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Impressionism to Surrealism: Art and Culture, 1880 to the Eve of WWII

Readings, Part 2

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"4th. — Because it is unjust to punish the sex who are the victims of a vice, and leave unpunished the sex who are the main cause, both of the vice and its dreaded consequences; and we consider that liability to arrest, forced medical treatment, and (where this is resisted) imprisonment with hard labour, to which these Acts subject women, are punishments of the most degrading kind.

"5th. — Because, by such a system, the path of evil is made more easy to our sons, and to the whole of the youth of England; inasmuch as a moral restraint is withdrawn the moment the State recognizes, and provides convenience for, the practice of a vice which it thereby declares to be necessary and venial.

"6th. — Because these measures are cruel to the women who come under their action — violating the feelings of those whose sense of shame is not wholly lost, and further brutalising even the most abandoned.

"7th. — Because the disease which these Acts seek to remove has never been removed by any such legislation. The advocates of the system have utterly failed to show, by statistics or otherwise, that these regulations have in any case, after several years' trial, and when applied to one sex only, diminished disease, reclaimed the fallen, or improved the general morality of the country. We have, on the contrary, the strongest evidence to show that in Paris and other Continental cities where women have long been outraged by this system, the public health and morals are worse than at home.

"8th. — Because the conditions of this disease, in the first instance, are moral, not physical. The moral evil through which the disease makes its way separates the case entirely from that of the plague, or other scourges, which have been placed under police control or sanitary care. We hold that we are bound, before rushing into experiments of legalizing a revolting vice, to try to deal with the *causes* of the evil, and we dare to believe that with wiser teaching and more capable legislation, those causes would not be beyond control."

Sources: Josephine E. Butler, *Personal Reminiscences of a Great Crusade* (Connecticut: Hyperion Books, Inc., 1976), pp. 1-10.

26.3

Militant Suffragists, Emmeline Pankhurst

Once they had access to education, and had proven themselves capable of political activism, the next reform middle-class women sought was to change the franchise systems of the West. Suffragettes (or Suffragists; their name comes from the word suffrage, or right to vote) from across Europe and America took varied approaches to promoting their quest for the vote. All, however, believed that getting the vote would allow them to obtain more reforms later on. Some, such as Millicent Fawcett in Britain or Hubertine Auclert in France, took the route piloted by Butler, in petitioning their governments for suffrage, while others (mostly in Britain) tried a more dramatic way of publicizing their movement. These were the "militant suffragists" who chained themselves to Parliament in London, went on hunger strikes, vandalized, and even committed public suicide were all attempts used by various militant suffragists. Women did finally get the vote, but not until after World War I.

In Britain, the most famous militant suffragists were members of one family: the Pankhursts. Emmeline (1858-1929) and her daughters Christabel (1880-1958) and Sylvia (1882-1960) founded the Women's Social and Political Union in 1903. In 1913 Emmeline gave the following speech in Connecticut.

Questions

1. In what ways does Pankhurst tailor her speech to the interests of her American audience?
2. How does Pankhurst define "government?"
3. What dangers do you see in using the language of war and violence to advocate political change?

I do not come here as an advocate, because whatever position the suffrage movement may occupy in the United States of America, in England it has passed beyond the realm of advocacy and it has entered into the sphere of practical politics. It has become the subject of revolution and civil war, and so to-night I am not here to advocate woman suffrage. American suffragists can do that very well for themselves. I am here as a soldier who has temporarily left the field of battle in order to explain — it seems strange it should have to be explained — what civil war is like when civil war is waged by women. I am not only here as a soldier temporarily absent from the field of battle; I am here — and that, I think, is the strangest part of my coming — I am here as a person who, according to the law courts of my country, it has been decided, is of no value to the community at all; and I am adjudged because of my life to be a dangerous person. So you see there is some special interest in hearing so unusual a person address you. I dare say, in the minds of many of you — you will perhaps forgive me this personal touch — that I do not look either very like a soldier or very like a convict, and yet I am both.

It would take too long to trace the course of militant methods as adopted by women, because it is about eight years since the word militant was first used to describe what we were doing; it is about eight years since the first militant action was taken by women. It was not militant at all, except that it provoked militancy on the part of those who were opposed to it. When women asked questions in political meetings and failed to get answers, they were not doing anything militant. To ask questions at political meetings is an acknowledged right of all people who attend public meetings; certainly in my country, men have always done it, and I hope they do it in America, because it seems to me that if you allow people to enter your legislatures without asking them any questions as to what they are going to do when they get there you are not exercising your citizen rights and your citizen duties as you ought. At any rate in Great Britain it is a custom, a time-honored one, to ask questions of candidates for Parliament and ask questions of members of the government. No man was ever put out of a public meeting for asking a question until Votes for Women came onto the political horizon. The first people who were put out of a political meeting for asking questions, were women; they were brutally ill-used; they found themselves in jail before twenty-four hours had expired. But instead of the newspapers, which are largely inspired by the politicians, putting militancy and the reproach of militancy, if reproach there is, on the people who had assaulted the women, they actually said it was the women who were militant and very much to blame.

It was not the speakers on the platform who would not answer them, who were to blame, or the ushers at the meeting; it was the poor women who had had their bruises and their knocks and scratches, and who were put into prison for doing precisely nothing but holding a protest meeting in the street after it was all over. However, we were called militant for doing that, and we were quite willing to accept the name, because militancy for us is time-honored; you have the church militant and in the sense of spiritual militancy we were very militant indeed. We were determined to press this question of the enfranchisement of the women to the point where we were no longer to be ignored by the politicians as had been the case for about fifty years, during which time women had patiently used every means open to them to win their political enfranchisement.

Enough of Sympathy

Experience will show you that if you really want to get anything done, it is not so much a matter of whether you alienate sympathy; sympathy is a very unsatisfactory thing if it is not practical sympathy. It does not matter to the practical suffragist whether she alienates sympathy that was never of any use to her. What she wants is to get something practical done, and whether it is done out of sympathy or whether it is done out of fear, or whether it is done because you want to be comfortable again and not be worried in this way, doesn't particularly matter so long as you get it. We had enough of sympathy for fifty years; it never brought us anything; and we would rather have an angry man going to the government and saying, my business is interfered with and I won't submit to its being interfered with any longer because you won't give women the vote, than to have a gentleman come onto our platforms year in and year out and talk about his ardent sympathy with woman suffrage.

"Put them is prison," they said; 'that will stop it." But it didn't stop it. They put women in prison for long terms of imprisonment, for making a nuisance of themselves — that was the expression when they took petitions in their hands to the door of the House of Commons; and they thought that by sending them to prison, giving them a day's imprisonment, would cause them to all settle down again and there would be no further trouble. But it didn't happen so at all: instead of the women giving it up, more women did it, and more and more and more women did it until there were three hundred women at a time, who had not broken a single law, only "made a nuisance of themselves" as the politicians say.

The whole argument with the anti-suffragists, or even the critical suffragist man, is this: that you can govern human beings without their consent. They have said to us, "Government rests upon force; the women haven't force, so they must submit." Well, we are showing them that government does not rest upon force at all; it rests upon consent. As long as women consent to be unjustly governed, they can be; but directly women say: "We withhold our consent, we will not be governed any longer so long as that government is unjust," not by the forces of civil war can you govern the very weakest woman. You can kill that woman, but she escapes you then; you cannot govern her. And that is, I think, a most valuable demonstration we have been making to the world.

Death or the Vote

Now, I want to say to you who think women cannot succeed, we have brought the government of England to this position, that it has to face this alternative; either women are to be killed or women are to have the vote. I ask American men in this meeting, what would you say if in your State you were faced with that alternative, that you must either kill them or give them their citizenship — women, many of whom you respect, women whom you know have lived useful lives, women whom you know, even if

you do not know them personally, are animated with the highest motives, women who are in pursuit of liberty and the power to do useful public service? Well, there is only one answer to that alternative; there is only one way out of it, unless you are prepared to put back civilization two or three generations; you must give those women the vote. Now that is the outcome of our civil war.

You won your freedom in American when you had the Revolution, by bloodshed, by sacrificing human life. You won the Civil War by the sacrifice of human life when you decided to emancipate the negro. You have left it to the women in your land, the men of all civilized countries have left it to women, the work out their own salvation. That is the way in which we women of England are doing. Human life for us is sacred, but we say if any life is to be sacrificed it shall be ours; we won't do it ourselves, but we will put the enemy in the position where they will have to choose between giving us freedom or giving us death.

Sources: Jennifer A. Hurley, ed., *Women's Rights: Great Speeches in History* (San Diego: Greenhaven Press, Inc., 2002), pp. 96-100.

26.4

THE JEWISH QUESTION AND ZIONISM, THEODORE HERZL

The Zionist movement is a combination of liberal ideas (the right of every individual Jew to personal liberty and religious toleration), nationalism (the creation of a nation-state for Jews as a people), and a progressive movement (it was modeled on the democratic reform movements, such as those that enfranchised all male citizens in Britain and Prussia). The founder of the World Zionist Organization was Theodore Herzl (1860-1904), an Austrian Jew who recognized a tragic reality in the Age of Progress: anti-Semitism was on the rise and Jews were no longer safe anywhere in Europe. In 1896 he published a pamphlet on the Jewish State.

QUESTIONS

1. Does Herzl seriously consider putting a Jewish state in Argentine rather than Palestine?
2. Compare this text to the speech by Emmeline Pankhurst. What is dangerous about taking such extreme positions as militancy and self-exile to ensure personal liberty?
3. From this selection, can you tell if Herzl was an observant or secular Jew? Does it matter?

II. — The Jewish Question

No one can deny the gravity of the situation of the Jews. Wherever they live in perceptible numbers, they are more or less persecuted. Their equality before the law, granted by statute, has become practically a dead letter. They are debarred from filling even moderately high positions, either in the

fabricated of ideal cobwebs, but a solid and broad bridge of facts. If it be so, it will carry us safely over many a chasm in our knowledge, and lead us to a region free from the snares of those fascinating but barren virgins, the Final Causes, against whom a high authority has so justly warned us. 'My sons, dig in the vineyard,' were the last words of the old man in the fable: and, though the sons found no treasure, they made their fortunes by the grapes.

(*The Darwinian Hypothesis*, 1859)

Source: T. H. Huxley, *The Essence of T. H. Huxley*, ed. Cyril Bibby (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967) pp. 165-168.

27.2

"A DREAM IS A FULFILLMENT OF A WISH," SIGMUND FREUD

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) addressed the issues of human behavior and motivation, and created the modern science of psychology. His principle contribution to Western thought in general and to the anxiety of the late nineteenth century in particular was the theory of the unconscious. It is an understanding of behavior that goes beyond the act itself to the impulse that caused it, which is often hidden and seems unrelated to the act itself. Freud's theories were also disturbing because he believed that most actions relate in some way to sexuality, often to the conflict between social repressions and sexual drives, particularly as children. The unconscious is shaped by this conflict and behavior is only an outward external expression of these internal conflicts. Even though many of his particular theories have been rejected, his overall understanding of behavior and motivation is still widely accepted. This was not always so; the very idea that children had sexuality offended many of Freud's contemporaries, just as Darwin's suggestion that man and animal were one and the same offended them.

The Interpretation of Dreams *was Freud's first published work (1900); this selection deals with the concept of wish fulfillment.*

QUESTIONS

1. What do Freud and Darwin's theories have in common?
2. One area in which Freud is still controversial today is in his theories about women. How does he characterize women in this selection?
3. Before Freud, what did people think dreams were?

