

'Shuddering, the great star uncurls at its sex  
 In labour, but cannot give  
 Back in the teeth of the universal multiplex  
 A stellar negative.'

'The snake with a rat stuck in its gullet,  
 The homicide with a gun—  
 O prolific dispenser of birth and of bullet,  
 You, you are the guilty one.'

Subsiding, the weeping ceased in the sacred tree,  
 As the leaves closed over.  
 And I saw the everlastingly restless body of humanity  
 Clapsed in the arms of its lover.

GEOFFREY GRIGSON

## SONNET

They were the saints and heroes of my early age ;  
 And one deep in that cusped and coloured  
 Restaurant, read me his words about the page  
 Torn from the shut book : he was untainted

For me even by his errors, and full perfection,  
 It seemed, in wide possession of his sky,  
 Silvered them like virtues, past detection  
 By my rebellious and imperfect eye.

I do not now reject them: incomplete,  
 In this full-moon'd and quiet September night,  
 Their wisdom warns me of the soft and white,  
 The moron scratching, and the aimless feet.

I want perfection; but this cooler light  
 Shows it no longer in its débris of defeat.

# NOVELIST-PHILOSOPHERS-VI

## ANDRÉ MALRAUX

*D. M. COLLAR*

### THE IMPORTANCE OF MALRAUX

THE period that followed the French Revolution was cataclysmic. Brief flashes of consciously directed action—a war of liberation, an abortive revolution—gave hope to a few, but to most event and catastrophe were as little understood and as remote as were the pestilences of an earlier epoch. Inspired by slogans of personal loyalty, the mass of humanity were automata whose actions had for them personally little meaning or value. A gulf separates the victors of Valmy from the desperately heroic sappers of the Beresina. In contrast, our own age is above all an age of consciousness and choice. At no time have so many individuals been engaged in doing things they do not want to do and that no human being would ever freely choose. At no time have so many been so clearly aware of why they are making this sacrifice of immediate personal interest. Nor is this conscious choice confined to the more advanced countries. It is nothing to do with the propaganda of Press and Radio. The Chinese peasant is in it. Throughout Europe ordinary and undoctinaire citizens have performed acts usually associated with the professional revolutionary. It is an historical fact that over an important fraction of the earth's surface man has forcibly won control of his productive resources and claims on that control to base his whole physical and psychical existence.

It is a tragic paradox that in this period whose keynote is consciousness and action, the intellectual is so frequently found in what is basically the spiritual position of the common man in the preceding age. Unable to understand the world he experiences, he renounces his participation for untempered grief, metaphysical consolation or the inner world of fantasy. Choice—although conditioned—was an assumption of Cartesian psychology. The psychology accepted by the intellectual today implicitly denies