

This was greater to-day than it was in the days when silver was admitted to the coinage.

One of the most interesting citizens with whom I talked was the Populist member of the Legislature from Leadville. This man was a storekeeper of considerable property; he was a Populist because he was a Socialist in his convictions. Like most other Populists I met, he not only believed in the free coinage of silver, but in large additions to our greenback currency. "How large a currency do you think this country ought to have?" I asked. "I do not know," he answered, "but I think that we need a great deal more than we have now, and I would have the Government gradually issue greenbacks as long as they remained at par in gold. When gold rose to a premium, I should believe that the danger-line had been reached, and that the issue should be stopped." Even this radical Populist, therefore, believed in President Harrison's dictum that every dollar, gold, silver, or paper, must be as valuable as every other dollar. This sentiment is nearly universal both in the West and the South. The demand for the repeal of the Bland-Allison Act and the Sherman Act, it will be remembered, has always been to prevent a predicted depreciation of the silver currency. This depreciation has never yet taken place. If it should take place under the free coinage of silver, the advocates of contraction would find that substantially the whole public was in favor of the maintenance of an honest dollar. C. B. S.

## An Interpreter of Poets

By Prof. Francis H. Stoddard.

The function of the great critic is as creative as is the function of the great poet, artist, dramatist. In many ways it is more immediately arousing. The great artist is he who finds reality and possibility of incarnation in an idea; or, the great artist is he who finds an idea and possibility of divinity in a reality. There have always been these two sorts of artists. One can find the Sophocles, the Dumas, the Tolstoï, the Molière, who prisons an idea and fixes it in carnate form, to us of flesh and life forever an embodiment in life and flesh of a heretofore vague and fugitive notion. The idea becomes living in the *Œdipus*, the *Electra*, the *Anna Karénina*, the *Malade Imaginaire*, the *Athos*, *Porthos*, and *D'Artagnan*. And one can find the Shakespeare, the Arnold, the Browning, who sets free from its earth-bonds a thought-existence, a spiritual life, too far, too fine, too free for carnate form freely to compass it. The characters—*Hamlet*, *Lear*, *Othello*—die into a larger life for us. In literature, in all great presentations, we have these two sorts of artists:

One "rais'd a mortal to the skies;"  
One "drew an angel down."

Each becomes an artist, comes into the higher rank of a creator, because he establishes a relation between a past ideal and a newly created actual; or, because he establishes a relation between an existing life and a possible, yet unrealized, notion. Always the artist establishes, one may say creates, the relation; sometimes he establishes, creates as we say, the ideal notion itself.

But the idea is apart, is untemporal, is of no age; the actual is near, is closely united to ourselves, is definitely of this age. Living mostly in a past age, or in a strange age, or in a future age, is the artist, whether he be poet, painter, or prophet. By so much as he is a great artist—because he brings, for himself and in his own way, into temporal life the eternal, ageless world-ideas—the poet is out of reach of instant comprehension to us, and out of reach of our ordinary thought-habit. Even the lines of phrase get a mystical convoluteness in consonance with the subtle thought-method of a great poet. If, then, a reader cares to understand such a poet, or such an artist, he must in some way establish a mental friendship, and cultivate a spiritual intimacy, with the notions, the ideals, the important personages, of the poet's mental circle. If the reader—by long and patient study; by abnegation of his preference, for the time being, that he may accept the

poet's friend and the poet's ideal as his own ideal or his own friend; by creative completion of the outlines left incomplete here and there by the poet, and re-arousment of the minor forms not quite awakened into life by the poet—can bring himself into the poet's life-circle, the real, sympathetic appreciation comes. Such an audience every poet has. It is an audience fit—and few. Most of us are busy with our own small worlds, our own ideals, or our own mental and spiritual friends. If we are to enter the poet's circle, we must be introduced. And so the commentator has his function.

Of commentators there are, as of the creative artists, two sorts—critics and interpreters. The one is the critic who illustrates, who explains, who completes the fact for us. The other is the interpreter who makes us forget the author's hard and visible creation in the zeal he gives us for the author's faint and half-vanished ideal notion. For most uses, the critic is our best companion. Guide-posts, so to speak, under his direction, appear and point the way. He puts prose reality into the poetical language of the writer; he foot-notes him, and annotates him; he analyzes his style, and gives him good advice; he points out with great cleverness what the author is not, and how much better it would be were he other and different. We all read the criticisms of these commentators, and we find them helpful. They make straight the road to and from literature, and if they prefer the stone-paved highway to the flower-banked lane, they make, at all events, a useful choice.

