

ing the emotion may be, the tragic beauty and the flight of the human spirit portrayed, there is in the whole sum of the work a balancing of things with a more complete view of the world and all that is in it. *The Hairy Ape* had only one thread. It was operatic, lyrical, in its interpretation of life. To think of it as a problem is absurd. It is what its author meant it to be, a powerful and picturesque statement of a thing that was insoluble. It was not even realism, but a sort of brutalism used lyrically. It was not revolutionary except in so far as it was a moving response to a certain human condition. *The Hairy Ape* was complete; what made it complete was not its comment on its material but its unity of emotion. In its high levels *The Hairy Ape* was perfect in its kind. But life nevertheless is more complex than all that. It was on the side of this larger complexity and grasp that Diff'rent went to pieces at the end and *Anna Christie* failed, in so far as it did fail, to reach a bang-up and right conclusion. There are more and more elements to be considered as one's art develops. The intellectual weight and measure is one of the parts of us that drama involves as well as the more poignantly felt circumstance.

That this progression toward a wider complexity is dangerous, so sensitive a mind as that behind these plays knows, none better. One may be able to do a more or less single-minded thing well enough, but fail in others. A man like Mr. O'Neill may stumble and despair long before he finds—if he ever does—the same mastery in this more complex venture that he has achieved in his earlier work. His friends will protest, they will beg him to stick to his very own art. But fortunately a man like Mr. O'Neill has more brains than many of his admirers. He will know that such venture and progression is only the danger that follows vitality, the perpetual risk in all growth. He will know that an artist must go on or fail—and even fail if it must be—since there is never any going back.

I am not saying that Mr. O'Neill ought to do this, that or the other; such critical exhortation is a stupid intrusion—I am saying that from his best work I think that he will. In *The Hairy Ape* he got himself through; he found a complete outlet for what he was in relation to the theme he chose. And yet it remained temperamental, seen with an original and strong intelligence but moody. That need not be a defect, but it can be a limitation. Mr. O'Neill will be finding more and more in his plays a wider outlet for his relation to a wider world of life. His poetry will be freer; it will rest easier in mere beauty itself; it will have more admission and understanding of pure beauty, romance, delight and even ecstasy. His realism will be less than formerly the use of the actual to support a glowing and passionate mood. It will be more the patient and inexhaustible study of reality in order to find the one essential line that conveys the truth of it. Mr. O'Neill has his own kind of construction already learned. With the structure well contrived he will be able to take the opportunity of putting in as much choiceness as he likes. He can give to work that is strongly built an actual and unescapable selection from reality. He can give it a further distinction, the echo of his most delicate world. He can haunt the shadings of the play, haunt the mere words with his own hidden life until they are closer to him, as the dream of the play is already close. From his best scenes now I keep an impression like that I keep of music long after I have heard it. The experience remains curiously uninteresting and vague and at the same time beautiful and vivid. But if things go right with him Mr. O'Neill

will not stay where he is. In the art toward which the author of *Anna Christie* is moving, the poignancy of music and the nature and comment of the world of life will balance and measure and justify each other.

This does not in the least mean that Mr. O'Neill will have to go into conclusions, preaching, argument, problematic themes. It means only that he will find what will be his own truth as he goes on, and that it will grow with his growth. This truth will be what he thinks is the sum, the account, of all the elements involved in his material. As in *The Hairy Ape* already, in a more single line, this truth will be his escape to which he wins his way. It will be the avenue of his liberation from his matter; the only thing that can make him free of the burden of that world he creates and judges.

STARK YOUNG.

To the One of Fictive Music

Sister and mother and diviner love,
And of the sisterhood of the living dead
Most near, most clear, and of the clearest bloom,
And of the fragrant mothers the most dear
And queen, and of diviner love the day
And flame and summer and sweet fire, no thread
Of cloudy silver sprinkles in your gown
Its venom of renown, and on your head
No crown is simpler than the simple hair.

Now, of the music summoned by the birth
That separates us from the wind and sea,
Yet leaves them in us until earth becomes,
By being so much of the things we are,
Gross effigy and simulacrum, none
Gives motion to perfection more serene
Than yours, out of our imperfections wrought,
Most rare, or ever of more kindred air
In the laborious weaving that you wear.

For so retentive of themselves are men
That music is intensest which proclaims
The near, the clear, and vaunts the clearest bloom,
And of all vigils musing the obscure
That apprehends the most which sees and names,
As in your name, an image that is sure,
Among the arrant spices of the sun,
O bough and bush and scented vine, in whom
We give ourselves our likeliest issuance.

Yet not too like, yet not so like to be
Too near, too clear, saving a little to endow
Our feigning with the strange unlike, whence springs
The difference that heavenly pity brings.
For this, musician, in your girdle fixed
Bear other perfumes. On your pale head wear
A band entwining, set with fatal stones.
Unreal, give back to us what once you gave:
The imagination that we spurned and crave.

WALLACE STEVENS.

The Philosophy of Conservatism

Outspoken Essays (Second Series), by William Ralph Inge, C. V. O., D. D., F. B. A., Dean of St. Paul's. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. \$2.00.