It is easy to prove that dreams often reveal themselves without any disguise as fulfilments of wishes; so that it may seem surprising that the language of dreams was not understood long ago. For instance, there is a dream that I can produce in myself as often as I like — experimentally, as it were. If I eat

anchovies or olives or any other highly salted food in the evening, I develop thirst during the night which wakes me up. But my waking is preceded by a dream; and this always has the same content, namely, that I am drinking. I dream I am swallowing down water in great gulps, and it has the delicious taste that nothing can equal but a cool drink when one is parched with thirst. Then I wake up and have to have a real drink. This simple dream is occasioned by the thirst which I become aware of when I wake. The thirst gives rise to a wish to drink, and the dream shows me that wish fulfilled. In doing so it is performing a function — which it was easy to divine. I am a good sleeper and not accustomed to be woken by any physical need. If I can succeed in appeasing my thirst by *dreaming* that I am drinking, then I need not wake up in order to quench it. This, then, is a dream of convenience. Dreaming has taken the place of action, as it often does elsewhere in life. Unluckily my need for water to quench my thirst cannot be satisfied by a dream in the same way as my thirst for revenge against my friend Otto and Dr. M.; but the good intention is there in both cases. Not long ago this same dream of mine showed some modification. I had felt thirsty even before I fell asleep, and I had emptied a glass of water that stood on the table beside my bed. A few hours later during the night I had a fresh attack of thirst, and this had inconvenient results. In order to provide myself with some water I should have had to get up and fetch the glass standing on the table by my wife's bed. I therefore had an appropriate dream that my wife was giving me a drink out of a vase; this vase was an Etruscan cinerary urn which I had brought back from a journey to Italy and had since given away. But the water in it tasted so salty (evidently because of the ashes in the urn) that I woke up. It will be noticed how conveniently everything was arranged in this dream. Since its only purpose was to fulfil a wish, it could be completely egoistical. A love of comfort and convenience is not really compatible with consideration for other people. The introduction of the cinerary urn was probably yet another wish-fulfilment. I was sorry that the vase was no longer in my possession — just as the glass of water on my wife's table was out of my reach. The urn with its ashes fitted in, too, with the salty taste in my mouth which had now grown stronger and which I knew was bound to wake me....

Here is another dream in which once again the stimulus produced its effect during actual sleep. One of my women patients, who had been obliged to undergo an operation on her jaw which had taken an unfavourable course, was ordered by her doctors to wear a cooling apparatus on the side of her face day and night. But as soon as she fell asleep she used to throw it off. One day, after she had once more thrown the apparatus on the floor, I was asked to speak to her seriously about it. 'This time I really couldn't help it,' she answered. 'It was because of a dream I had in the night. I dreamt I was in a box at the opera and very much enjoying the performance. But Herr Karl Meyer was in the nursing-home and complaining bitterly of pains in his jaw. So I told myself that as I hadn't any pain I didn't need the apparatus; and I threw it away.' The dream of this poor sufferer seems almost like a concrete representati0n of a phrase that sometimes forces its way on to people's lips in unpleasant situations: 'I must say I could think of something more agreeable than this.' The dream gives a picture of this more agreeable thing. The Herr Karl Meyer on to whom the dreamer transplanted her pains was the most indifferent young man of her acquaintance that she could call to mind.

The wish-fulfilment can be detected equally easily in some other dreams which I have collected from normal people. A friend of mine, who knows my theory of dreams and has told his wife of it, said to me one day: 'My wife has asked me to tell you that she had a dream yesterday that she was having her period. You can guess what that means.' I could indeed guess it. The fact that this young married woman dreamt that she was having her period meant that she had missed her period. I could well believe that she would have been glad to go on enjoying her freedom a little longer before shouldering the burden of motherhood. It was a neat way of announcing her first pregnancy. Another friend of mine wrote and told

me that, not long before, his wife had dreamt that she had noticed some milk stains on the front of her vest. This too was an announcement of pregnancy, but not of a first one. The young mother was wishing that she might have more nourishment to give her second child than she had had for her first....

These examples will perhaps be enough to show that dreams which can only be understood as fulfilments of wishes and which bear their meaning upon their faces without disguise are to be found under the most frequent and various conditions. They are mostly short and simple dreams, which afford a pleasant contrast to the confused and exuberant compositions that have in the main attracted the attention of the authorities. Nevertheless, it will repay us to pause for a moment over these simple dreams. We may expect to find the very simplest forms of dreams in *children*, since there can be no doubt that their psychical productions are less complicated than those of adults. Child psychology, in my opinion, is destined to perform the same useful services for adult psychology that the investigation of the structure or development of the lower animals has performed for research into the structure of the higher classes of animals. Few deliberate efforts have hitherto been made to make use of child psychology for this purpose.

The dreams of young children are frequently pure wish-fulfilments and are in that case quite uninteresting compared with the dreams of adults. They raise not problems for solution; but on the other hand they are of inestimable importance in proving that, in their essential nature, dreams represent fulfilments of wishes. I have been able to collect a few instances of such dreams from material provided by my own children.

I have to thank an excursion which we made to the lovely village of Hallstatt in the summer of 1896 for two dreams: one of these was dreamt by my daughter, who was then eight and a half, and the other by her brother of five and a quarter. I must explain by way of preamble that we had been spending the summer on a hillside near Aussee, from which, in fine weather, we enjoyed a splendid view of the Dachstein. The Simony Hütte could be clearly distinguished through a telescope. The children made repeated attempts at seeing it through the telescope — I cannot say with what success. Before our excursion I had told the children that Hallstatt lay at the foot of the Dachstein. They very much looked forward to the day. From Hallstatt we walked up the Echerntal, which delighted the children with its succession of changing landscapes. One of them, however, the five-year-old boy, gradually became fretful. Each time a new mountain came into view he asked if that was the Dachstein and I had to say, 'No, only one of the foothills.' After he had asked the question several times, he fell completely silent; and he refused point-blank to come with us up the steep path to the waterfall. I thought he was tired. But next morning he came to me with a radiant face and said: 'Last night I dreamt we were at Simony Hütte.' I understood him then. When I had spoken about the Dachstein, he had expected to climb the mountain in the course of our excursion to Hallstatt and to find himself at close quarters with the hut which there had been so much talk about in connection with the telescope. But when he found that he was being fobbed off with foothills and a waterfall, he felt disappointed and out of spirits. The dream was a compensation. I tried to discover its details, but they were scanty: 'You have to climb up steps for six hours' — which was what he had been told....

A friend of mine has reported a dream to me which was very much like my son's. The dreamer was an eight-year-old girl. Her father had started off with several children on a walk to Dornbach, with the idea of visiting the Rohrer Hütte. As it was getting late, however, he had turned back, promising the children to make up for the disappointment another time. On their way home they had passed the signpost that marks the path up to the Hameau. The children had then asked to be taken up to the Hameau; but once again for the same reason they had to be consoled with the promise of another day. Next morning the eight-year-old girl came to her father and said in satisfied tones: 'Daddy, I dreamt last

night that you went with us to the Rohrer Hütte and the Hameau.' In her impatience she has anticipated the fulfilment of her father's promises.

Here is an equally straightforward dream, provoked by the beauty of the scenery at Aussee in another of my daughters, who was at that time three and a quarter. She had crossed the lake for the first time, and the crossing had been to short for her: when we reached the landing-stage she had not wanted to leave the boat and had wept bitterly. Next morning she said: 'Last night I went on the lake.' Let us hope that her dram-crossing had been of a more satisfying length.

My eldest boy, then eight years old, already had dreams of his phantasies coming true: he dreamt that he was driving in a chariot with Achilles and that Diomede was the charioteer. As may be guessed, he had been excited the day before by a book on the legends of Greece which had been given to his elder sister.

If I may include words spoken by children in their sleep under the heading of dreams, I can at this point quote one of the most youthful drams in my whole collection. My youngest daughter, then nineteen months old, had had an attack of vomiting one morning and consequently been kept without food all day. During the night after this day of starvation she was heard calling out excitedly in her sleep: 'Anna Fweud, stwawbewwies, wild stwawbewwies, omblet, pudden!' At that time she was in the habit of using her own name to express the idea of taking possession of something. The menu included pretty well everything that must have seemed to her to make up a desirable meal. The fact that strawberries appeared in it in two varieties was a demonstration against the domestic health regulations. It was based upon the circumstance, which she had no doubt observed, that her nurse had attributed her indisposition to a surfeit of strawberries. She was thus retaliating in her dream against this unwelcome verdict.

Source: Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, trans. James Strachey (New York: Avon Books, 1965), pp. 155-167.

27.3

The Antichrist, Friedrich Nietzsche

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) was and is much misunderstood in the twentieth and the twentieth-first century. He was idealized (and misquoted) by Hitler and the Nazi propaganda machine, which will use Nietzsche's idea of an ubermensch *or "superman" to defend the destruction of lesser races (such as the Jews and Slavs) and the rise of the pure, Aryan race. In reality, Nietzsche was not really important for what he said as much as what he questioned. He drew into question everything accepted and assumed certain by the traditional, middle class, European culture of his day. He questioned democratic systems, nationalism, Christianity, rationalism, morality, science, etc. For Nietzsche all of these only limited human intellect, making one weak, excessively humble and meek. Instead, he praised a return to classical Greek heroic values; striving for personal glory rather than submitting to the democratic or nationalistic principle. Nietzsche is the glorification of the individual.*

Chapter 6

Roger Fry and the Post-Impressionists

Roger Fry had arrived at the Slade at the beginning of the autumn term of 1910. At forty-four years old, his credentials were impressive: in 1905 he had helped to launch the highbrow art journal *The Burlington Magazine*, and had subsequently become curator of paintings and then European buyer for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Yet despite his clear suitability to teach the Slade students in art history – and Fry was an excellent lecturer – he was a man of contradictions.

From a Quaker family that had made a fortune in chocolate, in the mid-1880s as an undergraduate at King's College, Cambridge, Fry had studied natural sciences, not art history. But he took a keen interest in the writings of Ruskin, and developed excellent skills as a draughtsman. Though he took a double first and applied, unsuccessfully, for a College fellowship in science, he 'had begun to think of art as somehow my only possible job.'[1] On abandoning academia Fry trained as an artist in London. In 1891 he made his first trip to Italy, and studied briefly at the Académie Julian in Paris, where he discovered the Impressionists and fell for the work of Monet.

But Fry absorbed ideas and influences when and where he found them, and regularly changed his style. When Paul Nash's friend Robert Trevelyan showed him his small but eclectic collection of paintings in 1913, Nash was amazed to be told that they were *all* by the same man:

Mark Gertler, Dora Carrington, *1912*

Stanley Spencer, The Centurion's Servant, *1914*

Two years after Fry's appearance, Virginia Stephen married Leonard Woolf, and thirty years later, as Virginia Woolf, she would publish the first biography of Roger Fry. With his arrival the famous Bloomsbury Group was now virtually complete, and Fry put 'flesh and blood' on what Woolf considered the skeleton of their more rudimentary discussions of art and beauty. With Fry there was 'always some new idea afoot', Woolf would write, 'always some new picture standing on a chair to be looked at, some new poet fished out of obscurity and stood in the light of day'.[5] It was a thrilling moment, the coming together of a circle of glittering talents who would help to refashion England's literary and artistic culture for the next forty years, dragging it all too reluctantly into the voguish world of the Modern.*

By 1910, Fry's artistic interests were ranging beyond the Old Masters. Like a number of avant-garde artists and critics, he began taking interest in the pictorial and sculptural works of what were usually considered more backward civilisations. In the spring of that year he reviewed a book on drawings by African Bushmen for the *Burlington Magazine*, admiring their sharpness of perception and intelligence of design.[6] These, he felt, could in no way be considered primitive works, though they clearly differed strongly from Western painterly traditions. Fry was opening up his awareness to a wider sphere of artistic expression, though it was not one that would win him many friends. Henry Tonks told the critic Robert Ross, 'I say, don't you think Fry might find something more interesting to write about than Bushmen, Bushmen!!'[7]