But now and then appears a creative critic. Some years ago, under private imprint, were issued two volumes of philosophic commentary on the "*Faust*" of Goethe, by Mr. Denton J. Snider. Later, three volumes appeared on the *Histories*, the *Comedies*, the *Tragedies* of Shakespeare.



Denton J. Snider

One volume on Homer—the first part, I believe, of a fuller commentary—and two volumes on Dante, recently published, complete a list which I have in mind to use as illustration. Mr. Snider has as yet, I suspect, spoken to but a small audience through these books, at least in the Eastern States; for his works, though in part published some years ago, are difficult to obtain. I believe they are not largely read simply because they are not widely known. For this man, in his own way, and to those who can move with him, is a real interpreter of poets. To him the

world is a great drama, and the poet a prophet or seer half unconscious himself of the full meaning of the speech he gives the world. There is a philosophy within the message of the poet for Mr. Snider, and he boldly thinks on past the bare lines into what he believes to be the poet's fullest conception. So it comes about that these works are studies into the art, the philosophy, the deeper meanings, of the poet's utterance; and so it comes about also that they are illuminative, suggestive, frequently irritating, always stimulating, to a thoughtful mind. Mr. Snider has a peculiar equipment. He has a mind of simplicity and ingenuousness; he has American directness; and he is saturated with Teutonic philosophy. These conditions make him somewhat exceptional. Far be it from me to single out any one in the throng of Shakespeare critics and name him as supreme even in a single direction. What I shall say is, that Mr. Snider is well-nigh unique among the interpreters of Shakespeare and Goethe. There is no other who has joined just such equipment to just such temper and trend of mind; and there is no reader, I venture to say, of these great poets to whom Mr. Snider's interpretations will not bring continually the charm of pleased surprise, and frequently the joy of receptive appreciation.

In considering the work of such an interpreter as Mr. Snider, one comment is sure to suggest itself to the reader.

It is a question. It is the query whether Goethe really meant, whether Shakespeare really meant, that which Mr. Snider makes Hamlet and makes Faust to yield as significance. In reading these interpretations no doubt the literal, exact critic will frequently part company with the philosophic reader. In a strict literal sense it is certainly open to question if some of Mr. Snider's interpretations are true. One may question, for instance, whether Shakespeare viewed "Romeo and Juliet" as an exposition of the limitations of the institutional element in society, or considered "Troilus and Cressida" as a dramatic treatise on the distress logically resultant from a "Neglection of Degree" in a constituted community. All such theoretic philosophies, it may easily and with much truth be said, are put upon Shakespeare by Mr. Snider; the interpretation outruns the limit of the portrayal. Literally speaking, this is true; but there is something more than the literal in interpretations. It is a paradox in expression, but it is a truth in literature, that there are many things in this literature which are historically false and yet which are spiritually true. In the evolution of the beings which we call ourselves, the soul and the mind and the executive-shaping ability do not seem to have developed in synchronous stages, nor in parallel sequences. The ideal is now ages behind and now ages beyond the reality, and the literal critic is always sitting idealless with a foundling fact or sitting in hopeless vagueness contemplating a bodiless idea. The artist is of no age. He yokes the idea of yesterday to the fact of to-day; the ideal of now to the actual of then. For his interpretation the freer soul demands a parallel imaginative thought. The interpretation may not interpret Shakespeare. It may interpret in another fashion the idea which is suggested in the work of Shakespeare. In its best form such interpretation is as truly creative as any criticism of life in poem, novel, or drama. We have too few of such creative interpreters rather than too many.



## Ulster and Home Rule

By Thomas Donnelly

In weighing the various forces that have combined against the Home Rule Bill, it is easy, perhaps, to over-estimate the adverse influence of Ulster. That Ireland's northern province is unalterably opposed to Mr. Gladstone's measure we have all been taught to believe.

From the days of the warlike chiefs of Tyrconnel to the passing of the Act of Union the spirit of Ulster seems to have been strongly national. The Convention of Dungannon, which practically created the independent constitution Ireland enjoyed between 1782 and 1800, was conceived and held in Ulster, which was also, during the trying period immediately preceding the union, unswervingly loyal to the cause of Irish autonomy.

