

May, 1940.

Vol. 1. No. 6.

The Abinger Chronicle

Contents:

King's	-	-	Cadet R. G. Bosanquet
Garrick	-	-	Desmond Mac Carthy
Cry of the Gentle	-	-	} Geoffrey Eley
Lines after re-reading the	-	-	
Name and Nature of Poetry	-	-	
Childhood Memories (2)	-	-	Sarah Shorey Gill
Mosses' Wood, Leith Hill	-	-	V. S. Wainwright
Escape	-	-	Clifford Dymont
The Reaper-to the Winds	-	-	S. S.
On the rejections of some lines on Liberty			Jacob Hornstein

W

Price Sixpence

The Abinger Chronicle

The annual subscription is 6/- post free, 3/- for six months post free.

Subscriptions are received at
THE ABINGER CHRONICLE,
CHERRY COTTAGE, ABINGER COMMON, DORKING,
SURREY.

(Cheques if used should be made out to
Sylvia Sprigge, no stamps please.)

The first, second, third, fourth and fifth numbers
are sold out.

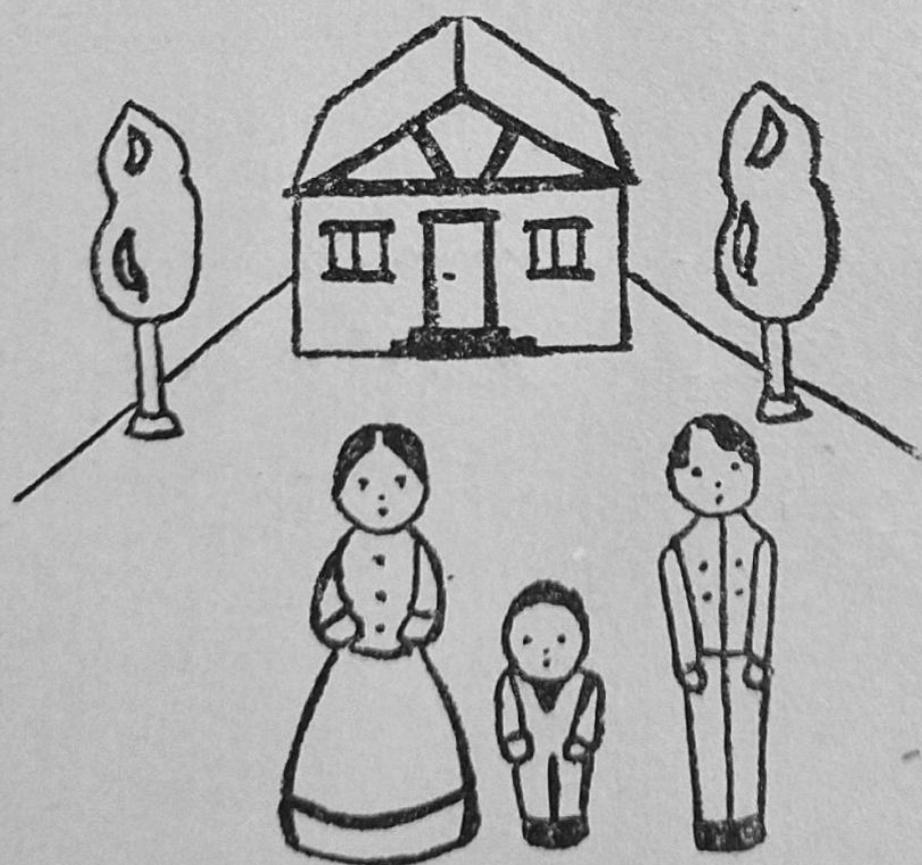
HORIZON

EDITED BY CYRIL CONNOLLY

Review of Art and Literature

*The editorial and publishing offices of HORIZON are
at 6, Selwyn House, Lansdowne Terrace, W.C. 1—
Six months subscription, 6/6 net, including postage.*

U.S.A.—\$1.75.



COTTAGE SET

A solid wooden toy for
4 years and over.

1/9 (post 2½d.)

Separately:

Figure, each 3d.

House " 8d.

Tree " 3d.

Any small wooden Toy individually made to order.