* In 1932 Carrington would ponder the 'quintessence' of the Bloomsbury Group. She concluded: 'It was a marvellous combination of the Highest intelligence, & appreciation of Literature combined with a lean humour & tremendous affection. They gave it backwards and forwards to each other like shuttlecocks only the shuttlecocks multiplied as they flew in the air.'[8] Others were not so charmed, and John Rothenstein would later remark on the dark shadow that the group's 'malevolence and intrigue' cast over the lives of a number of early twentieth-century British artists. He added that one artist had told him shortly before his death that this shadow 'had ruined his life and that, had he known what it would be like, he would have been most careful not to antagonize them'. This man might well have been Nevinson.[9]

Then in the summer of 1910 there was an exhibition at the Public Art Galleries in Brighton of modern French artists. It included works by Derain, Signac, Gauguin, Cézanne and Matisse. Fry attended, and though the reviews were largely hostile, the idea he had outlined to the Bells was rekindled. With his friend, the journalist and literary critic Desmond MacCarthy, he headed off to Paris. Together with Clive Bell they visited the Parisian dealers and private collectors, arranging an assortment of paintings to exhibit at the Grafton Galleries in Mayfair. Fry did not have an exact idea of which artists or works he wanted to exhibit, nor high hopes that their show would be a success. Nonetheless, MacCarthy later recalled Fry's 'raptures' as they looked through the pictures that had been generously put at their disposal in Paris. 'He would sit in front of them with his hands on his knees groaning repeatedly, "Wonderful, wonderful".'[10]

Fry was spellbound. Virginia Woolf described him at the Grafton Galleries gazing at the paintings, 'plunging his eyes into them as if he were a humming-bird Hawkmoth hanging over a flower, quivering yet still. And then drawing a deep breath of satisfaction, he would turn to whoever it might be, eager for sympathy.'[11] Manet, Cézanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh, and Matisse would dominate the London show, which included such now-famous works as Matisse's *Fille aux Yeux Verts*, Manet's *Un Bar aux Folies-Bergères*, and Van Gogh's *Wheatfield with Crows*. There was also a work by Picasso, *Portrait of Clovis Sagot*.

Although some of these paintings were already twenty or even thirty years old – and four of the five major artists represented were dead – they were new to most Londoners. The show was going to be an eye-opener for an insular audience that had been brought up on the realism of the classical tradition – a tradition exemplified by contemporary British painters such as John Singer Sargent, William Rothenstein, William Nicholson and Augustus John. Fry's 'new' continental paintings were not, by and large, 'about' anything – they did not have a narrative or a

literary inspiration in the way that most Pre-Raphaelite and Symbolist paintings did. They were portraits, or landscapes, or still lifes, painted with a distinctive, idiosyncratic eye. They were anti-narrative, anti-naturalistic: form and style dominated. Only Walter Sickert and, before him, Whistler seemed to be offering anything akin to this modern art being painted on the other side of the Channel. Fry knew there would be trouble: 'I am preparing for a huge campaign of outraged British Philistinism', he told a friend in October.[12]

The exhibition opened to the public on 8 November 1910 under the title *Manet and the Post-Impressionists*, a collective phrase Fry coined especially for the show. It met with immediate derision. The critic for the *Pall Mall Gazette* described the paintings as 'the output of a lunatic asylum',[13] whilst Robert Ross, writing in the *Morning Post*, pointed out that Van Gogh *had* been 'a lunatic', and that the 'emotions of these painters… are of no interest except to the student of pathology and the specialist in abnormality.' Given the fate of Fry's schizophrenic wife (she had recently been committed to an asylum), these accusations must have been particularly hurtful. The exhibition, Ross declared, revealed 'a widespread plot to destroy the whole fabric of European painting'.[14] Paul Nash recalled that one critic, Sir Claude Phillips of *The Telegraph*, 'the most honest and uncompromising of them all,' on leaving the show 'threw down his catalogue upon the threshold of the Grafton Galleries and stamped on it.'[15] The reviewer from *The Times* observed that such work 'throws away all that the long-developed skills of past artists had acquired and bequeathed. It begins all over again – and stops where a child would stop.'[16]

Though a similar process of reinvention and experimentation was also occurring in contemporary music and literature, this was not going to endear Fry's show to an older, conservative audience. The venerable painter Sir William Blake Richmond wrote of his 'fierce feeling of terror lest the youth of England, young promising fellows, might be

contaminated' by 'this unmanly show'.[17] The aged hedonist and writer Wilfrid Scawen Blunt rejected claims that the show paralleled the response to the Pre-Raphaelites' first appearance at the Royal Academy in the late 1850s: 'these are not works of art at all,' he wrote in his diary, 'unless throwing a handful of mud against a wall may be called one. They are works of idleness and impotent stupidity, a pornographic show.'[18]

Of course, the hostile response of the older critics and public must be set not just against the ongoing revolution in the arts, but also against the wider contexts of contemporary Britain. Socially and politically speaking, these were years of crisis and anxiety. The decade before 1914 is often seen, nostalgically, as a period of innocence and tranquillity. Yet in 1910 Edwardian England was not wholly at ease with itself. The previous year had seen the fraught divisions caused by the Liberal government's 'People's Budget'. Whilst this was a major first step towards the creation of a modern welfare state, it had enraged the landed class, which Prime Minister Asquith and his Chancellor, Lloyd George, expected to fund it. The House of Lords had unsuccessfully opposed the Budget – indeed, the government had questioned the Lords' continued existence, and in 1910 an Act of Parliament seriously curtailed their powers. The old Tory order, it seemed, was on the brink of collapse.

At the same time, in Wales and north-west England the labour unions, with their links to socialist, Marxist and anarchist movements, were in full and militant action, demanding radical social as well as political change. On 8 November, the same day Fry's exhibition opened to the public, there was a riot in Tonypandy, with shops looted and a miner killed. The Home Secretary, Winston Churchill, was forced to send policemen and soldiers from London in an effort to restore order. But the disquiet continued to simmer and occasionally boil over through the rest of the year and on into the long, unusually hot summer of 1911. In Ireland, meanwhile, calls for Home Rule and Independence were getting louder, and civil war looked ever more threatening; and in London the Suffragettes were

becoming more vocal and forceful in their demands – and meeting even stronger opposition. On 18 November, only a few days after Wilfrid Blunt visited the Grafton Galleries and described the exhibition there as 'pornographic', truncheon-wielding policemen in Parliament Square broke up a vocal crowd of protesters demanding Votes for Women. On what became known as 'bloody Friday', some two hundred and eighty protesters were arrested.

Did the press reaction to Post-Impressionism reflect these social upheavals? Fry was surprised that the 'accusation of anarchism was constantly made' against the 'new' artistic movement. He believed that from an aesthetic point of view 'this was, of course, the exact opposite of the truth, and I was for long puzzled to find the explanation of so paradoxical an opinion and so violent an enemy.' Fry thought that the opposition arose from class and snobbery. To become an authority on Chinese porcelain or Renaissance painting demanded education, erudition and time devoted to study, 'but to admire a Matisse required only a certain sensibility. One could feel fairly sure that one's maid could not rival one in the former case, but might by a mere haphazard gift of Providence surpass one in the second.'[19] This, perhaps, was true – but Fry seems to have missed the bigger picture.

These foreign artists, with their seemingly crude style and gaudy colours, challenged the conventional notion of Western Europe as a civilized, sensible and pacific society – exactly the same challenge Socialism and the Suffragettes were making. But once Victorian scientists had accepted Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection, the portent of its obverse face, degeneration, had appalled them. Survival of the human species seemed to hang on the twin principles of strength and fitness, yet at the same time civilisation and industrialisation was producing its fair crop of the ill, the malformed, the vicious, the decadent, the discontented, the insane and the anarchic. This was a Janus-faced world in which respectability was only skin-deep – as Robert

Louis Stevenson revealed in his dark 1886 novella, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, and as Sigmund Freud was soon exposing in the new discipline of psychoanalysis.

The *fin-de-siècle* mood, characterized in England by Oscar Wilde's circle of aesthetes and homosexuals, still cast its shadow across the new century. One Slade student who visited the Post-Impressionist exhibition wondered if in some 'of the most successful exhibits, the emotion expressed was somewhat feeble or morbid, or decadent?'[20] In an extraordinary book published in 1895, *Degeneration*, the German sexologist Max Nordau had described decadence and the *fin-de-siècle* mood as 'the impotent despair of a sick man, who feels himself dying by inches in the midst of an eternally living nature blooming insolently forever.' To Nordau, death, decay and insanity appeared to characterise the modern art and literature being spawned in the corrupted cities of Europe: 'We stand now in the midst of a severe mental epidemic,' he declared, 'a sort of black death of degeneration and hysteria, and it is natural that we should ask anxiously on all sides: "What is to come next?"'[21]

For such critics, new conceptions in art, music and literature were bought at dangerous expense. For many intellectuals and politicians, something had to be done to counter what was seen as an increasingly menacing threat. Karl Pearson, who in 1911 would become UCL's Professor of Eugenics, had recently declared: 'The time is coming when we must consciously carry out that purification of the state and race which has hitherto been the work of the unconscious cosmic process. The higher patriotism and the pride of race must come to our aid in stemming deterioration... To produce a nation healthy alike in mind and body must become a fixed idea'.[22] Artworks of the seemingly insane had no place in such a world, as J. Comyns Carr, art critic and director of London's New Gallery, recognized. For Carr, Fry's movement appeared 'to indicate a wave of disease, even of absolute madness; for the whole product seems to breathe not ineptitude merely but corruption – especially

marked in a sort of combined endeavour to degrade and discredit all forms of feminine beauty.'[23]

This was an attitude to modernity that would culminate in the 1930s with the burning of 'degenerate' books and paintings by the Nazis – acts that terminated with the Holocaust. That would be the true madness of the twentieth century. But in its first years there was a real sense of instability, danger and uncertainty about modern civilisation. To be avant-garde was to challenge the very social order.

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Heavily morally and culturally loaded, *Manet and the Post-Impressionists* was some exhibition. Back at the Slade, Henry Tonks was having none of it. As Nash observed, his fellow students were 'by no means a docile crowd and the virus of the new art was working in them uncomfortably. Suppose they all began to draw like Matisse?'[24] Tonks gathered them together and called on their 'sporting instincts', explaining that whilst he could not prevent them visiting the Grafton Galleries, he could tell them 'how very much better pleased he would be if we did not risk contamination but stayed away.'[25]

In private Tonks was equally hostile. Whilst Brown and Steer aired their concern that if the Slade did not adopt the new, modern style into its teaching it would lose out to other London art schools, Tonks declared, 'I cannot teach what I don't believe in. I shall resign if this talk about Cubism does not cease; it is killing me.'[26] He would come to view Post-Impressionism as 'an evil thing' that 'seduced the most gifted of the Slade students' away from the English tradition represented by Turner, Gainsborough, Constable, Millais and Holman Hunt.[27] 'I don't believe', he would confess to a friend, that 'I really like any modern development.'[28]

Nash ignored Tonks's request to stay away from the first Post-Impressionist exhibition. But he left it 'untouched', writing long afterwards, 'I remained at the point I had reached and continued to make my monochrome drawings of "visions"'.[29] The responses of his

colleagues were (at this stage) equally cool. Richard Nevinson, who had already spent some time in Paris and knew of the 'Post-Impressionist' artists long before 1910, went with Gertler to what was being called this 'ultra-modernist' exhibition.[30] It made a limited impact on their art, however. Like Nash, they would not yet join the ranks of the European avant-garde.

Indeed, to one anonymous Slade student writing in the College magazine, Post-Impressionism was really nothing new: 'The principles advanced in the catalogue of the Exhibition at the Grafton Galleries were certainly interesting, but surely more as a revival than as an innovation. They express nothing more than has been the aim of artists from time immemorial.'[31] Others saw it as significant, but with little immediate impact. William Rothenstein told Fry that he considered the exhibition to have been 'a brilliant and gallant charge of the light brigade – a glorious episode, but leaving things very much where they were before.'[32] This seems to have been true, at least at first, for the young Slade students. But some of their immediate elders – among them Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant and the Fitzroy Street painters such as Spencer Gore – were soon displaying the influence of Post-Impressionism in one form or another.

