

It's a charming studio drawing-room, filled to overflowing with pieces of furniture of the time of Louis the Sixteenth, where Mr. Sambourne has set up his easel. The windows look out in front on to the sunny hill-terrace, so quiet, it is hard to believe oneself in London. Stained glass in delicate colour forms a golden background to the figure of the artist as he stoops over his work in the inner room. Here and there the light shines on the brass mouldings and handles of the cabinets, on the bronze figure of Louis the Magnificent, on the quaint clock with its bowed supporters. But Mr. Sambourne, kind and cheery, attracts one's attention from the fascinating bric-a-brac, and I cease to take interest even in a screen once belonging to Queen Marie Antoinette, when my host is so obliging as to talk about himself.

Will you listen, too?

"When I was sixteen (says Mr. Sambourne) I learnt engineering with the Penns, the famous engineers. With them I remained five years. I was always fond of drawing, and one of my sketches was shown by young German Reed to Mark Lemon, then editor of *Punch*. As he thought well of the sketch, I began to contribute to the paper. My first published cut was a portrait of John Bright. Was taken on the staff after a time, and so, giving up engineering, I took to Art instead. I never studied in any school, and never had a drawing lesson. It is not often I use a model, as I find photographs (there are nine or ten thousand in the cabinets behind you) of such immense help, I have them of all sorts of people and nearly all are taken by myself. My man is very useful and sits sometimes for me. My model for John Bull is a giant of a country policeman whose acquaintance I have fortunately made. I have drawers full of portraits of celebrities, from the Queen down to the Radical M. P's.

"I am very fond of my work, but have no fixed hours for it. Sometimes I am idle for two or three days at a time, and then again on Fridays, when I have to send up my drawing, I often don't dine till eleven o'clock at night. I am not nervous and don't mind working with other people about me in the least. This is our general sitting-room. I could not shut myself up in a studio away from everyone as so many artists do.

"I don't often illustrate for anything but *Punch*, though now I am busy with pictures for a new edition of Hans Andersen's fairy tales, and over there is a drawing I made for a book written by Molloy called "Our Autumn Holiday," and which is an account of some delightful weeks he and I and two others spent in France, in 1874. The book had quite a success at the time and sells to this day.

"The subjects for the cartoons are chosen at the dinner, which, every week, on a Wednesday, all the staff attends. No stranger is ever admitted to this function. But once, long ago, Sir Joseph Paxton, of Great Exhibition fame, appeared, though why he came or who asked him has never yet been discovered."

Mr. Sambourne breaks off to show me a sketch for Andersen's "Little Mermaid" (by the way it is to be hoped that the new translator of these fairy stories will take as a model the translation of the 1855 edition; the two or three after that date have been vastly inferior), and then he opens a box which lies near the sketch and takes out a large wooden fan, ornamented in a curious and very original fashion, which he holds delicately and shows with great pride. No wonder, for on nearly every rib of the fan, famous artists have made characteristic pen and ink drawings, "and all are done by friends of mine," says Mr. Sambourne, as he points out the different little designs signed and dated by such men as Millais, Alma Tadema, Marcus Stone and Tenniel. When this elegant piece is finished it is to be set up in a glass frame on the inlaid cabinet. I have only once seen another like it, and that was at Mr. Du Maurier's stall at the Silver Fête. It was raffled for and won by a Mr. Meyerhuber, I think; and there were many speculations amongst the rest of the disappointed and envious ticket-holders as to what the German gentleman would do with his prize. What *did* become of it, I wonder?

As I am making a tour of inspection round the rooms, now looking at the brass inlaid piano, made to match the furniture (the Spanish mahogany for that piano the Broadwoods had had in stock 150 years), and now examining some beautiful little water-colours painted by an aunt of Mr. Sambourne's, so the artistic feeling may be said in this case to be inherited by my host, I am told so many interesting things it is hard to remember all. But I recollect, Mr. Sambourne said that in one of the cartoons of Gladstone, as Wellington at the head of the troops, he is in the exact uniform worn by the great soldier at Waterloo. Mr. Boehm, the sculptor, had been lent the costume by the present duke, and Mr. Sambourne, who is a connection of Mr. Boehm's, had it photographed. "I put on Wellington's cocked hat a few years ago, I tried on Napoleon's, the very one the Prussians picked up near Charlevoix after the battle. I was staying with Orchardson at the time he was painting his Napoleon picture. The Tussauds lent him the Emperor's uniform, so I have done a singular thing: I have worn Wellington's hat and Napoleon's, both of which had been in the smoke of Waterloo."

