

Compared with these two issues all others appear secondary.

A substantial part of British public opinion — the most honest and wholesome part — still feels much sympathy for us. That is an important fact which we can take into account. England, after all, is a country of 'gentlemen,' who know what honor means and who keep their word. One must nevertheless understand how to deal with them. They should be enlightened about many matters; for they are not, by the nature of things, much interested in continental affairs.

From every point of view it is advisable for France to adopt a frank, loyal, and open policy toward Germany, be it in matters of security or of reparations. We should like nothing better than to come to an understanding with the German Democrats. But we are, nevertheless, obliged to keep a sharp eye on affairs beyond the Rhine. The position of the German Democracy is none too stable — far from it. A return to power of the military reactionaries is quite

possible, not to say probable. And we well know what such a restoration would bode for us!

In our dealings with England the attitude and influence of America will be decisive. It behooves us to make every effort to render our relations with the United States as cordial and intimate as possible. The impending journey of Marshal Foch cannot fail to have a happy influence in that direction.

And, finally, France must play with firmness and decision the part which belongs to her in Europe. She must gather around her all the young states which have been born or greatly increased in size as a consequence of the common victory — Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Yugoslavia. She must strengthen her relations with Belgium.

Fortified by these friendships, we shall be able to treat with England on an equal basis, and then we shall have every chance of coming to an understanding with her; for England greatly respects the strong.

## SILENCE

BY MARGARET BROWN

*[The Bookman]*

Out of an empty heart I made you songs  
For singing in your absence; and it seemed  
Easy enough to speak of all I dreamed;  
Easy enough to clothe with words my need;  
Simple, indeed,  
Out of an empty heart to make you songs!

Now that my heart is filled, my words are spent:  
I bring you gifts of silence! Love is wise,  
And stills my lips to speak from out my eyes!  
Wherefore, look long and deeply, love, for so  
Silence shall show  
How that my heart is filled — and my words spent.

## HENRI-FRÉDÉRIC AMIEL

[September 27 was the hundredth anniversary of Amiel's birth.]

From *The Times Literary Supplement*, September 29  
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'If we look,' says Benedetto Croce, at the end of the most suggestive chapter of his book on the writing of history, 'merely at the enormous amount of psychological observations and moral doubts accumulated in the course of the nineteenth century by poetry, fiction, and the drama, those voices of our society, and consider that in great part it remains without critical treatment, some idea can be formed of the immense amount of work that it falls to philosophy to accomplish.'

Whether the traditionalist would call the work that Croce indicates philosophy or history or criticism is of no particular account; what is important is that it remains to be done. Until it is done, the twentieth century will always be liable to be puffed up with a conceit of its superiority to a century which it has not yet troubled to understand.

It is true there are signs in England of a fashionable reversion to the Victorian era; it is being exhibited as a curiosity with patient skill. But the Victorianism which may have a present vogue is a very local and limited variety of the consciousness of the nineteenth century; it does not contain England's contribution to that consciousness. The work of isolating and estimating that contribution is eminently a work of seriousness, and seriousness — the *σπουδαίτης* for which Matthew Arnold so strongly pleaded — is not the quality most frequently demanded or supplied to-day. The very word jars on a modern ear. To be serious is to be solemn; to be solemn, portentous. Yet, it is silly

to approach the England of the Oxford Movement, of Maxwell and Huxley and Arnold, of Thomas Hardy, in a superficial mood. The depths of these men were troubled. If we can see their agonies only as grimaces, we had better leave them alone. A time when Mr. Chesterton can declare publicly, and be publicly praised for declaring, that Mr. Hardy is 'the village atheist brooding over the village idiot,' is not the best time for attempting the work which Croce indicates.

But the time will come, and the work will be done. Not until the twentieth century is fully aware of the nineteenth, and has exerted itself to put a valuation upon its achievement, will it have the strength for an achievement of its own. When the work is being done, and nineteenth-century England is being seen in its true relation to the European consciousness of the period, Henri-Frédéric Amiel will be one of the landmarks in the survey. He may even be a basis for the triangulation, as a piece of flat, unbroken, compact ground serves best for the certain measurement of the great peaks on the horizon.

The nineteenth century was complex and Titanic, — a *sæculum mirabile* if ever there was one, — a century difficult to comprehend by reason of the magnitude of the peaks that rose from it. In it Amiel appears like one of those little convex mirrors which reflect, in bright and distinct minuscule, the colossal landscape on to which the window opens. All the potentialities are there, none of the realizations. He is a