IRENE LANDRY,
Ross Cottage, South Holmwood, Dorking, Surrey.

The Abinger Chronicle

Vol. 1. No. 6.

May, 1940

KING'S, CAMBRIDGE.

When I remember how our spirits walked
Clothed in bright light amid the courts of King's,
How, in that starry heaven of ancient things
Ever unfolding to our gaze, we talked
Of dreams, ideas, and phantasies which baulked
Words' golden efforts; how burst forth the springs
Of incandescent love, as lightning flings
Its passion through the sky of June twin-forked,
Then I remember how, although alone
I tread a little while the paths of men,
Yet is my spirit on the sunset flown
Thither beyond; and from this lonesome den
Back to its other, ageless home ascends,
Pacing the courts of King's with other friends.

R. G. BOSANQUET.

GARRICK AND THE HISTRIONIC TEMPERAMENT.

Johnson and Garrick rode up together from Lichfield to London in 1737; and Garrick, after studying law for a while, became a partner in his brother's wine business. In October, 1741, he wrote home to say that he had played Richard III. the night before, "to the surprise of everybody; and as I shall make £300 per annum by it, and as it is what I really dote upon, I am resolved to pursue it." The importance of this performance to the English stage is obvious; what the news conveyed to the family circle at Lichfield was dismay! The Garricks were a large

family, and their poverty made it difficult to preserve the position of gentility which their refinement made precious to them. Socially they hovered on the verge of the Cathedral Close, and in the writings of Miss Seward we may still breathe that atmosphere.

“The Swan of Lichfield” may be taken as a symbol of all that had to be carefully and constantly propitiated by people in the Garrick’s position: what would strike them first about David’s news was the way in which it would strike Miss Seward. The letters he continued to write are indicative of his character. Each announces a more astonishing success than the last; and though they are written in that spirit of amiable elation which was one of his charming traits, there is no resentful triumph over his relations, who had chosen to feel disgraced by him. He attempts to convince them that he has been wise to yield to an irresistible bent; and, in describing the august company he keeps, he is mentioning, he knows, what would plead best for him at home. “Garrick,” said Dr. Johnson afterwards, “has made a player a higher character.”

From all accounts, Garrick’s most astonishing power lay in his talent for creating a character on the stage. This was Johnson’s opinion and Diderot’s, who includes in his monthly budget of literary gossip to the Duke of Saxe-Gotha, a description of the dagger scene in *Macbeth*:—

David Garrick’s great art lies in the facility with which he ceases to be self-conscious and enters into the situation of the character he is impersonating. And once he is in that situation he is no longer David Garrick, but becomes that person . . . He never grimaces or exaggerates; every change of expression proceeds from the working of his spirit within. He never exceeds the truth, and he knows the strange secret of making himself beautiful through passion alone.

But the most valuable of all contemporary criticisms of Garrick is that of a Gottingen professor, Lichtenburg:—

Garrick’s features are speaking . . . He makes one serious with him; he makes one frown with him and smile with him. When, in an aside, he takes his

audience into his confidence, there is something so winning in his intimate geniality that one flings one-self, heart and soul, into his compelling mood. No one else in England can make Garrick's bow. Nothing in him is slipshod or slovenly. No actor ever needed less elbow-room for effective gesture. His way of shrugging his shoulders, crossing his arms, cocking his hat, or putting it on or taking it off . . . in short, whatever he does . . . is so easily and *securely* done, that the man appears to be all right hand. His intelligence is ubiquitous throughout every muscle of his body.

The very skirts of his coat, said Dr. Burney, seemed to act. When his wig fell off in a paroxysm of rage as Lear, the house remained perfectly grave, and it is recorded that when Garrick as Macbeth spoke the line, "There's blood upon thy face," a man who was taking the part of the First Murderer put his hand to his head crying, "Is there, by God?" From such stories we can form some notion of the spell his acting threw over audience and players.

Yet the sensation which Garrick's natural acting produced was accompanied by professional outcries. Many shared the opinion of Quin, a reputable actor of the stilted school, who exclaimed on first seeing Garrick, "We are all wrong if he is right."

