

Perhaps we shall. Indeed in the Symposium of the *New Review* Mr. Walter Besant actually goes so far as to say: "The Art of Fiction is ruled by the same laws as govern the Art of Painting. Almost word for word the same teaching might be given. Colour, light, shadow, drawing, grouping, proportion, selection, dramatic treatment, may all be considered for a novel as for a picture. . . . This is the *technique*—the science—of the Art." And he adds, "this *technique* each man has now to find out for himself. Can these things be taught? Most certainly they can. The young writer can be taught these things just as the young painter can be taught the elementary principles of his Art." This is plain speaking. But we must remember that it is Mr. Besant who is speaking. It often happens that he who excels in some particular sphere minimizes the difficulties of entering that sphere. So Sydney Smith held that anyone could sit down to the acquisition of wit as he might sit down to the study of arithmetic; and so M. Poincaré thinks "anyone who should dedicate his life to it could, perhaps, eventually imagine the fourth dimension"—both which assertions will appear to most of us utterly untenable.

Many circumstances contribute to foster this idea that the art of writing fiction can be learnt. The enormous, spreading, and apparently insatiable demand for reading-matter of whatever degree of excellence—or rather of mediocrity; the unappeasable craving for novelty; the consequent impressing of writers whose only qualification is rapidity and fecundity in production; the daily widening sphere assumed by the newspaper, which is now not only a vehicle for news and politics, but is also for a certain class a vehicle for the whole circle of art, science, and literature; the wonderful growth and increase of circulating libraries which foster the pernicious habit of hurried and desultory reading and depreciate the intrinsic value of a good book—such influences tend to lead those who are called upon to cater for this unhealthy literary appetite to forget that it was once said by one of the greatest of artists that the poet—that is, the artist—is born, not made. And this art of fiction is at once the subtlest and the most complex of arts. It takes as its object matter nothing less than the mind and heart of this subtle and complex creature man—his sublimest ideas, his deepest emotions. It is a depiction of that incomprehensible thing "character," and character in its most intricate aspects, as acting and re-acting upon character and environment. Its aim is the truthful yet artistic representation of thought and feeling—desperate hopes, patient longings, fantastic joys, entrancing thrills, hates, loves, jealousies—all the unnamable, unclassifiable contents of the human heart, and each of them portrayed, manipulated, shifted according to the untrammelled will of the romancer. Is this teachable, teachable by books? Not even could Mr. Besant say it was teachable.

In all works of fiction a rough classification may discover three component parts: the narrative or plot; the characters; and the philosophy or view of life. Only the first order of mind seems to be able to keep these three parts in perfect balance. Shakespeare, as might be expected, is unrivalled in this balance. In "Romeo and Juliet," to take only one instance, we feel as keen an interest in the fate of the hero and heroine as we do in themselves, in their characters; and we feel as keen an interest in the view of life, of love, as we do in their characters. Everything is in proportion. In Byron's dramas, to choose a quite antithetical example, the plot and the characters, both are wholly subservient to the dramatist's views of life as enunciated by his heroes. In Thackeray and in Dickens again—to pass from the drama to the novel—we find that admirable balance between plot, character, and philosophy. "David Copperfield," for example, could be read with thorough enjoyment for any one of these attributes alone; in fact it would not be rash to hazard the assertion that many a reader has perused it at fourteen for the story, at twenty for the characters, and at thirty for Dickens' solution of those puzzling enigmas of life, those problems of mind and heart, which cluster about our relationships with friends, lovers, and wives. George Meredith, on the other hand, inclines to a preponderance of philosophy. Wilkie Collins to a preponderance of plot. George Eliot to a preponderance of character—though she perhaps comes nearer the first rank of novelist and attains very nearly a perfect equipoise. The planes upon which each of these three factors may be placed may, of course, differ as the poles: the plot may be meagre as that of "Childe Harold," or intricate as that of "Altiora Peto"; the characters may be those of "Belinda" or those of "Adam Bede"; and the philosophy may be that of "Moll Flanders," or that of "The Egoist"; but these three component elements there always will be, and always in more or less perfect or imperfect balance. Now, even if one possessed the gifts of narrative, insight into character, and a capacity for formulating philosophy of life, would any tuition endow the faculty of combining these in artistic proportion? Surely not. Even Mr. Besant feels bound to say "He [the student in a hypothetical School of Fiction] would especially learn, unless his teachers were pedants, that mere knowledge of the *technique* is useless without a natural aptitude for the Art is present to begin with." Of course it is; just as a mere knowledge of grammar will not produce an essayist, nor a mere knowledge of logic a dialectician—nor, to clinch and enforce the point by an extreme example, a mere knowledge of metre a poet.

