



## A Minuet On Reaching the Age of Fifty

BY GEORGE SANTAYANA

DRAWINGS BY FLORENCE HOWELL BARKLEY

Old Age, on tiptoe, lays her jeweled hand  
Lightly in mine. Come, tread a stately measure,  
Most gracious partner, nobly poised and bland;  
Ours be no boisterous pleasure,  
But smiling conversation, with quick glance,  
And memories dancing lightlier than we dance—  
Friends, who a thousand joys  
Divide and double, save one joy supreme  
Which many a pang alloys.  
Let wanton girls and boys  
Cry over lovers' woes and broken toys.  
Our waking life is sweeter than their dream.

Dame Nature, with unwitting hand,  
Has sparsely strewn the black abyss with lights,  
Minute, remote, and numberless. We stand  
Measuring far depths and heights,  
Arched over by a laughing heaven,  
Intangible and never to be scaled.  
If we confess our sins, they are forgiven;  
We triumph, if we know we failed.

Tears that in youth you shed,  
Congealed to pearls, now deck your silvery hair;  
Sighs breathed for loves long dead  
Frosted the glittering atoms of the air  
Into the veils you wear  
Round your soft bosom and most queenly head;  
The shimmer of your gown  
Catches all tints of autumn, and the dew  
Of gardens where the damask roses blew;  
The myriad tapers from these arches hung  
Play on your diamonded crown;  
And stars, whose light angelical caressed  
Your virgin days,  
Give back in your calm eyes their holier rays.  
The deep past living in your breast  
Heaves these half-merry sighs;  
And the soft accents of your tongue  
Breathe unrecorded charities.

Hasten not; the feast will wait.  
This is a master-night without a morrow.  
No chill and haggard dawn, with after-sorrow,  
Will snuff the spluttering candle out  
Or blanch the revelers homeward straggling late.  
Before the rout  
Wearies or wanes, will come a calmer trance.  
Lulled by the popped fragrance of this bower,  
We'll cheat the lapsing hour  
And close our eyes, still smiling, on the dance.





# The Patriot of the Planet

BY GILBERT K. CHESTERTON



TOUCHING the later work of Mr. H. G. Wells, there is a reflection that must have occurred to many of his readers, though it seems hardly to have been noticed by many, if any, of his critics. His first fantastic books may well throw a light, if a somewhat lurid light, on his last serious books. One of his recent and most serious books, "The Salvaging of Civilization," is an eloquent and effective plea for a world state, or single international nation. It suggests that we should feel a patriotism for the whole planet. And this should surely remind the reader of those noble nightmares in which Mr. Wells once imagined the defense of the whole planet against the monsters of another planet. It is certainly an irony that the man who has ended with the notion of the peace of the world should have begun with the notion of the "War of the Worlds." And it is certainly a symbol that the first of the strange stars with which we can be conceived as coming into contact is a star that bears the name of Mars. The monsters of Mr. Wells's were certainly martial as well as Martian. And though Mr. Wells would now probably repudiate the moral, I really believe that he had then found the method. There would be a much stronger motive for this planetary patriotism in the thing he invented as a fancy than in anything he adduces as a fact.

If he really wishes us to extend our political loyalty to the whole human race and our political frontiers to the whole terrestrial globe, there is no doubt about the practical thing which he ought to do. Let him merely introduce some three-legged giants from Mars; let him arrange for a real visit from those monsters with their tripods, like goblins stalking about on stilts, a mere trifle for a man of his talents. Then I will promise him that we shall all feel the solidarity of the human race, and even possibly something of the sanctity of the earth that is their mother; and so far as that is concerned, I shall rejoice with him heartily. But it may well be doubted whether most men will vividly imagine the earth unless they imagine something beyond the earth. It may well be doubted whether they will really conceive the world at all so long as they conceive the world as the universe.

There is one man who might really restore that sense of the central monarchy of man for which Mr. Wells makes a moving appeal, and he is the man in the moon. Some would indeed suggest that Mr. Wells himself is rather like the man in the moon; that he has something of his pallid abstraction, something of his almost inhuman detachment. But I have never agreed with this criticism of his literary personality. It seems to me the very reverse of merely rigid and mathemati-