of other laborers in the United States is only about six hundred and forty dollars. Indeed, up to 1897, or a year or two thereafter, Dutton regarded himself as one of the successful minority in the struggle for a living; but since that time his difficulties have grown even more rapidly than the additional expense of rearing three growing children would seem to warrant. His family account books show that he now receives twenty per cent more salary than in 1897; but against this, his annual supply of food now costs about \$550, as compared with \$385 then; his rent has advanced from \$168 to \$240; his expense for clothing from \$150 to \$180, and the cost of his fuel from \$56 to \$62.

It may be seen at a glance that his total expense for these four main necessities amounts to about \$1,032 now, as compared with \$759 then, while his income has increased only from \$1,075