He was not a romantic actor; the part of Romeo, for instance, did not give his genius its best opportunity. He was most satisfied with himself in parts which were studies in the comedy of character; "No, no; you may humbug the town for some time longer as a tragedian," he said, in dismissing a mouthing actor, who offered to try his hand in lighter parts, "but comedy is a serious thing." If he had a fault on the stage it was a continual tendency to restless, bustling action; and Mrs. Parsons, in her biography of him, remarks that the same criticism may be made upon his career: "quietness and confidence in real life were the strength he lacked." He was the same man off the stage as on it. Goldsmith's lines,

On the stage, he was natural, simple, affecting;
'Twas only that when he was off he was acting,

apart from their sarcastic point, imply too great a contrast between Garrick as he appeared to an audience and as he appeared to his friends. Exuberance of spirits made him also in private life animate every gesture with dramatic zest, just as exuberance in a man of letters sometimes heightens his talk. But while we credit a writer with sincerity in spite of over-emphatic phrases, the actor who conveys emotion by expressive gestures instead of expressive words is more seldom given credit for unaffected feeling. Johnson loved emphasis for its own sake, and no one doubted his sincerity; Garrick, a born actor, loved expressiveness for its own sake, and he was often, in consequence, thought shallow.

However Johnson's gibe at him, "Punch has no feelings," referred only to Garrick on the boards. It was a retort to a very understandable request from Garrick that Johnson should not talk so loud in the wings, since it "hurt his feeling as King Lear to overbear him." Johnson objected to the emotions arising out of playing a part being described as *feeling*, ignoring the fact that an artist might well be hurt by such a display of indifference. Another remark of Johnson's with the same sort of implication, "David has many friends but no friend," is also unfair. Garrick's friend was, it has been truly said, his wife. She was a charming, sensible woman, in whose nature descretion was the flowering of a gentle spirit. We find her praised and liked by everyone; even by Foote, who squirted gall on every occasion, and broke, sooner or later, with every friend he had. "She has the merit," Foote wrote, "of making me constant and uniform, in perhaps the only constant part of my life—my esteem and admiration for her." It was in his home Garrick found the steady happiness which enabled him to ride triumphantly through tossing seas of convivial and theatrical distraction.

The portraits of Garrick suggest by their variety in expression his protean changeability of countenance even better than the testimony of eye-witnesses. Among them is a pencil sketch of Garrick at breakfast; he leans with

folded arms across the table; his face is grave, his attitude and expression suggest mobility at rest. You can imagine that calm, full face, with its noticeable dark eyes and straight mouth, changing as suddenly as a willow in the wind when a gust shivers it to silver; you can imagine those features shuttled into surprising expressions. Here his face is caught at a moment of stillness and receptivity; and in it you can read both the man of sense and the delightful companion. Johnson said of Garrick "that for sprightly conversation he had not his match in England," and Goldsmith, who was a good judge of amenity, described him as

An abridgment of all that was pleasant in man.
The chief fault that Goldsmith found in him was that he was

Though secure of our hearts, confoundly sick

If they were not his own by finessing or trick.

That is to say, Garrick was always bent on delighting his friends in ways which also gave delight to himself: he could not help making an art of charming them.

The charge of stinginess, which finds an echo chiefly in the memoirs and correspondence of needy-lavish receivers of Garrick's bounty fades on examination into the plain fact that he was by far the most prosperous denizen of Bohemia in his time. He seems to have given money away readily and repeatedly, and often against his judgment; but he was always careful to preserve the power of doing so in future. He was not impulsively generous; but the one line of his writings which has gained the distinction of being quoted by people who have forgotten its origin, comes straight from the experience of a sympathetic nature:—

A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind.

It is always interesting to hear an artist speak of his art, and Garrick, in discussing acting, insisted on two points. Firstly, that the actor's emotions should be absolutely independent of circumstances, that he should be able to make love to a repulsive old witch as if she were Juliet herself, and never be at the mercy of his own moods;

secondly, that the finest acting springs immediately from emotion.

I pronounce that the greatest strokes of genius have been unknown to the actor himself till circumstances, the warmth of the scene has sprung the mine, as it were, as much to his surprise as to that of the audience.

