

## A PAGE OF VERSE

### AT ITHACA

BY 'H. D.'

[*The Nation and the Athenæum*]

OVER and back,  
the long waves crawl  
and track the sand with foam;  
night darkens, and the sea  
takes on that desperate tone  
of dark that wives put on  
when all their love is done.

Over and back,  
the tangled thread falls slack,  
over and up and on;  
over and all is sewn;  
now while I bind the end,  
I wish some fiery friend  
would sweep impetuously  
these fingers from the loom.

My weary thoughts  
play traitor to my soul,  
just as the toil is over;  
swift while the woof is whole,  
turn now, my spirit, swift,  
and tear the pattern there,  
the flowers so deftly wrought,  
the border of sea blue,  
the sea-blue coast of home.

The web was over-fair,  
that web of pictures there,  
enchantments that I thought  
he had, that I had lost;  
weaving his happiness  
within the stitching frame,  
weaving his fire and fame,  
I thought my work was done,  
I prayed that only one  
of those that I had spurned  
might stoop and conquer this  
long waiting with a kiss.

But each time that I see  
my work so beautifully  
inwoven and would keep  
the picture and the whole,  
Athene steels my soul.  
Slanting across my brain,  
I see as shafts of rain  
his chariots and his shafts,  
I see the arrows fall,  
I see my lord who moves  
like Hector lord of love,  
I see him matched with fair  
bright rivals, and I see  
those lesser rivals flee.

### THE LAPIDARY

BY C. FIELD

[*Cambridge Review*]

By pangs which seem cruel,  
By anguish profound,  
Man's spirit, God's jewel,  
Is polished and ground.

Time's wheel steady-turning,  
Pain's fiery law,  
By grinding and burning,  
Expel the last flaw.

O Gem in the Artist  
Rejoice and be still!  
Each ray which thou dartest  
Is proof of His skill.

His skill stern and tender,  
Which never lets go,  
Till blazes in splendor  
God's jewel aglow.

When ashes join ashes,  
And dust goes to dust,  
The glory that flashes  
Shall vindicate trust.

## LIFE, LETTERS, AND THE ARTS

### BAYREUTH AND POLITICS

THE fate of the Wagner Festival at Bayreuth hangs on the turn of political events in Europe. Talking with a correspondent of the *London Observer*, Siegfried Wagner, son of the great composer and himself a conductor of distinction, has explained that the fall of the mark makes it doubtful whether the festival can be held at all. Prior to the war the cost was 650,000 marks. Before abandoning hope of financing this year's festival from German sources, Herr Wagner had got together about seven million marks, but, as he says, 'that won't go very far.'

In spite of dismaying prospects, Herr Wagner is not without hope. Like most Europeans he looks to America to extricate him from his difficulties, and anticipates sufficient returns from his prospective series of concerts in the United States to enable Bayreuth to reassume its old position as a Wagner shrine. However, he has not been able to leave Germany as early as he hoped, for 'the movements of the French are too perplexing to warrant my leaving my old mother and my little children alone in Bavaria. We live under the shadow of a fear that they may march in upon us any time. This is much more actual than any thought of separatism, which I look upon as nonsense.'

He relies, too, upon the pride which German singers have always taken in appearing at Bayreuth. Although the plaint has long been heard that the high American exchange has drawn to our shores the best orchestral players and the best opera singers of the Old World, he believes that they will all come flocking back to offer their services if the Bayreuth Festival can again be given.

As he told the correspondent: 'It is my absolute conviction that all asked to take part will come back to Bayreuth from all parts of the world. They always did. And I refuse to believe in any decay of German musical life. For me there is no other country but Germany where music is concerned: to me the least of our orchestras is a better interpreter of our great ones than the finest elsewhere — Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, my father.'

Herr Wagner bitterly attacked the modern tendency to simplify the settings of Wagnerian opera. 'Nobody will persuade me,' he said, 'to believe that the underlying idea of cutting out my father's elaborate stage directions is any but desire for cheapness of production. I maintain that as it is written so it should be carried out. How is one to express the atmosphere of the different centuries without the scenery as well as the costumes? At a pinch, I will allow that the smallness of a stage may set up a demand for strictest simplicity of detail. But big stages want filling. At Bayreuth we shall never alter in this respect.'



### 'G. K. C.'S WEEKLY'

*G. K. C.'s Weekly* is to be the title of a new London sixpenny review designed to carry the ideas hitherto expounded in the *New Witness* to a wider public than the old weekly could reach. It will appear next spring — always provided that the necessary working capital of 10,000 pounds can be procured.

In 1911 Cecil Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc founded the *New Witness*. From the beginning it was a paper with a thesis, and it scorned all thoughts of compromise. It was Catholic first and