For the moment, however, Nevinson, Gertler, Spencer and some of their Slade colleagues were still finding more influence in the National Gallery's collection of Renaissance paintings than in the Post-Impressionists at Grafton Street. In 1910 Augustus John had made his first visit to northern Italy, where he had seen the works of such Italian 'primitives' as Signorelli at Orvieto and Giotto at Padua. Their influence had quickly appeared in his paintings, which were exhibited on his return to England, and the young Slade artists appear to have followed John's lead.*

Nevinson later recalled that 'By this time I was largely under the influence of Gertler and was doing highly finished heads in the Botticelli

* The critic Laurence Binyon, writing in the *Saturday Review*, considered John's works better than the Gauguins on show at the Post-Impressionist exhibition.[33]

manner.'[34] His beautifully finished self-portrait of 1911 certainly shows the influence of the Florentine painter, and it was John who had introduced Gertler to tempera. Indeed, by that year the Slade Coster Gang had renamed themselves 'the Neo-Primitives' (or so Nevinson later claimed), drawing artistic influence directly from the Italian early to mid Renaissance – artists that included Duccio, Cimabue, Giotto, Masaccio, Fra Angelico, Piero della Francesca and Botticelli.[35]

Thus Gertler declared in an interview with the *Jewish Chronicle* in February 1912 that Piero della Francesca's *Nativity* in the National Gallery was 'assuredly one of the finest pictures in the world', filled with 'music and rhythm' of colour. He added that it was Botticelli who had 'helped me a great deal to see clearly in that direction.' He doubted whether the Old Masters would ever be equalled in this respect: 'There is too much visualism, and not enough brain, in modern art', he complained. 'People do not think enough before they put brush to canvas, and then we are not such keen craftsmen as they were in the old days.'[36] When the reporter asked him what he thought of modern art, Gertler explained: 'I say this, that until we begin to paint in the same sincere spirit that they did, we have no chance of approaching them as painters.' Augustus John was the only modern artist he spoke of by name as 'really great'.[37] Nevinson also rated Piero della Francesca highly, though he held that it was Whistler who was 'undoubtedly our last Artist', and that 'John is useless compared to him emotionally'.[38]

The apotheosis of this 'primitive' spirit was Gertler's *Allegory* and then a group portrait that John Currie painted in 1912. It portrayed the artist alongside Gertler, Nevinson, Wadsworth, Allinson and the proprietress of the Petit Savoyard café in Soho. With a deftly Renaissance style and an Italianate backdrop (a critic would soon speak of the 'Florentine lucidity' of Currie's figures[39]), he titled this unusual tempera scene *Some Later Primitives and Madame Tisceron*. It was well received when exhibited at the NEAC – but it could not be called modern in terms of what was

going on across the Channel, or indeed in terms of what was going on in Bloomsbury or Camden Town. Even in August 1913 Gertler was telling Brett to study 'Giotto! & at once – He is tremendous!!! Study also Dürer – *the* draughtsman. These men are a constant cause of inspiration to me. It will never do, unless we too, express ourselves with such knowledge & emotion.'[40]

When Nevinson, Gertler and Currie exhibited at the Chenil Gallery in Chelsea in December 1913 alongside paintings by Augustus John, the critic for *The Observer* perceived that 'when their modernity is closely investigated it seems to belong more to the fifteenth century than to the twentieth century. Indeed the most "advanced" of the exhibits take us back to the days of Giotto.'[41] But by then the 'Neo-Primitives' were already breaking up. Nevinson had warned Carrington in July of his fear that Currie and Gertler were becoming too 'early Italian & costumy', telling her that 'we must guard against raking up the past'. He felt that such 'academic art' was 'second hand & therefore lifeless.' Though he looked to the past, he wanted 'to paint this present age', and soon Gertler and Currie were following suit.[42]

It was Stanley Spencer who would be most influenced by the early Renaissance Italians. There is no evidence that he ever visited the first Post-Impressionist show, and he later denied having been influenced by *any* form of contemporary art (though this was clearly untrue).[43] In 1911 his fellow Slade student Gwen Darwin (six years Spencer's senior and a grand-daughter of Charles Darwin) gave him a copy of Ruskin's *Giotto and his Works at Padua*. The illustrations there were supplemented by those he saw in a series of little art books published by Gowans & Gray – available for a shilling apiece – and Spencer was soon returning to Cookham with editions on the Old Masters stuffed in his pockets. He was reading widely and avidly, and discovering how the medieval and early Renaissance artists he so admired had worked as craftsmen, celebrating God with their manual skills. It was an idea that appealed greatly. He later

earned Gertler's wrath by answering the question of what he thought of Picasso with the reply: 'I haven't got past Piero della Francesca yet'.[44] Gertler and Nevinson soon moved beyond their interest in the so-called Primitives; Spencer, however, did not.

Indeed Spencer – like Gertler and Nevinson – eventually became fed up with 'thinking' about art, and the endless discussions the Slade students engaged in. They all had their own theories on how great art could be produced, with Maxwell Lightfoot and Edward Wadsworth amongst the most fervent in advancing their ideas and advising their peers. Not that Spencer minded Lightfoot's encouragement: though he came from a working-class Liverpool family with little interest in art, Lightfoot was precociously talented and had recently been invited to join the select circle of Walter Sickert's Camden Town Group. But in 1914 Spencer explained to Gwen Darwin that whilst at the Slade he would go 'for ages every day, to lunch with Nevinson & Wadsworth, & Wadsworth used to get me to study the anatomy of his "thoughts" upon art & how to paint & draw in a *practical* way, mind. This sort of thing went on for what seemed to me years until at last one day Wadsworth came in absolutely desperate'. Wadsworth didn't think Spencer knew enough about 'Art', and so advised him to give it up altogether, explaining: '"I have had experience; you have not. I have passed through all the stages an artist can go through; Rembrandt & all the rest". He went on like this & Nevinson looked very glum. It is extraordinary, but on this occasion I was silent. I thought perhaps he was ragging, until one day I asked Nevinson & he said Wadsworth was doing the same thing to him; delivering these lectures. I thought when I heard Wadsworth going on, "If you had not interfered you would never have got yourself into a muddle" for Wadsworth is a horrible man to me. You understand I only tell you this to show you that it was more or less through listening to these people's rubbish that made me so prejudiced against thought in every way... I agree with you that my work has suffered on account of this prejudice'.[45]

It was Carrington who was the most immediately influenced by the Post-Impressionist exhibition. She returned to Bedford after her first term at the Slade a changed woman. Her brother Noel recalled how her new opinions on art 'deflated all our previous conceptions; those revered elders, Lord Leighton, Alma-Tadema, Herkomer and company were brushed aside as fit only for the dustbin. Who were we to look to, then? Why, Sickert, Steer, John, [Ambrose] McEvoy: names unknown to Bedford, and even these were not to be mentioned in the same

The 'Slade Maids': Dora Carrington, Barbara Hiles and Dorothy Brett outside the Slade in their fashionable new haircuts, 1911.

breath as Cézanne.' For Carrington's art-loving mother this was all 'rather humiliating', and she 'now hardly dared to talk on the subject for fear of mispronouncing these strange names.'[46]

This, though, was as nothing compared to Carrington's corresponding change in appearance. When she had arrived at the Slade she was quite conventional-looking. But in 1911, in a defiant, defeminising act, she cut her long locks of golden hair in to a short, boyish bob. Hiles and Brett followed her example. They became known as 'the Slade cropheads', and set a trend for young female art students. Copying their dress designs from Augustus John's gypsy drawings, these 'Slade maids', relaxing under UCL's quadrangle limes between classes with their 'half done' hair and frocks like nighties, were soon being both admired and parodied in the College magazine.*

Whilst Carrington's old acquaintances in Bedford hardly recognised her, in London she was suddenly being noticed. It was this radical change in her appearance that really brought the nineteen-year-old student to her male peers' attention. 'You girls are so sensitive & I am so rough – I don't know how to handle you,' Gertler would soon be telling Brett. 'Please know, that I never want to annoy you three – because I love you all, as friends – You are so much better than my men friends & so much more intelligent than the other women I know.'[48] But of the three it was Carrington, with her good looks, charm, vitality, intelligence and independence of spirit, who would soon be threatening Gertler and Nevinson's cherished friendship.

* As a poem in a 1912 edition of the University College student magazine addressed to 'The Slade Maid' joked: 'Oh (S)lady, you force my attention … For your garb, and your hats, I might mention … Your hair's but half done … I think … You ought to be Slayed.'[47]

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▸▸▸ *A Funeral*

SO GORGEOUS WAS THE SPECTACLE ON THE MAY morning of 1910 when nine kings rode in the funeral of Edward VII of England that the crowd, waiting in hushed and black-clad awe, could not keep back gasps of admiration. In scarlet and blue and green and purple, three by three the sovereigns rode through the palace gates, with plumed helmets, gold braid, crimson sashes, and jeweled orders flashing in the sun. After them came five heirs apparent, forty more imperial or royal highnesses, seven queens—four dowager and three regnant—and a scattering of special ambassadors from uncrowned countries. Together they represented seventy nations in the greatest assemblage of royalty and rank ever gathered in one place and, of its kind, the last. The muffled tongue of Big Ben tolled nine by the clock as the cortege left the palace, but on history's clock it was sunset, and the sun of the old world was setting in a dying blaze of splendor never to be seen again.

In the center of the front row rode the new king, George V, flanked on his left by the Duke of Connaught, the late king's only surviving brother, and on his right by a personage to whom, acknowledged *The Times,* "belongs the first place among all the foreign mourners," who "even when relations are most strained has never lost his popularity amongst us"—

William II, Emperor of Germany. Mounted on a gray horse, wearing the scarlet uniform of a British Field Marshal, carrying the baton of that rank, the Kaiser had composed his features behind the famous upturned mustache in an expression "grave even to severity." Of the several emotions churning his susceptible breast, some hints exist in his letters. "I am proud to call this place my home and to be a member of this royal family," he wrote home after spending the night in Windsor Castle in the former apartments of his mother. Sentiment and nostalgia induced by these melancholy occasions with his English relatives jostled with pride in his supremacy among the assembled potentates and with a fierce relish in the disappearance of his uncle from the European scene. He had come to bury Edward his bane; Edward the arch plotter, as William conceived it, of Germany's encirclement; Edward his mother's brother whom he could neither bully nor impress, whose fat figure cast a shadow between Germany and the sun. "He is Satan. You cannot imagine what a Satan he is!"

This verdict, announced by the Kaiser before a dinner of three hundred guests in Berlin in 1907, was occasioned by one of Edward's continental tours undertaken with clearly diabolical designs at encirclement. He had spent a provocative week in Paris, visited for no good reason the King of Spain (who had just married his niece), and finished with a visit to the King of Italy with obvious intent to seduce him from his Triple Alliance with Germany and Austria. The Kaiser, possessor of the least inhibited tongue in Europe, had worked himself into a frenzy ending in another of those comments that had periodically over the past twenty years of his reign shattered the nerves of diplomats.

Happily the Encircler was now dead and replaced by George who, the Kaiser told Theodore Roosevelt a few days before the funeral, was "a very nice boy" (of forty-five, six years younger than the Kaiser). "He is a thorough Englishman and hates all foreigners but I do not mind that as long as he does not hate Germans more than other foreigners." Alongside George, William now rode confidently, saluting as he passed the regimental colors of the 1st Royal Dragoons of which he was honorary colonel. Once he had distributed photographs of himself wearing their uniform with the Delphic inscription written above his signature, "I bide my time." Today his time had come; he was supreme in Europe.