The good actor must be, then, a man of lively emotions and exceptional sensibility, or he will be neither impressive nor a good mimic; yet for the stimulation of his emotions he must learn to depend, not on external causes, but on himself. Just as the born orator is a man who can deliver sentences he has polished for days as though they were bursting from his heart—that is to say, one who is capable of being excited by his own words—so the born actor is a man whose emotions are excited by his own voice and gestures. We all know that if we can succeed in smiling through some unpleasant business our feelings tend to become more cheerful, and that conversely nothing is more likely to depress us further than beginning to whimper. In the born actor this influence of muscular movements upon emotional states is far greater and swifter. He has only to strike a passionate attitude to begin to possess instantly the emotional cue to his part, or, to imitate a character, to begin at once to feel like him. After that moment the excitement out of which, according to Garrick, superlative acting springs, tends to increase with every gesture, every inflection of the voice, every change of feature. Garrick in private life was remarkable for combining acute sensibility with clear-headed detachment. These were the qualities, together with his fine physical equipment and his ceaseless industry, that made him so great upon the stage.

DESMOND MACCARTHY.

Lines written after re-reading Housman's
"The name and nature of Poetry."

How is borne in on us the meaning of a phrase!
How long it lives with us, is gazed at
and flicks past the tiny shutter of the mind

After re-reading Housman

conned, yet unread, unseized by inner eye.
 A day will come though, when a quickened nerve
 leaps to the vivid life beneath the word,
 playing the artist. Light! Then is light!
 Bursting and dazzling—out of the darkness, white.
 Deep into the heart it goes

Swelling, upheaving, a most violent force
 that will not let peace back into that place
 till mind has yielded, and with humble grace
 bowed to the truth. We have been stopped
 short in our daily track. For a huge second
 living—freed from death.

So was I struck, and still I, blinded, know—
 Man first must lose, if he would find his life.

GEOFFREY ELEY.

CRY OF THE GENTLE.

Dry rock and broken glory . . . last autumn's weeds . . .
 A tin, not even empty, poxed with rust . . .
 This drought is sunless—of the sick wind
 skirting the corner, bitter and aimless,
 giving no respite, absorbed in its own pain.

Wind that is neither brother nor sister,
 but loneliness and disappointment;
 breeding aches in neglected loins,
 vacantly plucking at grief.

What was the catch of song cantering in with the sun?
 What was the gay laugh? and the eager?
 How did the hands rest and the lips linger?
 The fount—did it spring?—of the heart runs no more.

We have cried against compromise. Against walls
 have we hammered—the hard and the irreducible.
 Is there no way home? No peace? No rest?
 Stretch up our arms—the crowd at the Assumption.
 Oh! Grant us help who seek not the unattainable.

GEOFFREY ELEY.

These, Polly, are some of my childhood memories which I have strung together for you:

2. ANCESTOR WORSHIP.

Over the mantelpiece in my aunts' parlour there hung the portrait of a dignified old gentleman, their father. They gave me no definite information about him beyond this fact.

Little by little from other sources I gathered that here was "the villain of the piece". It was hinted to me that hunting had been his passion and port his poison; that gradually the fat lands, the Cornmill next to which we lived and "all the hereditaments appertaining thereto" that he had inherited from his grandfather, Richard Saxby, had vanished, and with them their patrimony. The aunts were dumb on this subject. No wonder they preferred to go further back for their ancestor worship. They were high priestesses of this cult and, as I lived so much with them, I was a convenient vessel to pour their pratings into. These consisted of a number of facts, unrelated to one another, told to me at odd times, and which I never succeeded in reducing to order. I pricked up my ears when I heard I had been "named for" my great grandmother Sarah Shorey who had brought the Delaware Estate into the family. They rambled on with details of others—the Ashdowns, the Streatfields, the Denmans, "all landed gentry" as Aunt Betsy remarked, to whom they were akin. But when they spoke of the Saxbys the Aunts held their heads a little higher. They told of a Court Baron held in 1413; among the earliest tenants whose names appeared on the rolls was that of William Saxpais or Saxby of Saxbys. So through the centuries the family survived, until in 1790 Richard Saxby, who had no male issue, by his Will left his estates to his grandson Thomas Driver—the Aunts' father.