After all, the conclusion of the whole matter, is it not this, that Art is a product of the imagination, and imag-

ination is a thing which one may perhaps cultivate in one's self but can never implant in another? Why then take such trouble to insist upon what is after all a truism? Because there are too many who think that there is a royal road to the writing of romance. There are too many who think there is a royal road to all sorts of things. Once upon a time men served an apprenticeship of seven years to a trade. To-day the 'prentice is as extinct a species as the Dodo. The 'prentice now learns, or thinks he learns, his trade from hand-books, manuals, ready-references, and what not. With what result? With the result that mediocrity abounds, and with the further result that people are beginning to lose the faculty of discriminating between the mediocre and the excellent. And unfortunately the habit seems to have encroached even upon the sacred precincts of literature.

ARNOLD HAULTAIN.

SIR DANIEL WILSON.

OB. MDCCCXIII.

IN MEMORIAM.

"God gives to his beloved his good gift, sleep!"
After the long day's turmoil and the heat,
The weary moments, and the quickened beat
Of fevered pulses, comes a yearning deep
For rest, while o'er the slumberous senses creep
Benumbing shadows, and oblivion sweet
Enshrines the soul, until dawn angels greet
The sleeper's wondering gaze with rays which leap
Into a flood of glory. When life's shades
Gather, and evening falls, as in the west,
The sunset's splendour into softness fades,
With reflex gleamings from the land of rest,
So longed for,—at God's touch, the weary eye
Closes,—to wake in immortality.

With reverent hands I lay these cypress leaves,
Twined with the laurel he so meekly wore,
Upon his quiet grave, where evermore
The whispering wind a solemn requiem weaves.
Remember, though the wounded spirit grieves,
The words he spake, the life he lived, the store
Of heaven-born compassion that he bore
Toward the friendless ones whom Christ receives.
The nine-fold Muses miss his fostering care,
And the wide world of letters mourns. O heart,
So kindly and so earnest! with rare art
Didst thou stern duty's rugged tasks make fair,
So that the Master's mind, as in thee wrought,
Seemed, even here, to full fruition brought.

Mourn not the shadows, dark, intangible
That, like a veil, obscure his home from ours,
Ev'n while the darkening tempest o'er us lowers,
The fullest trust shall surely in us dwell,
With power, deep, abiding, that the soul,
Loved by his Maker, in His likeness grows,
And wisdom learns, as cycling ages roll,
Diviner than mere human dreams. He sows
Infinite realms of thought, and reaps,
And ever reaps the infinite in realms
From which forever grief and death and night
Are banished, and in the trackless deeps
Of love and light, no gathering storm o'erwhelms
His barque, no dimming doubts obscure his sight.

Oshawa.

MARGARET EADIE HENDERSON.

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TWO KNAPSACKS:

A NOVEL OF CANADIAN SUMMER LIFE.

BY J. CAWDOR BELL.

CHAPTER XV.—(Continued).

WHAT did those deceitful men, Errol and Perrowne, mean, by saying they had to go away to get up their Wednesday evening talk, and to visit their parishioners? There they were, in their old places at the table, Mr. Errol at Mrs. Carmichael's right, and apparently on the best of terms with her, and Mr. Perrowne dancing attendance upon Miss Halbert and her invalid father. Mrs. Du Plessis thought she would take up Mr. Wilkinson's dinner with the colonel's help, as Cecile had been reading to him so long. Accordingly, the Captain talked to that young lady, while Mr. Bangs monopolized Mrs. Carruthers. There was a little commotion, when Mr. Bigglethorpe walked in, and received the sympathetic expressions of the company over his singed face and scorched hands. In spite of these, the sufferer had been up early fishing, just after the rain. Fortunately, he continued, there was no cleared land about the lakes, hence there were very few grasshoppers washed in by the heavy downpour. Had there been, he wouldn't have got a fish. But he had got fish, a big string of them, in splendid condition. He had left some with his kind entertainers, the Richards, but had plenty remaining, which he had left in the kitchen in care of the young woman with the unpronounceable Scripture name. "Now," said the fisherman, "a nime is a very important thing to a man or a woman. Why do people give their children such awful nimes?"

Bigglethorpe is Dinish, they say, but Felix Isidore is as Latin as can be. They called me 'fib' at school."

"'Tis the hoighth av impartance to have a good name, say Oi," added Mr. Terry. "Moy fayther, glory be to his sowl, put a shaint's name an me, an' I put her own mother's name, the Howly Vargin rist her, on Honoria here. 'An', savin' all yer prisinces, there's no foiner Scripcher name than John; how's that, Squire?"