Behind him rode the widowed Queen Alexandra's two brothers, King Frederick of Denmark and King George of the Hellenes; her nephew, King Haakon of Norway; and three kings who were to lose their thrones: Alfonso of Spain, Manuel of Portugal and, wearing a silk turban, King Ferdinand

of Bulgaria who annoyed his fellow sovereigns by calling himself Czar and kept in a chest a Byzantine Emperor's full regalia, acquired from a theatrical costumer, against the day when he should reassemble the Byzantine dominions beneath his scepter.

Dazzled by these "splendidly mounted princes," as *The Times* called them, few observers had eyes for the ninth king, the only one among them who was to achieve greatness as a man. Despite his great height and perfect horsemanship, Albert, King of the Belgians, who disliked the pomp of royal ceremony, contrived in that company to look both embarrassed and absent-minded. He was then thirty-five and had been on the throne barely a year. In later years when his face became known to the world as a symbol of heroism and tragedy, it still always wore that abstracted look, as if his mind were on something else.

The future source of tragedy, tall, corpulent, and corseted, with green plumes waving from his helmet, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, heir of the old Emperor Franz Josef, rode on Albert's right, and on his left another scion who would never reach his throne, Prince Yussuf, heir of the Sultan of Turkey. After the kings came the royal highnesses: Prince Fushimi, brother of the Emperor of Japan; Grand Duke Michael, brother of the Czar of Russia; the Duke of Aosta in bright blue with green plumes, brother of the King of Italy; Prince Carl, brother of the King of Sweden; Prince Henry, consort of the Queen of Holland; and the Crown Princes of Serbia, Rumania, and Montenegro. The last named, Prince Danilo, "an amiable, extremely handsome young man of delightful manners," resembled the Merry Widow's lover in more than name, for, to the consternation of British functionaries, he had arrived the night before accompanied by a "charming young lady of great personal attractions" whom he introduced as a lady in waiting of his wife's, come to London to do some shopping.

A regiment of minor German royalty followed: grand dukes of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Schleswig-Holstein, Waldeck-Pyrmont, of Coburg, Saxe-Coburg, and Saxe-Coburg Gotha, of Saxony, Hesse, Württemberg, Baden, and Bavaria, of whom the last, Crown Prince Rupprecht, was soon to lead a German army in battle. There were a Prince of Siam, a Prince of Persia, five princes of the former French royal house of Orléans, a brother of the Khedive of Egypt wearing a gold-tasseled fez, Prince Tsia-tao of China in an embroidered light-blue gown whose ancient dynasty had two more years to run, and the Kaiser's brother, Prince Henry of Prussia, representing the German Navy, of which he was Commander in Chief. Amid all this magnificence were three civilian-coated gentlemen,

M. Gaston-Carlin of Switzerland, M. Pichon, Foreign Minister of France, and former President Theodore Roosevelt, special envoy of the United States.

Edward, the object of this unprecedented gathering of nations, was often called the "Uncle of Europe," a title which, insofar as Europe's ruling houses were meant, could be taken literally. He was the uncle not only of Kaiser Wilhelm but also, through his wife's sister, the Dowager Empress Marie of Russia, of Czar Nicolas II. His own niece Alix was the Czarina; his daughter Maud was Queen of Norway; another niece, Ena, was Queen of Spain; a third niece, Marie, was soon to be Queen of Rumania. The Danish family of his wife, besides occupying the throne of Denmark, had mothered the Czar of Russia and supplied kings to Greece and Norway. Other relatives, the progeny at various removes of Queen Victoria's nine sons and daughters, were scattered in abundance throughout the courts of Europe.

Yet not family feeling alone nor even the suddenness and shock of Edward's death—for to public knowledge he had been ill one day and dead the next—accounted for the unexpected flood of condolences at his passing. It was in fact a tribute to Edward's great gifts as a sociable king which had proved invaluable to his country. In the nine short years of his reign England's splendid isolation had given way, under pressure, to a series of "understandings" or attachments, but not quite alliances—for England dislikes the definitive—with two old enemies, France and Russia, and one promising new power, Japan. The resulting shift in balance registered itself around the world and affected every state's relations with every other. Though Edward neither initiated nor influenced his country's policy, his personal diplomacy helped to make the change possible.

Taken as a child to visit France, he had said to Napoleon III: "You have a nice country. I would like to be your son." This preference for things French, in contrast to or perhaps in protest against his mother's for the Germanic, lasted, and after her death was put to use. When England, growing edgy over the challenge implicit in Germany's Naval Program of 1900, decided to patch up old quarrels with France, Edward's talents as *Roi Charmeur* smoothed the way. In 1903 he went to Paris, disregarding advice that an official state visit would find a cold welcome. On his arrival the crowds were sullen and silent except for a few taunting cries of "*Vivent les Boers!*" and "*Vive Fashoda!*" which the King ignored. To a worried aide who muttered, "The French don't like us," he replied, "Why should they?" and continued bowing and smiling from his carriage.

For four days he made appearances, reviewed troops at Vincennes, attended the races at Longchamps, a gala at the Opéra, a state banquet at the Elysée, a luncheon at the Quai d'Orsay and, at the theater, transformed a chill into smiles by mingling with the audience in the entr'acte and paying gallant compliments in French to a famous actress in the lobby. Everywhere he made gracious and tactful speeches about his friendship and admiration for the French, their "glorious traditions," their "beautiful city," for which he confessed an attachment "fortified by many happy memories," his "sincere pleasure" in the visit, his belief that old misunderstandings are "happily over and forgotten," that the mutual prosperity of France and England was interdependent and their friendship his "constant preoccupation." When he left, the crowds now shouted, "*Vive notre roi!*" "Seldom has such a complete change of attitude been seen as that which has taken place in this country. He has won the hearts of all the French," a Belgian diplomat reported. The German ambassador thought the King's visit was "a most odd affair," and supposed that an Anglo-French *rapprochement* was the result of a "general aversion to Germany." Within a year, after hard work by ministers settling disputes, the *rapprochement* became the Anglo-French Entente, signed in April, 1904.

Germany might have had an English entente for herself had not her leaders, suspecting English motives, rebuffed the overtures of the Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, in 1899 and again in 1901. Neither the shadowy Holstein who conducted Germany's foreign affairs from behind the scenes nor the elegant and erudite Chancellor, Prince Bülow, nor the Kaiser himself was quite sure what they suspected England of but they were certain it was something perfidious. The Kaiser always wanted an agreement with England if he could get one without seeming to want it. Once, affected by English surroundings and family sentiment at the funeral of Queen Victoria, he allowed himself to confess the wish to Edward. "Not a mouse could stir in Europe without our permission," was the way he visualized an Anglo-German alliance. But as soon as the English showed signs of willingness, he and his ministers veered off, suspecting some trick. Fearing to be taken advantage of at the conference table, they preferred to stay away altogether and depend upon an ever-growing navy to frighten the English into coming to terms.

Bismarck had warned Germany to be content with land power, but his successors were neither separately nor collectively Bismarcks. He had pursued clearly seen goals unswervingly; they groped for larger horizons with no clear idea of what they wanted. Holstein was a Machiavelli without a

policy who operated on only one principle: suspect everyone. Bülow had no principles; he was so slippery, lamented his colleague Admiral Tirpitz, that compared to him an eel was a leech. The flashing, inconstant, always freshly inspired Kaiser had a different goal every hour, and practiced diplomacy as an exercise in perpetual motion.

None of them believed England would ever come to terms with France, and all warnings of that event Holstein dismissed as "naïve," even a most explicit one from his envoy in London, Baron Eckhardstein. At a dinner at Marlborough House in 1902, Eckhardstein had watched Paul Cambon, the French ambassador, disappear into the billiard room with Joseph Chamberlain, where they engaged in "animated conversation" lasting twenty-eight minutes of which the only words he could overhear (the baron's memoirs do not say whether the door was open or he was listening at the keyhole) were "Egypt" and "Morocco." Later he was summoned to the King's study where Edward offered him an 1888 Uppmann cigar and told him that England was going to reach a settlement with France over all disputed colonial questions.

When the Entente became a fact, William's wrath was tremendous. Beneath it, and even more galling, rankled Edward's triumph in Paris. The *reise-Kaiser*, as he was known from the frequency of his travels, derived balm from ceremonial entries into foreign capitals, and the one above all he wished to visit was Paris, the unattainable. He had been everywhere, even to Jerusalem, where the Jaffa Gate had to be cut to permit his entry on horseback; but Paris, the center of all that was beautiful, all that was desirable, all that Berlin was not, remained closed to him. He wanted to receive the acclaim of Parisians and be awarded the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honor, and twice let the imperial wish be known to the French. No invitation ever came. He could enter Alsace and make speeches glorifying the victory of 1870; he could lead parades through Metz in Lorraine; but it is perhaps the saddest story of the fate of kings that the Kaiser lived to be eighty-two and died without seeing Paris.

Envy of the older nations gnawed at him. He complained to Theodore Roosevelt that the English nobility on continental tours never visited Berlin but always went to Paris. He felt unappreciated. "All the long years of my reign," he told the King of Italy, "my colleagues, the Monarchs of Europe, have paid no attention to what I have to say. Soon, with my great Navy to endorse my words, they will be more respectful." The same sentiments ran through his whole nation, which suffered, like their emperor, from a terrible need for recognition. Pulsing with energy and ambition, conscious

of strength, fed upon Nietzsche and Treitschke, they felt entitled to rule, and cheated that the world did not acknowledge their title. "We must," wrote Friedrich von Bernhardi, the spokesman of militarism, "secure to German nationality and German spirit throughout the globe that high esteem which is due them . . . and has hitherto been withheld from them." He frankly allowed only one method of attaining the goal; lesser Bernhardis from the Kaiser down sought to secure the esteem they craved by threats and show of power. They shook the "mailed fist," demanded their "place in the sun," and proclaimed the virtues of the sword in paeans to "blood and iron" and "shining armor." In German practice Mr. Roosevelt's current precept for getting on with your neighbors was Teutonized to, "Speak loudly and brandish a big gun." When they brandished it, when the Kaiser told his troops departing for China and the Boxer Rebellion to bear themselves as the Huns of Attila (the choice of Huns as German prototypes was his own), when Pan-German Societies and Navy Leagues multiplied and met in congresses to demand that other nations recognize their "legitimate aims" toward expansion, the other nations answered with alliances, and when they did, Germany screamed *Einkreisung!*—Encirclement! The refrain *Deutschland ganzlich einzukreisen* grated over the decade.

Edward's foreign visits continued—Rome, Vienna, Lisbon, Madrid—and not to royalty only. Every year he took the cure at Marienbad where he would exchange views with the Tiger of France, born in the same year as himself, who was premier for four of the years that Edward was king. Edward, whose two passions in life were correct clothes and unorthodox company, overlooked the former, and admired M. Clemenceau. The Tiger shared Napoleon's opinion that Prussia "was hatched from a cannon ball," and saw the cannon ball coming in his direction. He worked, he planned, he maneuvered in the shadow of one dominant idea: "the German lust for power . . . has fixed as its policy the extermination of France." He told Edward that when the time came when France needed help, England's sea power would not be enough, and reminded him that Napoleon was beaten at Waterloo, not Trafalgar.

In 1908, to the distaste of his subjects, Edward paid a state visit to the Czar aboard the imperial yacht at Reval. English imperialists regarded Russia as the ancient foe of the Crimea and more recently as the menace looming over India, while to the Liberals and Laborites Russia was the land of the knout, the pogrom, and the massacred revolutionaries of 1905, and the Czar, according to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, "a common murderer." The distaste was reciprocated. Russia detested England's alliance

with Japan and resented her as the power that frustrated Russia's historic yearning for Constantinople and the Straits. Nicholas II once combined two favorite prejudices in the simple statement, "An Englishman is a *zhid* (Jew)."