Evidently, a great pleasure to Mr. Sambourne is the fact that his daughter has developed talent for drawing, and is now going through a regular studio-training. We have so few women artists of any strength that the young lady will be welcome indeed, if she has in any way inherited her father's gifts of originality and humour.

To be a painter and have your hand well in, did not Thackeray say that was the height of human happiness? Mr. Sambourne's cheerful face testifies how completely the life he has chosen—chosen as far back as 1851, when at a remarkably early age he filled a sketch book, still carefully treasured—suits him. He is by no means a typical-looking artist, with that look of perpetual youth possessed by most smooth-faced, fair-haired men, that look of youth some happy souls keep all their days. He has also the appearance of living a great deal in the open air, and the last thing one would connect with him would be a drawing board and easel, and the first thing a hunting-crop and spears. Good-humoured and unaffected, it is a pleasure to see the pride with which he shows off his many charming possessions, and as we wander up-stairs and down-stairs, and in my lady's chamber, I wonder if there is any one more to be envied in his surroundings than Mr. Sambourne the *Punch* man. The fact that he is about to cut the best of the season and that for the next few weeks his address will be somewhere in Norway, Sweden, or the Baltic, seems to afford him supreme delight. The inequality in the human lot strikes me as simply appalling on a hot day in June in town, when one hears of such luck; and it is enviously, indeed, that I turn this afternoon from the kind door (on which is engraved in brazen letters that "Mr. Linley Sambourne is not at home," an announcement not made for friends, but for unfortunate strangers) into the sunny street. Well, after all, the Baltic may pall after a time, and Norway and Sweden don't look very interesting—on the map, whereas, London, even in the dog-days, possesses attractions which never, or hardly ever, fail.

WALTER POWELL.

A MODERN MYSTIC—II.

IN THE WEEK of the 6th June, it was sought to give the reader some idea of the personality of a remarkable man, who lives as Socrates lived, a heteroclit life, out of the beaten path; be he sophist, or fanatic, or dreamer, palpably a sincere sojourner on this whirling marble we call the earth. When the House of Commons rose, some departmental business detaining me at Ottawa, I determined to extend my acquaintance with this quaint and curious but earnest preacher of righteousness. I little thought how great, how startling the surprise that was in store for me.

His name is McKnom. He is descended from a Scotch Puritan stock, but for three generations his family have lived on the shores of the St. Lawrence. As a boy he used to swim over its broad bosom; hence, no doubt, his strong love for the shores of rivers, though the great beauty of scene which greets the eye on all sides from Parliament Hill, would of itself account for his early daily visits to a spot whence the eye can take in the plunging Cataract of the Chaudière, the lake-like expanses higher up the stream, the dark solemn outlines of those ancient Laurentian hills, the onward flow of the Ottawa, hurrying to join the greater river, and thence speeding to its goal, the sea.

I met him near the statue of Sir George Cartier, where, by a happy accident, we were joined by a gentleman well known to literary men as a thinker and a brilliant writer—Mr. George Helpsam. We walked to the pagoda, on the west of the main building, and seating ourselves, so as to command a view of the Falls, whose down-sweeping foam, like the bridal veil of a Fury, partly hides the terror of the enraged river, I expected he would say something regarding the noble landscape before him, but, to my astonishment, the first words he uttered, turning to Helpsam, were—"Have you studied Plato?"

"I have read Plato," he answered, "I dare not presume to say I have studied him—I am not sure I always understood him when I had time for such reading, and beyond holding him to be a great master of style I am doubtful if I appreciated him. He seemed to me a fanciful writer; an impractical dreamer in whom the Neo-Platonists found a great deal more than ever he intended; a literary man among philosophers, rather than a philosopher among literary men."

"You were," replied McKnom, "never, my dear friend, more mistaken in your life—and believe me if ever there was a time when Plato should be studied, aye and prayed over, it is this very time, and here in Canada, and not only in Canada, but in England. I am sure you have studied the history of Greece. Did you ever pay special attention to the times of Plato? To understand Plato, or any great writer who sets before himself the end of benefiting mankind, you must understand his age, and the errors and abuses he seeks to destroy. A man may read Butler's "Analogy," and follow the close woven chain of reasoning, but he will not fully understand Butler, unless he knows the writings of the Deists, whose arguments Butler meets, and then what a flood of light is poured on his pages; and not only light but warmth, and arguments which seem heartless, such as that about the destruction of seeds, lose their repellence. Again to know the great work that Addison and Steele did for England, you must know their times, for they too were reformers. Now Plato is a reformer, and a reformer that looked so deeply into human nature, that his teaching, like the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, is applicable to all times and in all places."