I yawned at times; but became fully awake when the Aunts told the story of what they always called "our American money". It was a pleasant relief to hear of a

Ancestor Worship

relative who had achieved notoriety, even though it was the dubious one of having been proclaimed a murderer: the Aunts never used this dreadful word. Sitting in the parlour on Sunday afternoons they would recite this legend, either in unison, or solo with frequent interpolations from the other narrator. I was accustomed to this method of theirs, and the following is the gist of what they told me about George Denman.

It appears that early in the eighteen-hundreds he had shot a man, whether accidentally or from malice aforethought did not transpire; according to Aunt Betsy "*he thought he had killed him*". Anyhow he found it expedient to flee the country. He went to New England, and prospering there as a brewer, ultimately became part founder of a Bank. He died childless. No relatives survived but the Aunts and their two brothers.

A friend brought to their notice an advertisement in a London paper asking for the next of kin of the said George Denman. No action in the matter appears to have been taken until, in my aunts' remembrance, a lawyer, who was also a relative, undertook the task. Members of the family supplied the necessary expenses and to him were entrusted the certificates and other papers proving the relationship and claim. These never reached Boston, as unfortunately he died at sea on the voyage out. This seems to have damped the ardour of the family and no further attempt had since been made.

The Aunts still cherished the hope that an unspecified "somebody" would "do something about it" and that a colossal fortune would be laid at their feet.

The recital ended, Aunt Betsy went to the mirror and adjusted her cap which, in the excitement of telling this story (their favourite one), had gone slightly askew, giving her a somewhat rakish appearance.

SARAH SHOREY GILL.

MOSSES' WOOD, LEITH HILL.

In all the changing seasons, day by day,
 This wood is beautiful: but when at eve
 You tread alone the wide and sandy way
 And honeysuckle with June roses weave,
 Twining their loveliness with idle finger,
 A solemn grandeur falls on tree and fern.
 The last rays from the sun brighten and linger
 Upon grey stems. Brown-needled carpets burn
 A golden bronze. Spruce, Cedar, Cypress, Pine,
 Wide-spreading Chestnut, Beech down-bent in grief:
 The warm light limns the curve, the stately line,
 Lies quietly upon each silken leaf.

V. S. WAINWRIGHT.

ESCAPE.

I try not to look above
 At Orion, Capella,
 At the immeasurable Galaxy—
 For their lustre in my eyes
 So abounds I cannot see
 The sentry stiff with bayonet
 At the guns,
 Or the dog scraping for scraps to eat,
 Or the girl whose clicking heels
 Circle the night,

Oh, I dare not look above
 At Sirius, the Plough,
 At the Gemini
 In their calling continent of light.
 I cover my face with my hands
 And plunge into the dark alley.

CLIFFORD DYMENT.

A REAPER—TO THE WINDS.

(from Joachim du Bellay, "Le
 Vannneur aux Vends")

To you, frolicking winds
 on your wanderers' ways,
 flying over the world
 with a whistle-soft murmur,
 feathering gently
 the shadow dark verdure;
 I offer these violets
 lilies and daisies
 and rose petals here;
 these wine-red rose flowers
 so freshly new-blown,
 and these cornflowers too.
 With your sweet soughing
 waft over this plain,
 waft over my body
 the while I work breathless,
 reaping my corn
 in the heat of the day.

S.S.

ON THE REJECTION OF SOME LINES ON LIBERTY.

Tired of Slavonic unrelenting laws,
I tried to make my verse more free than free;
I sinned like sudden heat, that briskly thaws
The ice, and causes floods and anarchy.
O for it all! For there shall never be
A styleless style, nor games devoid of rules;
There is a law for whirling molecules,
And boundless freedom is a fallacy.
So, like Ulysses, hopeful, homeward bound,
And knowing well the perils of the sea,
I now return to the familiar ground
Of stanzas, equal feet, and melody;
And thankfully accept, about to land,
Immortal Sonnet, thy outstretchèd hand!

JACOB HORNSTEIN.



Estimates Free

Personal Supervision

A. A. TANNER & SON

for PRINTING

of every description

80 SOUTH ST., DORKING

Telephone 2131

DIE STAMPING. COPPER PLATE PRINTING