But old antagonisms were not so strong as new pressures, and under the urging of the French, who were anxious to have their two allies come to terms, an Anglo-Russian Convention was signed in 1907. A personal touch of royal friendliness was felt to be required to clear away any lingering mistrust, and Edward embarked for Reval. He had long talks with the Russian Foreign Minister, Isvolsky, and danced the Merry Widow waltz with the Czarina with such effect as to make her laugh, the first man to accomplish this feat since the unhappy woman put on the crown of the Romanovs. Nor was it such a frivolous achievement as might appear, for though it could hardly be said that the Czar governed Russia in a working sense, he ruled as an autocrat and was in turn ruled by his strong-willed if weak-witted wife. Beautiful, hysterical, and morbidly suspicious, she hated everyone but her immediate family and a series of fanatic or lunatic charlatans who offered comfort to her desperate soul. The Czar, neither well endowed mentally nor very well educated, was, in the Kaiser's opinion, "only fit to live in a country house and grow turnips."

The Kaiser regarded the Czar as his own sphere of influence and tried by clever schemes to woo him out of his French alliance which had been the consequence of William's own folly. Bismarck's maxim "Keep friends with Russia" and the Reinsurance Treaty that implemented it, William had dropped, along with Bismarck, in the first, and worst, blunder of his reign. Alexander III, the tall, stern Czar of that day, had promptly turned around in 1892 and entered into alliance with republican France, even at the cost of standing at attention to "The Marseillaise." Besides, he snubbed William, whom he considered "*un garçon mal élevé*," and would only talk to him over his shoulder. Ever since Nicholas acceded to the throne, William had been trying to repair his blunder by writing the young Czar long letters (in English) of advice, gossip, and political harangue addressed to "Dearest Nicky" and signed "Your affectionate friend, Willy." An irreligious republic stained by the blood of monarchs was no fit company for him, he told the Czar. "Nicky, take my word for it, the curse of God has stricken that people forever." Nicky's true interests, Willy told him, were with a *Drei-Kaiser Bund*, a league of the three emperors of Russia, Austria, and Germany. Yet, remembering the old Czar's snubs, he could not help patronizing his son. He would tap Nicholas on the shoulder, and say, "My

advice to you is more speeches and more parades, more speeches, more parades," and he offered to send German troops to protect Nicholas from his rebellious subjects, a suggestion which infuriated the Czarina, who hated William more after every exchange of visits.

When he failed, under the circumstances, to wean Russia away from France, the Kaiser drew up an ingenious treaty engaging Russia and Germany to aid each other in case of attack, which the Czar, after signing, was to communicate to the French and invite them to join. After Russia's disasters in her war with Japan (which the Kaiser had strenuously urged her into) and the revolutionary risings that followed, when the regime was at its lowest ebb, he invited the Czar to a secret rendezvous, without attendant ministers, at Björkö in the Gulf of Finland. William knew well enough that Russia could not accede to his treaty without breaking faith with the French, but he thought that sovereigns' signatures were all that was needed to erase the difficulty. Nicholas signed.

William was in ecstasy. He had made good the fatal lapse, secured Germany's back door, and broken the encirclement. "Bright tears stood in my eyes," he wrote to Bülow, and he was sure Grandpapa (William I, who had died muttering about a war on two fronts) was looking down on him. He felt his treaty to be the master coup of German diplomacy, as indeed it was, or would have been, but for a flaw in the title. When the Czar brought the treaty home, his ministers, after one horrified look, pointed out that by engaging to join Germany in a possible war he had repudiated his alliance with France, a detail which "no doubt escaped His Majesty in the flood of the Emperor William's eloquence." The Treaty of Björkö lived its brief shimmering day, and expired.

Now came Edward hobnobbing with the Czar at Reval. Reading the German ambassador's report of the meeting which suggested that Edward really desired peace, the Kaiser scribbled furiously in the margin, "Lies. He wants war. But I have to start it so he does not have the odium."

The year closed with the most explosive faux pas of the Kaiser's career, an interview given to the *Daily Telegraph* expressing his ideas of the day on who should fight whom, which this time unnerved not only his neighbors but his countrymen. Public disapproval was so outspoken that the Kaiser took to his bed, was ill for three weeks, and remained comparatively reticent for some time thereafter.

Since then no new excitements had erupted. The last two years of the decade while Europe enjoyed a rich fat afternoon, were the quietest. Nineteen-ten was peaceful and prosperous, with the second round of

Moroccan crises and Balkan wars still to come. A new book, *The Great Illusion* by Norman Angell, had just been published, which proved that war was impossible. By impressive examples and incontrovertible argument Angell showed that in the present financial and economic interdependence of nations, the victor would suffer equally with the vanquished; therefore war had become unprofitable; therefore no nation would be so foolish as to start one. Already translated into eleven languages, *The Great Illusion* had become a cult. At the universities, in Manchester, Glasgow, and other industrial cities, more than forty study groups of true believers had formed, devoted to propagating its dogma. Angell's most earnest disciple was a man of great influence on military policy, the King's friend and adviser, Viscount Esher, chairman of the War Committee assigned to remaking the British Army after the shock of its performance in the Boer War. Lord Esher delivered lectures on the lesson of *The Great Illusion* at Cambridge and the Sorbonne wherein he showed how "new economic factors clearly prove the inanity of aggressive wars." A twentieth century war would be on such a scale, he said, that its inevitable consequences of "commercial disaster, financial ruin and individual suffering" would be "so pregnant with restraining influences" as to make war unthinkable. He told an audience of officers at the United Service Club, with the Chief of General Staff, Sir John French, in the chair, that because of the interlacing of nations war "becomes every day more difficult and improbable."

Germany, Lord Esher felt sure, "is as receptive as Great Britain to the doctrine of Norman Angell." How receptive were the Kaiser and the Crown Prince to whom he gave, or caused to be given, copies of *The Great Illusion* is not reported. There is no evidence that he gave one to General von Bernhardi, who was engaged in 1910 in writing a book called *Germany and the Next War*, published in the following year, which was to be as influential as Angell's but from the opposite point of view. Three of its chapter titles, "The Right to Make War," "The Duty to Make War," and "World Power or Downfall" sum up its thesis.

As a twenty-one-year-old cavalry officer in 1870, Bernhardi had been the first German to ride through the Arc de Triomphe when the Germans entered Paris. Since then flags and glory interested him less than the theory, philosophy, and science of war as applied to "Germany's Historic Mission," another of his chapter titles. He had served as chief of the Military History section of the General Staff, was one of the intellectual elite of that hard-thinking, hard-working body, and author of a classic on cavalry before he assembled a lifetime's studies of Clausewitz, Treitschke, and Darwin, and

poured them into the book that was to make his name a synonym for Mars.

War, he stated, "is a biological necessity"; it is the carrying out among humankind of "the natural law, upon which all the laws of Nature rest, the law of the struggle for existence." Nations, he said, must progress or decay; "there can be no standing still," and Germany must choose "world power or downfall." Among the nations Germany "is in social-political respects at the head of all progress in culture" but is "compressed into narrow, unnatural limits." She cannot attain her "great moral ends" without increased political power, an enlarged sphere of influence, and new territory. This increase in power, "befitting our importance," and "which we are entitled to claim," is a "political necessity" and "the first and foremost duty of the State." In his own italics Bernhardi announced, "What we now wish to attain must be *fought for,*" and from here he galloped home to the finish line: "Conquest thus becomes a law of necessity."

Having proved the "necessity" (the favorite word of German military thinkers), Bernhardi proceeded to method. Once the duty to make war is recognized, the secondary duty, to make it successfully, follows. To be successful a state must begin war at the "most favorable moment" of its own choosing; it has "the acknowledged right . . . to secure the proud privilege of such initiative." Offensive war thus becomes another "necessity" and a second conclusion inescapable: "It is incumbent on us . . . to act on the offensive and strike the first blow." Bernhardi did not share the Kaiser's concern about the "odium" that attached to an aggressor. Nor was he reluctant to tell where the blow would fall. It was "unthinkable," he wrote, that Germany and France could ever negotiate their problems. "France must be so completely crushed that she can never cross our path again"; she "must be annihilated once and for all as a great power."

King Edward did not live to read Bernhardi. In January, 1910, he sent the Kaiser his annual birthday greetings and the gift of a walking stick before departing for Marienbad and Biarritz. A few months later he was dead.

"We have lost the mainstay of our foreign policy," said Isvolsky when he heard the news. This was hyperbole, for Edward was merely the instrument, not the architect, of the new alignments. In France the king's death created "profound emotion" and "real consternation," according to *Le Figaro*. Paris, it said, felt the loss of its "great friend" as deeply as London. Lampposts and shop windows in the Rue de la Paix wore the same black as Piccadilly; cab drivers tied crepe bows on their whips; black-draped portraits of the late king appeared even in the provincial towns as at the

death of a great French citizen. In Tokyo, in tribute to the Anglo-Japanese alliance, houses bore the crossed flags of England and Japan with the staves draped in black. In Germany, whatever the feelings, correct procedures were observed. All officers of the army and navy were ordered to wear mourning for eight days, and the fleet in home waters fired a salute and flew its flags at half-mast. The Reichstag rose to its feet to hear a message of sympathy read by its President, and the Kaiser called in person upon the British ambassador in a visit that lasted an hour and a half.

In London the following week the royal family was kept busy meeting royal arrivals at Victoria Station. The Kaiser came over on his yacht the *Hohenzollern,* escorted by four British destroyers. He anchored in the Thames Estuary and came the rest of the way to London by train, arriving at Victoria Station like the common royalty. A purple carpet was rolled out on the platform, and purple-covered steps placed where his carriage would stop. As his train drew in on the stroke of noon, the familiar figure of the German emperor stepped down to be greeted by his cousin, King George, whom he kissed on both cheeks. After lunch they went together to Westminster Hall where the body of Edward lay in state. A thunderstorm the night before and drenching rains all morning had not deterred the quiet, patient line of Edward's subjects waiting to pass through the hall. On this day, Thursday, May 19, the line stretched back for five miles. It was the day the earth was due to pass through the tail of Halley's comet, whose appearance called forth reminders that it was traditionally the prophet of disaster—had it not heralded the Norman Conquest?—and inspired journals with literary editors to print the lines from *Julius Caesar:*

> When beggars die there are no comets seen;
> The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes.

Inside the vast hall the bier lay in somber majesty, surmounted by crown, orb, and scepter and guarded at its four corners by four officers, each from different regiments of the empire, who stood in the traditional attitude of mourning with bowed heads and white gloved hands crossed over sword hilts. The Kaiser eyed all the customs of an imperial Lying-in-State with professional interest. He was deeply impressed, and years later could recall every detail of the scene in its "marvelous medieval setting." He saw the sun's rays filtered through the narrow Gothic windows lighting up the jewels of the crown; he watched the changing of the guards at the bier as the four new guards marched forward with swords at the carry-up

and turned them point down as they reached their places, while the guards they relieved glided away in slow motion to disappear through some unseen exit in the shadows. Laying his wreath of purple and white flowers on the coffin, he knelt with King George in silent prayer and on rising grasped his cousin's hand in a manly and sympathetic handshake. The gesture, widely reported, caused much favorable comment.

Publicly his performance was perfect; privately he could not resist the opportunity for fresh scheming. At a dinner given by the King that night at Buckingham Palace for the seventy royal mourners and special ambassadors, he buttonholed M. Pichon of France and proposed to him that in the event Germany should find herself opposed to England in a conflict, France should side with Germany. In view of the occasion and the place, this latest imperial brainstorm caused the same fuss, that had once moved Sir Edward Grey, England's harassed Foreign Secretary, to remark wistfully, "The other sovereigns are so much *quieter*." The Kaiser later denied he had ever said anything of the kind; he had merely discussed Morocco and "some other political matters." M. Pichon could only be got to say discreetly that the Kaiser's language had been "amiable and pacific."