"I am," said Helpsam, "quite aware there are startling correspondences between his teaching and the teaching of the New Testament, and that some of the Fathers regarded him as a Christian, born before his time. I have even read of a pious Catholic praying to the Platonic Socrates as

one of the Saints in the Catholic hagiology: *Sancte Socrates, ora pro nobis.*"

"And small wonder," answered McKnom. "But on the point you have raised, we may speak, my dear friend, at some future day. You are a politician—a noble thing if nobly lived—in fact the highest of all things, when truly discharged, as Plato saw and taught, as I can show, but full of peril; surrounded by temptations; crowded with difficulties; for the democracy, the *thêrion*, as Plato would call it, almost forces its rulers to rule badly. All the writings of Plato point to his Republic, and the vile condition of the Athenian democracy, politically and socially, is the true commentary which elucidates the Republic. He saw in that democracy the *mega thrêmna* of man's disregard for law; a bad system of education; women holding a degraded position; scepticism eating its way into heart and mind. Pericles had beautified Athens and extended its material prosperity, but corrupted the Athenians, and the Sophists were completing the work, destroying the foundations of faith, shredding away all in which fixed principles could take root. Here in Canada, now you'll excuse me sir, there are the same sores and ulcers in the body politic, in our social life, in our system of education, which alarmed Plato, and Plato, so far from being a mere metaphysical speculator, aimed at practical results, aimed at reform, aimed especially at saving the young from the corruption around; for he saw what the Roman Catholic Church sees, that for most men, if you are to give them principles which shall control their actions, you must instil these principles when they are young, so that, in addition to the conviction of the intellect, they may be bound by the ligaments of habits, affection, association, prejudice even."

"But Grote says that the Republic of Plato would be worse than the Athenian Republic that was before his eyes."

(McKnom) "It is a shallow remark; it has never been tried."

"I think an attempt was once made."

(McKnom) "I was not aware of it—so was a theocracy tried. Plato was only a man. He may well have fallen into error in attempting to build up an ideal State, but we must look at his aim. Now I said, a moment ago, you cannot understand Plato unless you are familiar with the society he sought to benefit; I should have gone farther and said you must also realize that he looked on men not as highly intelligent animals; not as mortal perishing creatures, but as beings with immortal souls, and no one ever lived who realized more than he did, the thought of our blessed Lord, What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul? Plato believed that the great object of man's search should be truth; that God was truth; and that only in God could human society find a sure resting place, just as the ark of Noah lay firm, and calm, on the mountain-top while the winds-swept deluge, like the passions of unscrupulous men, howled and dashed around. How must such a man have regarded the Athenian democracy?—that democracy, politically a remorseless tyranny, ostracising and killing its best men, led by unprincipled and corrupt demagogues; its youth contaminated, their private lives stained beyond description, their noblest aim to seize power not for the public good but for self-aggrandizement. Where was the lion heart? Where the lordly reason of other days? Starved, emaciated and degraded, and the many-headed monster of its wild desires, *polukephalon thrêmna*, yelling round and rending it in tatters. Lysias, the favourite rhetorician of its golden youth, immoral in his life, immoral in his teaching."

He had grown a little excited and paused. After a little Helpsam said: "Yes; I remember that speech of his in the Phædrus. But all the Sophists were not bad; Protagoras, Epicurus even, were good men."

(McKnom) "Quite so; but that is often the case. The first teachers of false principles are men unexceptionable in their lives; but their principles bear fruits in others. Some of our own materialists and agnostics live externally decent lives; but their principles bear fruits in others and will bear worse fruit than we have yet seen. I hinted a moment ago at an analogy between our own times and those of Plato. Two things should be specially dwelt on—a zeal on the part of men who care nothing about religion, and of others who profess to care a great deal, to bring up our youth without religious training, as if you can take up any subject, anything, any relation, which, to a truly philosophical mind, will not suggest a supreme personal God. I don't care whether you describe the construction of an orange, or a hawk's wing, or a world; whether you think of man as a child, or husband, or father, or citizen; you have either to deal with a personal God, a supreme mind, or else construct a god or gods of your own fancy, a pantheistic or polytheistic force behind all. Closely connected with the vicious system of education at Athens was the development of a popular literature. Lysias was one of the founders of a kind of writing which abounds to-day, and his publications, of which there was an incredible number, my friend, Mackenzie Bowell, would not allow to enter Canada. But they were also akin to books which are permitted to come in—nay, some have held they were the germ of the modern novel, with its futilities, its trashy dialogue, its corrupting dalliance with certain ideas, its weakening influence on the mind."

"What analogy," asked Helpsam, with a smile, "is there between a speech and a novel?"

(McKnom) "What likeness is there between the young tadpole and the full grown bull-frog? Remember they wrote speeches not always for delivery but for reading