DEAN INGE is one of the ablest and wittiest writers of our time; moreover he is a man of entire sincerity, willing to concede much that seems to go against his general position, and prepared to follow his beliefs wherever they may lead him. Although he is outspoken and often contemptuous, he is not irritating even when one most disagrees with him. In addition to being eminent as a Platonist and student of neo-Platonism, he holds strong views on political philosophy—the views of a genuine Tory, such as are scarcely to be found in our day among practical politicians. What he has to say almost always deserves respect, but very seldom (in any case) commands agreement.

The broad outline of his position is: That society cannot be held together without religion; that Christianity, as interpreted by Platonic theologians, is true; that there is no reason to expect progress here on earth, especially in material ways, since the only true good consists in eternal life, to be understood timelessly, not as an unending series of moments; that industrialism is a disaster, probably irremediable; that patriotism, as understood by English gentlemen, is good, but the German deification of the state introduced by Hegel is bad; that the white man is quite likely to be overwhelmed by the yellow man, chiefly because the latter is not afflicted with trade unions; that in civilized countries the best stocks are dying out, and degeneration can only be prevented by birth-control combined with eugenics; and that the Victorian age was, like that of Pericles and that of Elizabeth, a high-water mark to which we shall not soon attain again. He dislikes plutocrats and proletarians, capitalists and communists, the yellow press and the Labor revolt against it—in a word, everything characteristic of a modern industrial community. He likes the public schools, Oxford and Cambridge, country life, learning, the liberal professions, and aristocracy. Aristocracy is the keynote of his conservatism. The best types of human beings, he holds, cannot be produced in a population without social inequality, but can only be a fine flower to which the lower classes supply the manure. And he thinks the best types so valuable that where they have died out a community must perish or become worthless.

This question of aristocracy is the one which, more than any other, divides the philosophic Conservative from the philosophic Socialist. The motive power to Socialism is the sense of justice which, in the less fortunate members of the community, is a rationalization of envy. The motive power to aristocracy is that aspect of the gregarious instincts which leads some to assert leadership of the herd and others to follow willingly. Both socialism and aristocracy have a backing in instinct. A man who has one set of instincts stimulated will take one side, and a man who has the other set stimulated will take the other. Is there then no rational ground for a choice? Against the man who considers inequality a good in itself, perhaps the only argument is to make him experience inferiority; but against those who maintain, like Dean Inge, that aristocracy is necessary for the finer flowers of civilization, rational arguments can be advanced.

Historically, aristocracies have had the merits of fearlessness, vigorous personality, and (at certain times) encouragement to art and learning. They have had the demerits of cruelty, oppression, narrow-mindedness, and pugnacity. Their virtues came of leisure and economic security; their vices came of their social superiority. Science and industrialism have made it technically possible to give economic security with sufficient leisure to everybody; the result ought to be that everybody would have the virtues of aristocracy and nobody would have its vices. As yet, the correlative vices which the old system has bred in masters and slaves respectively have made it politically impossible for men to take full advantage of the technical possibilities, which they prefer to use for the purpose of killing each other. But there is no reason to believe that this folly will last for ever. Industrialism, as the Dean truly says, has hitherto been productive of evil; so was agriculture during the many centuries when it was thought to require human sacrifice to propitiate the corn spirit. Nowadays we offer human sacrifices to the machine spirit; but when we have learned to use machines without worshipping them, as we have at last learned to use agriculture, we shall be able to reap the benefit of them. The harm does not come from machines, but from our superstitious reverence for them.

The book is full of sayings of great excellence. His protest against the intolerable Narcissism of the worship of Humanity deserves agreement even from those who cannot find anything else to worship in the existing world:

Our personal idealists need to be reminded of Aristotle's words, that there are many things in the world more divine than man. Anthropolatry is the enemy; it has vitiated much modern philosophy. True philosophy is theocentric. The world is a hymn sung by the creative Logos to the glory of God the Father.

This view, true or false, is surely preferable to the grovelling microscopic vision of those philosophers whose serious attention is confined to this petty planet and the grovelling animalcules that crawl upon its surface.

Some epigrams are so good that it is impossible to resist quoting them.

It is only those who half envy the wicked here who want to roast them hereafter.

Materialistic dogmatism is the clerical form of dogmatic materialism.

[On vegetarianism] If we assume that survival has a value for the brutes, no one has so great an interest in the demand for pork as the pig.

Our quarrel with Germany, and the consequent downfall of the monarchy there, must not blind us to the fact that before the war that country was the best governed in Europe.

Some have said that human beings are not moved by abstractions; the truth is that they are seldom moved by anything else.

Lord Acton says bluntly, "The theory of nationalism is more absurd and more criminal than Socialism," a verdict which would have been more telling without the comparison, for Socialism is not necessarily absurd or criminal; it is only a machine which has hitherto refused to work, whereas nationalism works a great deal too well.

Of all aggregates, states are the most shameless in their conduct, when they act as states. To worship the state is to worship a demon who has not even the redeeming quality of being intelligent.