Next morning, in the procession, where for once he could not talk, William's behavior was exemplary. He kept his horse reined in, a head behind King George's, and, to Conan Doyle, special correspondent for the occasion, looked so "noble that England has lost something of her old kindliness if she does not take him back into her heart today." When the procession reached Westminster Hall he was the first to dismount and, as Queen Alexandra's carriage drew up, "he ran to the door with such alacrity that he reached it before the royal servants, "only to find that the Queen was about to descend on the other side. William scampered nimbly around, still ahead of the servants, reached the door first, handed out the widow, and kissed her with the affection of a bereaved nephew. Fortunately, King George came up at this moment to rescue his mother and escort her himself, for she loathed the Kaiser, both personally and for the sake of Schleswig-Holstein. Though he had been but eight years old when Germany seized the duchies from Denmark, she had never forgiven him or his country. When her son on a visit to Berlin in 1890 was made honorary colonel of a Prussian regiment, she wrote to him: "And so my Georgie boy has become a real live filthy blue-coated Pickelhaube German soldier!!! Well, I never thought to have lived to see that! But never mind, . . . it was your misfortune and not your fault."

A roll of muffled drums and the wail of bagpipes sounded as the coffin

wrapped in the Royal Standard was borne from the Hall by a score of blue-jackets in straw hats. A sudden shiver of sabers glittered in the sun as the cavalry came to attention. At a signal of four sharp whistles the sailors hoisted the coffin on to the gun carriage draped in purple, red, and white. The cortege moved on between motionless lines of grenadiers like red walls that hemmed in the packed black masses of perfectly silent people. London was never so crowded, never so still. Alongside and behind the gun carriage, drawn by the Royal Horse Artillery, walked His late Majesty's sixty-three aides-de-camp, all colonels or naval captains and all peers, among them five dukes, four marquises, and thirteen earls. England's three Field Marshals, Lord Kitchener, Lord Roberts, and Sir Evelyn Wood, rode together. Six Admirals of the Fleet followed, and after them, walking all alone, Edward's great friend, Sir John Fisher, the stormy, eccentric former First Sea Lord with his queer un-English mandarin's face. Detachments from all the famous regiments, the Coldstreams, the Gordon Highlanders, the household cavalry and cavalry of the line, the Horse Guards and Lancers and Royal Fusiliers, brilliant Hussars and Dragoons of the German, Russian, Austrian, and other foreign cavalry units of which Edward had been honorary officer, admirals of the German Navy—almost, it seemed to some disapproving observers, too great a military show in the funeral of a man called the "Peacemaker."

His horse with empty saddle and boots reversed in the stirrups led by two grooms and, trotting along behind, his wire-haired terrier, Caesar, added a pang of personal sentiment. On came the pomp of England: Poursuivants of Arms in emblazoned medieval tabards, Silver Stick in Waiting, White Staves, equerries, archers of Scotland, judges in wigs and black robes, and the Lord Chief Justice in scarlet, bishops in ecclesiastical purple, Yeomen of the Guard in black velvet hats and frilled Elizabethan collars, an escort of trumpeters, and then the parade of kings, followed by a glass coach bearing the widowed Queen and her sister, the Dowager Empress of Russia, and twelve other coaches of queens, ladies, and Oriental potentates.

Along Whitehall, the Mall, Piccadilly, and the Park to Paddington Station, where the body was to go by train to Windsor for burial, the long procession moved. The Royal Horse Guards' band played the "Dead March" from *Saul*. People felt a finality in the slow tread of the marchers and in the solemn music. Lord Esher wrote in his diary after the funeral: "There never was such a break-up. All the old buoys which have marked the channel of our lives seem to have been swept away."

Blind
by Mary Borden

THE door at the end of the baraque kept opening and shutting to let in the stretcher bearers. As soon as it opened a crack the wind scurried in and came hopping toward me across the bodies of the men that covered the floor, nosing under the blankets, lifting the flaps of heavy coats, and burrowing among the loose heaps of clothing and soiled bandages. Then the grizzled head of a stretcher bearer would appear, butting its way in, and he would emerge out of the black storm into the bright fog that seemed to fill the place, dragging the stretcher after him, and then the old one at the other end of the load would follow, and they would come slowly down the centre of the hut looking for a clear place on the floor.

The men were laid out in three rows on either side of the central alley way. It was a big hut, and there were about sixty stretchers in each row. There was space between the heads of one row and the feet of another row, but no space to pass between the stretchers in the same row; they touched. The old territorials who worked with me passed up and down between the heads and feet. I had a squad of thirty of these old orderlies and two sergeants and two priests, who were expert dressers. Wooden screens screened off the end of the hut opposite the entrance. Behind these were the two dressing tables where the priests dressed the wounds of the new arrivals and got them ready for the surgeons, after the old men had undressed them and washed their feet. In one corner was my kitchen where I kept all my syringes and hypodermic needles and stimulants.

It was just before midnight when the stretcher bearers brought in the blind man, and there was no space on the floor anywhere; so they stood waiting, not knowing what to do with him.

I said from the floor in the second row: "Just a minute, old ones. You can put him here in a minute." So they waited with the blind man suspended in the bright, hot, misty air between them, like a pair of old horses in shafts with their heads down, while the little boy who had been crying for his mother died with his head on my breast. Perhaps he thought the arms holding him when he jerked back and died belonged to some woman I had never seen, some woman waiting somewhere for news of him in some village, somewhere in France. How many women, I wondered, were waiting out there in the distance for news of these men who were lying on the floor? But I stopped thinking about this the minute the boy was dead. It didn't do to think. I didn't as a rule, but the boy's very young voice had startled me. It had come through to me as a real voice will sound sometimes through a dream, almost waking you, but now it had stopped, and the dream was thick round me again, and I laid him down, covered his face with the brown blanket and called two other old ones.

"Put this one in the corridor to make more room here," I said; and I saw them lift him up. When they had taken him away, the stretcher bearers who had been waiting brought the blind one and put him down in the cleared space. They had to come

round to the end of the front row and down between the row of feet and row of heads; they had to be very careful where they stepped; they had to lower the stretcher cautiously so as not to jostle the men on either side (there was just room), but these paid no attention. None of the men lying packed together on the floor noticed each other in this curious dreamplace.

I had watched this out of the corner of my eye, busy with something that was not very like a man. The limbs seemed to be held together only by the strong stuff of the uniform. The head was unrecognisable. It was a monstrous thing, and a dreadful rattling sound came from it. I looked up and saw the chief surgeon standing over me. I don't know how he got there. His small shrunken face was wet and white; his eyes were brilliant and feverish; his incredible hands that saved so many men so exquisitely, so quickly, were in the pockets of his white coat.

"Give him morphine," he said, "a double dose. As much as you like." He pulled a cigarette out of his pocket. "In cases like this, if I am not about, give morphine; enough, you understand." Then he vanished like a ghost. He went back to his operating room, a small white figure with round shoulders, a magician, who performed miracles with knives. He went away through the dream.

I gave the morphine, then crawled over and looked at the blind man's ticket. I did not know, of course, that he was blind until I read his ticket. A large round white helmet covered the top half of his head and face; only his nostrils and mouth and chin were uncovered. The surgeon in the dressing station behind the trenches had written on his ticket, "Shot through the eyes. Blind."

Did he know? I asked myself. No, he couldn't know yet. He would still be wondering, waiting, hoping, down there in that deep, dark silence of his, in his own dark personal world. He didn't know he was blind; no one would have told him. I felt his pulse. It was strong and steady. He was a long, thin man, but his body was not very cold and the pale lower half of his clear-cut face was not very pale. There was something beautiful about him. In his case there was no hurry, no necessity to rush him through to the operating room. There was plenty of time. He would always be blind.

One of the orderlies was going up and down with hot tea in a bucket. I beckoned to him.

I said to the blind one: "Here is a drink." He didn't hear me, so I said it more loudly against the bandage, and helped him lift his head, and held the tin cup to his mouth below the thick edge of the bandage. I did not think then of what was hidden under the bandage. I think of it now. Another head case across the hut had thrown off his blanket and risen from his stretcher. He was standing stark naked except for his head bandage, in the middle of the hut, and was haranguing the crowd in a loud voice with the gestures of a political orator. But the crowd, lying on the floor, paid

no attention to him. They did not notice him. I called to Gustave and Pierre to go to him.

The blind man said to me: "Thank you, sister, you are very kind. That is good. I thank you." He had a beautiful, voice. I noticed the great courtesy of his speech. But they were all courteous. Their courtesy when they died, their reluctance to cause me any trouble by dying or suffering, was one of the things it didn't do to think about.

Then I left him, and presently forgot that he was there waiting in the second row of stretchers on the left side of the long crowded floor.

Gustave and Pierre had got the naked orator back on to his stretcher and were wrapping him up again in his blankets. I let them deal with him and went back to my kitchen at the other end of the hut, where my syringes and hypodermic needles were boiling in saucepans. I had received by post that same morning a dozen beautiful new platinum needles. I was very pleased with them. I said to one of the dressers as I fixed a needle on my syringe and held it up, squirting the liquid through it; "Look. I've some lovely new needles." He said: "Come and help me a moment. Just cut this bandage, please." I went over to his dressing-table. He darted off to a voice that was shrieking somewhere. There was a man stretched on the table. His brain came off in my hands when I lifted the bandage from his head.

When the dresser came back I said: "His brain came off on the bandage."

"Where have you put it?" "I put it in the pail under the table."

"It's only one half of his brain," he said, looking into the man's skull. "The rest is here."

I left him to finish the dressing and went about my own business. I had much to do.

It was my business to sort out the wounded as they were brought in from the ambulances and to keep them from dying before they got to the operating rooms: it was my business to sort out the nearly dying from the dying. I was there to sort them out and tell how fast life was ebbing in them. Life was leaking away from all of them; but with some there was no hurry, with others it was a case of minutes. It was my business to create a counter-wave of life, to create the flow against the ebb. It was like a tug of war with the tide. The ebb of life was cold. When life was ebbing the man was cold; when it began to flow back, he grew warm. It was all, you see, like a dream. The dying men on the floor were drowned men cast up on the beach, and there was the ebb of life pouring away over them, sucking them away, an invisible tide; and my old orderlies, like old sea-salts out of a lifeboat, were working to save them. I had to watch, to see if they were slipping, being dragged away. If a man were slipping quickly, being sucked down rapidly, I sent runners to the operating rooms. There were six operating rooms on either side of my hut. Medical students in white coats hurried back and forth along the covered corridors between

us. It was my business to know which of the wounded could wait and which could not. I had to decide for myself. There was no one to tell me. If I made any mistakes, some would die on their stretchers on the floor under my eyes who need not have died. I didn't worry. I didn't think. I was too busy, too absorbed in what I was doing. I had to judge from what was written on their tickets and from the way they looked and the way they felt to my hand. My hand could tell of itself one kind of cold from another. They were all half-frozen when they arrived, but the chill of their icy flesh wasn't the same as the cold inside them when life was almost ebbed away. My hands could instantly tell the difference between the cold of the harsh bitter night and the stealthy cold of death. Then there was another thing, a small fluttering thing. I didn't think about it or count it. My fingers felt it. I was in a dream, led this way and that by my cute eyes and hands that did many things, and seemed to know what to do.

Sometimes there was no time to read the ticket or touch the pulse. The door kept opening and shutting to let in the stretcherbearers whatever I was doing. I could not watch when I was giving piqures; but, standing by my table filling a syringe, I could look down over the rough forms that covered the floor and pick out at a distance this one and that one. I had been doing this for two years, and had learned to read the signs. I could tell from the way they twitched, from the peculiar shade of a pallid face, from the look of tight pinched-in nostrils, and in other ways which I could not have explained, that this or that one was slipping over the edge of the beach of life. Then I would go quickly with my long saline needles, or short thick camphor oil needles, and send one of the old ones hurrying along the corridor to the operating rooms. But sometimes there was no need to hurry; sometimes I was too late; with some there was no longer any question of the ebb and flow of life and death; there was nothing to do.

