

A hard life, often a hard death, and side-effects
Which a humanist finds hard to stomach, are signs
That divulge nothing. A trait

Which might cannot be checked on: all who met them speak
Of a joy which made their own conveniences
Mournfulness and a bad smell.

If their hunch was not mistaken, it would explain
Why there is something fishy about a high style
And the characters it suits,

Why we add the embarrassing prefix *Super*—
To a natural life that nothing prevents us
Living except our natures.

A Sense of Distance

The door is shut.
The red rider
no longer crosses the canyon floor
under a thousand feet of air.

The glance that fell
on him, is shafting
a deeper well:
the boughs of the oak are roaring
inside the acorn shell.

The hoofbeats—silent, then—
are sounding now
that ride
dividing a later distance.

For I am in England,
and the mind's embrace
catches-up this *English*
and that horizonless desert space
into its own, and the three there
concentrically fill a single sphere.

And it seems as if a wind
had flung wide a door
above an abyss, where all
the kingdoms of possibility shone
like sandgrains crystalline in the mind's own sun.

Charles Tomlinson

The Disciple's Rebellion

A Memoir of Patrick Geddes — By LEWIS MUMFORD

I DID NOT actually meet Patrick Geddes in the flesh until the spring of 1923. But there were many premonitory tremors and quakes before we met; for our correspondence became more frequent, and as early as 1919 he had suggested that I collaborate with him in writing a book about contemporary politics: one of a dozen stimulating suggestions that never came to fruition either in my mind or in his.

In 1920, when I was in London at Le Play House as acting editor of the *Sociological Review*, he had cabled Victor Branford of his imminent arrival. His coming, in a matter of days, filled everyone there, from Victor Branford down, with eager trepidation and anticipatory anguish. But his work in Palestine, where he was already employed on various planning

schemes by the Zionist organisation—it was he who selected Mount Scopus as the site for the University and, with Frank Mears, drew up the original plan for it—kept him in Jerusalem. Even before that I had been tempted by his offer to take me on as his assistant at the University of Bombay, where he had become professor of Civics and Sociology; but in the end, the thought of America and the possibility of losing my future wife by my absence kept me from joining him.

At long last Geddes decided to come to the United States, a place he had not visited for a quarter of a century. He had left behind, at least in the mind of my old *Dial* friend, Robert Morss Lovett, the memory of his brilliant talks at the University of Chicago. In fact, everyone who knew Geddes in his prime, as did Auguste Hamon (the French biographer of Bernard Shaw), was wont to couple him with Shaw for his original sallies, his satiric wit, and his quick, sometimes savage, repartee. Verbally he was the master of the disconcertingly unexpected: so one can easily guess why the gentlemanly Sir Edward Lutyens, finding his imperially monumental plan for New Delhi severely criticised by this unconventional professorial nobody, turned on him with a furious contempt, as Lutyens' biographer disclosed.

Now Geddes, full of years and experience, felt drawn back to America, partly in the spirit that had governed so much of his life, that of the wandering scholar seeking fresh intellectual contacts, partly to chat with old academic friends, partly stirred perhaps by the hope that his young American disciple would turn out to be the person who, as "collaborator," would manage to transform the accumulated seekings and findings of a lifetime into an orderly, readable form. Then, too, he doubtless looked forward to the refreshment of a new scene and a new *Ecole Libre*, though the almost deserted

THROUGHOUT Lewis Mumford's work there appears the name of a "secret hero"—the neglected, almost forgotten Scots scientist, philosopher, city planner, Patrick Geddes (1854–1932). In fact, in his *The Condition of Man* (1944), Mumford wrote: "What he was, what he stood for, what he pointed towards will become increasingly important as the world grows to understand both his philosophy and his example. . . . Such a man has worshipped the burning bush and beheld from afar the Promised Land. . . . No man in our time has shown a higher degree of intensity: an intellectual energy that matched Leonardo's all-devouring curiosity, a practical grasp that organised masques and planned cities, a sexual vitality, continent but volcanic, that recalls the pan-like figures of Victor Hugo or Auguste Rodin. . . . That example is a starting-point for our future world culture. . . ." Among Lewis Mumford's other books are *Sticks and Stones* (1924), *The Golden Day* (1926), *Technics and Civilisation* (1934), and *The City in History* (1961).