"It suits me well enough, grandfather," replied Carruthers. The Captain was feeling uneasy. He didn't want Ezekiel to come out, so he asked Miss Du Plessis how her young man was. Such a question would have either roused Miss Carmichael to indignation or have overwhelmed her with confusion, but Miss Du Plessis, calm and unruffled, replied: "I suppose you mean Mr. Wilkinson, Captain Thomas. He has been very much shaken by his wound, but is doing remarkably well."

"F'what's Mishter Wilkison's name, Miss Ceshile, iv it's a fair quishtyon to ax at yeez?"

"It is Farquhar, is it not, Mr. Coristine?"

Mr. Coristine said it was, and that it was his mother's maiden name. She was a Scotchwoman, he had heard, and a very lovely character. The colonel had just returned from his ministrations. "Did I heah you cohlectly, Mr. Cohistine, when I thought you said that ouah deah young wounded friend's mothah's name was Fahquhah, suh?"

"You did, Colonel Morton."

"And of Scottish pahentage?"

"Yes."

"Do you know if any of her relatives were engaged in the Civil Wahah, our civil wahah?"

"I believe her brother Roderic ran the blockade, and fought for the South, where he fell, in a cavalry regiment."

"Be pleased, suh, to say that again. Rodehic Fahquhah, do you say?"

"His full name, I have seen it among Wilkinson's papers, was Roderic Macdonald Farquhar."

"Tehesa, my deah," said the colonel, his voice and manner full of emotion, as he turned towards his sister-in-law, "you have heard me mention my bosom friend, Captain Fahquhah?"

"Yes, indeed, many times," replied the lady addressed.

"And ouah deah boy upstairs, the pehschveh of my pooah life, is his nephew, his sistah's son. I was suah there was something drawing me to him. I shall make that brave boy my heih, my pooah deah comhade Fahquhah's nephew. What a fohtunate discovehy. Kindly excuse me, madam, and you my deah ladies, and you Squiah; I must go and tell my deah boy." So the colonel bowed to Mrs. Carruthers, and went out, with his handkerchief up to his face.

After the colonel left the table, the Captain looked over at his niece, saying: "Too late, Marjorie, my lass, too late! Didn't play your cards right, so you're cut out. Shifted his sheet anchor to the t'other bow, Marjorie."

Miss Carmichael was annoyed with good reason, and, in order to put a stop to such uncalled for and vulgar remarks, said, playfully, but with a spice of malice: "Take care, Uncle Thomas, or, as that funny theological student said to the people who were talking in church, 'I'll call out your name before the hail congregation.'" This terrible threat caused Ezekiel to subside, and carry on a less personal conversation with Miss Du Plessis. Then Mr. Terry came to the fore again.

"My little grandchilders' coushin, Mishter Coristine, do be sayin' yer name is Eujane, an' that's Frinch, isn't it?"

"Yes," replied the lawyer; "my mother was of Huguenot descent, and her name was Du Moulin. Some say that the Irish Mullens were once Du Moulins. That I don't know, but I'm not like the man-servant who applied for a situation, saying: 'Me name is Murphy, sorr, but me family came from France.' Coristine, I think, is good Irish."

The name craze spread over the whole table. Miss Halbert thought Basil a lovely name. It was Greek, wasn't it, and meant a king? Mr. Perrowne thought that the sweetest name in the world was Frances or Fanny. Mr. Errol affected Marjorie, and Mrs. Carmichael knew nothing superior to Hugh.

"What made you so savage with the Captain for coupling your name with Wilks?" asked the lawyer in an undertone.

"Because he is the last man in the world I should want my name to be coupled with."

"Oh, but that's hard on Wilks; he's a glorious fellow when you get to know his little ways."

"I don't want to know Mr. Wilkinson's little ways. I am sorry for his wound, but otherwise I have not the remotest sympathy with him. He strikes me as a selfish, conceited man."

"Not a kinder soul breathing, Miss Carmichael."

"Yes, there is."

"Who, then?"

"Yourself."

"Miss Carmichael, you make me the proudest man in the world, but I'm not fit to black Wilks' boots."

"Well, I will not be so rude as to say I think you are. But, never talk that way to me again, if you want me to like you. I will not have you demeaning yourself, even in speech, before Cecile's friend. Now, remember, not a word!"

The test was a severe one between loyalty to his old friend and devoted obedience to the girl he loved. As all the memories of past friendship came before him, he was