The masses are composed of Presbyterians and Catholics; the aristocracy of Protestant Episcopalians. At the last general election every Catholic candidate was pledged to Home Rule, while the Presbyterians are traditional supporters of Mr. Gladstone and his party. They, as Dissenters, do not forget how the Premier removed their pet grievance—an Irish State Church. Politically, therefore, Ulster Catholics and Presbyterians are allies. Opposed to them are the Protestant Episcopal aristocracy, or Unionists. At the present time Ulster's entire representation in the Commons shows a majority of anti-Home-Rulers—a majority, however, of but three or four members. The latter, moreover, were elected by constituencies in which the Protestant Episcopal interest happened to be unusually strong. Were Ulster to be polled without reference to the distribution of Parliamentary seats, the Home Rule must necessarily exceed the anti-Home Rule vote. Viewing the situation impartially from this standpoint, it is difficult to arrive at any conclusion other than that the masses of Ulster favor self-government, the aristocratic Unionist—or Loyalist—party representing only a powerful minority.

## The Greater Glory<sup>1</sup>

By Maarten Maartens

Author of "God's Fool," "Joost Avelingh," "An Old Maid's Love," etc.  
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### CHAPTER XXII.

#### THE HOME OF POESY

A large house on a grim canal—a number of flat, uninteresting windows in a flat, uninteresting façade. A low front door, with a heavy graystone coping, and on each side, along the narrow "stoep," a row of stumpy stone posts, connected by iron chains. The rest of it a great daub of dirty orange plaster, without any excrescence or salient feature, except just one little rusty spy-glass sticking out on the basement floor—the whole building like a meaningless, rich man's face, in its ugly and insolent self-content, comfortably dull. Young Reinout's home at the Hague.

And opposite, and on both sides of it, similar dwellings, of darker color, flat and gray, under the lowering sky and the general gloom and primness, with the foul canal asleep in the middle of the grass-grown street. A grand house in a grand neighborhood.

Count Hilarius van Rexelaer drove up to his own door in the neatest of little broughams and entered hurriedly. His whole manner betrayed anxiety, but then, as we have seen, he had an irritable way about him and a habitual nervous twitch of the eyes. He was a man harassed by many things, who took life restlessly.

He passed through the low entrance-hall, with its damp marble floor, and ran upstairs to a comparatively brighter part of the house. He looked into his wife's boudoir; it was empty, but sounds to which he was well accustomed were issuing from the conservatory beyond. A sweet voice was shakily crooning some French words:

*D'un seul regard il m'a tuée,  
Car ce regard resta le seul.*

The singing stopped at the sound of the opening door. A copper-colored mulatto woman, in iridescent drapery, rose up from the floor and made obeisance, as her master entered. The Countess Rexelaer lifted a slow head from her divan. "Ah, mon ami! Bonjour!" she said, and let it fall again.

"It is most vexatious," began the Count, spitting his words, as the French inelegantly but aptly put it. "There is nothing but worry. I can't stand the strain. I shall have to resign." He stopped, and scowled at the waiting-woman.

"Laissez," said the Countess, languidly, "fetch me a glass of Cape wine and a biscuit—" and as soon as the mulatto had crept noiselessly away—"It is no use, my dear Rexelaer: I tell her everything you tell me."

The husband pushed aside a green parrot which had slipped from its perch on to a low chair by the couch, and, having thus freed a seat for himself, he sat down, unheeding of the disturbed favorite's flutter and fuss. "Come here, Rollo. Poor Rollo! Pretty Rollo!" interposed the lady. "Oh, bother! listen to me, Margot!" said the Count. When he called her "Margot," she knew that he was either very much pleased or very much put out. She herself had officially decreed, on becoming a Countess, that her name should henceforth be Margherita. "Pearl, for you, if you like, Hilarius." He had long ago left off calling her "Pearl."

"Well, what is it?" she asked, faintly. "You must not tire me to-day. The damp has given me my headache."

Said Count Hilarius, solemnly: "The King had a bad egg for breakfast this morning."

The Countess laughed, but indolently, as one who has more serious things to occupy her thoughts.

"You laugh!" cried the Count, in sudden wrath, "because you do not understand. By Heaven, it is no laughing matter! Who is responsible for the eggs? I! If it happens again, I shall resign."

"Nonsense!" she said, sitting up, alert and sharp.

"Ah, that brings you round, does it? I tell you my nerves can't stand the strain. This is the third time since

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1893, D. Appleton & Co., New York.