The hospital throbbed and hummed that night like a dynamo. The operating rooms were ablaze; twelve surgical équipes were at work; boilers steamed and whistled; nurses hurried in and out of the sterilizing rooms carrying big shining metal boxes and enamelled trays; feet were running, slower feet. shuffling. The hospital was going full steam ahead. I had a sense of great power, exhilaration and excitement. A loud wind was howling. It was throwing itself like a pack of wolves against the flimsy wooden walls, and the guns were growling. Their voices were dying away. I thought of them as a pack of beaten dogs, slinking away across the dark waste where the dead were lying and the wounded who had not yet been picked up, their only cover the windy blanket of the bitter November night.

And I was happy. It seemed to me that the crazy crowded bright hot shelter was a beautiful place. I thought, "This is the second battlefield. The battle now is going on over the helpless bodies of these men. It is we who are doing the fighting now, with their real enemies." And I thought of the chief surgeon, the wizard working like lightning through the night, and all the others wielding their flashing knives against the invisible enemy. The wounded had begun to arrive at noon. It was now past midnight, and the door kept opening and shutting to let in the stretcher-bearers, and the ambulances kept lurching in at the gate. Lanterns were moving through the

windy dark from shed to shed. The nurses were out there in the scattered huts, putting the men to bed when they came over the dark ground, asleep, from the operating rooms. They would wake up in clean warm beds---those who did wake up.

"We will send you the dying, the desperate, the moribund," the Inspector-General had said. "You must expect a thirty per cent. mortality." So we had got ready for it; we had organised to dispute that figure.

We had built brick ovens, four of them, down the centre of the hut, and on top of these, galvanised iron cauldrons of boiling water were steaming. We had driven nails all the way down the wooden posts that held up the roof and festooned the posts with red rubber hot-water bottles. In the corner near to my kitchen we had partitioned off a cubicle, where we built a light bed, a rough wooden frame lined with electric light bulbs, where a man could be cooked back to life again. My own kitchen was an arrangement of shelves for saucepans and syringes and needles of different sizes, and cardboard boxes full of ampoules of camphor oil and strychnine and caffeine and morphine, and large ampoules of sterilized salt and water, and dozens of beautiful sharp shining needles were always on the boil.

It wasn't much to look at, this reception hut. It was about as attractive as a goods yard in a railway station, but we were very proud of it, my old ones and I. We had got it ready, and it was good enough for us. We could revive the cold dead there; snatch back the men who were slipping over the edge; hoist them out of the dark abyss into life again. And because our mortality at the end of three months was only nineteen per cent., not thirty, well it was the most beautiful place in the world to me and my old grizzled Pépères, Gaston and Pierre and Leroux and the others were to me like shining archangels. But I didn't think about this. I think of it now. I only knew it then, and was happy. Yes, I was happy there.

Looking back, I do not understand that woman---myself---standing in that confused goods yard filled with bundles of broken human flesh. The place by one o'clock in the morning was a shambles. The air was thick with steaming sweat, with the effluvia of mud, dirt, blood. The men lay in their stiff uniforms that were caked with mud and dried blood, their great boots on their feet; stained bandages showing where a trouser leg or a sleeve had been cut away. Their faces gleamed faintly, with a faint phosphorescence. Some who could not breathe lying down were propped up on their stretchers against the wall, but most were prone on their backs, staring at the steep iron roof.

The old orderlies moved from one stretcher to another, carefully, among the piles of clothing, boots and blood-soaked bandages---careful not to step on a hand or a sprawling twisted foot. They carried zinc pails of hot water and slabs of yellow soap and scrubbing brushes. They gathered up the heaps of clothing, and made little bundles of the small things out of pockets, or knelt humbly, washing the big yellow stinking feet that protruded from under the brown blankets. It was the business of

these old ones to undress the wounded, wash them, wrap them in blankets, and put hot-water bottles at their feet and sides. It was a difficult business peeling the stiff uniform from a man whose hip or shoulder was fractured, but the old ones were careful. Their big peasant hands were gentle---very, very gentle and careful. They handled the wounded men as if they were children. Now, looking back, I see their rough powerful visages, their shaggy eye-brows, their big clumsy, gentle hands. I see them go down on their stiff knees; I hear their shuffling feet and their soft gruff voices answering the voices of the wounded, who are calling to them for drinks, or to God for mercy.

The old ones had orders from the commandant not to cut the good cloth of the uniforms if they could help it, but they had orders from me not to hurt the men, and they obeyed me. They slit up the heavy trousers and slashed across the stiff tunics with long scissors, and pulled very slowly, very carefully at the heavy boots, and the wounded men did not groan or cry out very much. They were mostly very quiet. When they did cry out they usually apologised for the annoyance of their agony. Only now and then a wind of pain would sweep over the floor, tossing the legs and arms, then subside again.

I think that woman, myself, must have been in a trance, or under some horrid spell. Her feet are lumps of fire, her face is clammy, her apron is splashed with blood; but she moves ceaselessly about with bright burning eyes and handles the dreadful wreckage of men as if in a dream. She does not seem to notice the wounds or the blood. Her eyes seem to be watching something that comes and goes and darts in and out among the prone bodies. Her eyes and her hands and her ears are alert, intent on the unseen thing that scurries and hides and jumps out of the corner on to the face of a man when she's not looking. But quick, something makes her turn. Quick, she is over there, on her knees fighting the thing off, driving it away, and now it's got another victim. It's like a dreadful game of hide and seek among the wounded. All her faculties are intent on it. The other things that are going on, she deals with automatically.

There is a constant coming and going. Medical students run in and out.

"What have you got ready?"

"I've got three knees, two spines, five abdomens, twelve heads. Here's a lung case--haemorrhage. He can't wait." She is binding the man's chest; she doesn't look up.

"Send him along."

"Pierre ! Gaston ! Call the stretcherbearers to take the lung to Monsieur D-----." She fastens the tight bandage, tucks the blanket quickly round the thin shoulders. The old men lift him. She hurries back to her saucepans to get a new needle.

A surgeon appears.

"Where's that knee of mine? I left it in the saucepan on the window ledge. I had boiled it up for an experiment."

"One of the orderlies must have taken it," she says, putting her old needle on to boil.

"Good God! Did he mistake it?"

"Jean, did you take a saucepan you found on the windowsill?"

"Yes, sister, I took it. I thought it was for the casse croûte; it looked like a ragout of mouton. I have it here."

"Well, it was lucky he didn't eat it. It was a knee I had cut out, you know."

It is time for the old ones' "casse croûte." It is after one o'clock. At one o'clock the orderlies have cups of coffee and chunks of bread and meat. They eat their supper gathered round the stoves where the iron cauldrons are boiling. The surgeons and the sisters attached to the operating rooms are drinking coffee too in the sterilizing rooms. I do not want any supper. I am not hungry. I am not tired. I am busy. My eyes are busy and my fingers. I am conscious of nothing about myself but my eyes, hands and feet. My feet are a nuisance, they are, swollen, hurting lumps, but my fingers are perfectly satisfactory. They are expert in the handling of frail glass ampoules and syringes and needles. I go from one man to another jabbing the sharp needles into their sides, rubbing their skins with iodine, and each time I pick my way back across their bodies to fetch a fresh needle I scan the surface of the floor where the men are spread like a carpet, for signs, for my special secret signals of death.

"Aha! I'll catch you out again." Quick, to that one. That jerking! That sudden livid hue spreading over his form. "Quick, Emile! Pierre !" I have lifted the blanket. The blood is pouring out on the floor under the stretcher. "Get the tourniquet. Hold his leg up. Now then, tight-tighter. Now call the stretcher bearers."

Someone near is having a fit. Is it epilepsy? I don't know. His mouth is frothy. His eyes are rolling. He tries to fling himself on the floor. He falls with a thud across his neighbour, who does not notice. The man just beyond propped up against the wall, watches as if from a great distance. He has a gentle patient face; this spectacle does not concern him.

The door keeps opening and shutting to let in the stretcher-bearers. The wounded are carried in at the end door and are carried out to the operating rooms at either side. The sergeant is counting the treasures out of a dead man's pockets. He is tying his little things, his letters and briquet, etc., up in a handkerchief. Some of the old ones are munching their bread and meat in the centre of the hut under the electric light. The others are busy with their pails and scissors. They shuffle about, kneeling, scrubbing, filling hotwater bottles. I see it all through a mist. It is misty but eternal.

It is a scene in eternity, in some strange dream-hell where I am glad to be employed, where I belong, where I am happy. How crowded together we are here. How close we are in this nightmare. The wounded are packed into this place like sardines, and we are so close to them, my old ones and I. I've never been so close before to human beings. We are locked together, the old ones and I, and the wounded men; we are bound together. We all feel it. We all know it. The same thing is throbbing in us, the single thing, the one life. We are one body, suffering and bleeding. It is a kind of bliss to me to feel this. I am a little delirious, but my head is cool enough, it seems to me.

"No, not that one. He can wait. Take the next one to Monsieur D-----, and this one to Monsieur Guy, and this one to Monsieur Robert. We will put this one on the electric light bed; he has no pulse. More hot-water bottles here, Gaston.

"Do you feel cold, mon vieux?"

"Yes, I think so, but pray do not trouble."

I go with him into the little cubicle, turn on the light bulbs, leave him to cook there; and as I come out again to face the strange heaving dream, I suddenly hear a voice calling me, a new far-away hollow voice.

"Sister! My sister! Where are you?"

I am startled. It sounds so far away, so hollow and so sweet. It sounds like a bell high up in the mountains. I do not know where it comes from. I look down over the rows of men lying on their backs, one close to the other, packed together on the floor, and I cannot tell where the voice comes from. Then I hear it again.

"Sister! Oh, my sister, where are you?"

A lost voice. The voice of a lost man, wandering in the mountains, in the night. It is the blind man calling. I had forgotten him. I had forgotten that he was there. He could wait. The others could not wait. So I had left him and forgotten him.

Something in his voice made me run, made my heart miss a beat. I ran down the centre alley way, round and up again, between the two rows, quickly, carefully stepping across to him over the stretchers that separated us. He was in the second row. I could just squeeze through to him.

"I am coming," I called to him. "I am coming."

I knelt beside him. "I am here," I said; but he lay quite still on his back; he didn't move at all; he hadn't heard me. So I took his hand and put my mouth close to his bandaged head and called to him with desperate entreaty.

"I am here. What is it? What is the matter?"

He didn't move even then, but he gave a long shuddering sigh of relief.

"I thought I had been abandoned here, all alone," he said softly in his far-away voice. I seemed to awake then. I looked round me and began to tremble, as one would tremble if one awoke with one's head over the edge of a precipice. I saw the wounded packed round us, hemming us in. I saw his comrades, thick round him, and the old ones shuffling about, working and munching their hunks of bread, and the door opening to let in the stretcher bearers. The light poured down on the rows of faces. They gleamed faintly. Four hundred faces were staring up at the roof, side by side. The blind man didn't know. He thought he was alone, out in the dark. That was the precipice, that reality.

"You are not alone," I lied. "There are many of your comrades here, and I am here, and there are doctors and nurses. You are with friends here, not alone."

"I thought," he murmured in that far-away voice, "that you had gone away and forgotten me, and that I was abandoned here alone."

My body rattled and jerked like a machine out of order. I was awake now, and I seemed to be breaking to pieces.

"No," I managed to lie again. "I had not forgotten you, nor left you alone." And I looked down again at the visible half of his face and saw that his lips were smiling.

At that I fled from him. I ran down the long, dreadful hut and hid behind my screen and cowered, sobbing, in a corner, hiding my face. The old ones were very troubled. They didn't know what to do. Presently I heard them whispering:

"She is tired," one said.

"Yes, she is tired."

"She should go off to bed," another said.

"We will manage somehow without her," they said.

Then one of them timidly stuck a grizzled head round the corner of the screen. He held his tin cup in his hands. It was full of hot coffee. He held it out, offering it to me. He didn't know of anything else that he could do for me.