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THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

DAYS IN CORNWALL

LIFE'S LITTLE THINGS

LIFE'S LESSER MOODS

THE ENCHANTED STONE

ADVENTURES AMONG PICTURES

DAYS WITH VELASQUEZ

REMBRANDT

THE EDUCATION OF AN ARTIST

AUGUSTUS SAINT GAUDENS

THE DIARY OF A LOOKER ON

TURNER'S GOLDEN VISIONS

THE CONSOLATIONS OF A CRITIC



SUNFLOWERS

BY VINCENT VAN GOGH

In the collection of Herr Paul von Mendelssohn-Barschldy

587

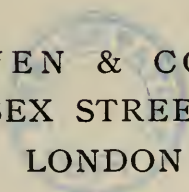
THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

BY

C. LEWIS HIND

WITH TWENTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS

METHUEN & CO. LTD.
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.
LONDON



First Published in 1911

PORTIONS of this book have appeared in the daily Press and in magazines. The author is indebted to the hospitality of the columns of *The English Review*, *T. P.'s Magazine*, *The Daily Chronicle*, *The Evening News*, and *The Art Chronicle*.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER I. AN OPENING AVENUE . . .	I
„ II. CLEARING THE GROUND . . .	8
„ III. ITS EFFECT UPON US . . .	14
„ IV. A DIVERSION ON CRITICISM AND COLLECTING	24
„ V. THE THREE PIONEERS . . .	31
„ VI. A CONNOISSEUR	36
„ VII. LOOKING BACK	39
„ VIII. RECONCILING PUVIS DE CHAVANNES AND MATISSE	53
„ IX. MATISSE AGAIN AND A DIALOGUE	58
„ X. THE MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND : EPSTEIN AND GILL	65
„ XI. THE MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND : AUGUSTUS JOHN	72
„ XII. MR. JINNEWAY ON POST IMPRES- SIONISM	75
„ XIII. A POST IMPRESSIONIST ESSAY .	85
INDEX	93

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

SUNFLOWERS. By Vincent van Gogh. In the collection of Herr Paul von Mendelssohn-Bartholdy	<i>Frontispiece</i>
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST. By Paul Cézanne. In the collection of M. Volland	FACING PAGE 4
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
STILL LIFE. By Paul Cézanne	8
From a photograph by J. E. Bulloz, Paris	
LANDSCAPE. By Paul Cézanne	10
From a photograph by J. E. Bulloz, Paris	
THE FIELDS. By Vincent van Gogh	14
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
A SEAMAN'S MOTHER. By Vincent van Gogh. In the collection of Bernheim Jeune & Cie	22
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
THE BATHERS. By Paul Cézanne	26
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
THE WAYSIDE CHRIST. By Paul Gauguin	30
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
PÈRE TANGUY. By Vincent van Gogh	32
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
WOMAN OF TAHITI. By Paul Gauguin	34
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
THE BAY. By Paul Cézanne. In the collection of Monsieur E. Druet	38
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
WOMAN WITH THE BEADS. By Paul Cézanne. In the collection of Monsieur E. Druet	40
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST. By Henri Matisse. In the collection of Madame Stein	46
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
TAHITIAN PASTORAL. By Paul Gauguin	56
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
STUDY. By Henri Matisse	58
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
THE WOMAN WITH THE GREEN EYES. By Henri Matisse. In the collection of Mme. L. . . .	60
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
STREET AND TREES. By Vincent van Gogh	62
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
EUPHEMIA. By Jacob Epstein	66
From a photograph by The Graphic Press Co.	
THE CHILD. By Jacob Epstein	68
From a photograph by The Graphic Press Co.	
STILL LIFE. By Paul Cézanne	74
From a photograph by The Graphic Press Co.	
RAIN EFFECT. By Vincent van Gogh	76
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST. By Vincent van Gogh. In the collection of Madame Gossehawk Berger . . .	80
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
A TAHITIAN GROUP. By Paul Gauguin	82
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	
L'ESPRIT VEILLE. By Paul Gauguin. In the collection of Monsieur E. Druet	86
From a photograph by E. Druet, Paris	

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

CHAPTER I

AN OPENING AVENUE

I

POST Impressionism has been called the heart of painting: it has also been described as an insult to the intelligence. To some it is a re-birth of vision and feeling, to others the foul fruit of a horrid egotism. In a word it is a novelty—to England.

As the essence is sincerity, and as even sincerity is contagious, the idea of Post Impressionism inclines to make people sincere in their utterances about the idea. Calling it a spiritual movement, I have been charged with hypnosis and accused of imagining that which it never contained. I accept the reproach. St. John saw more in Patmos than was contained in the landscape, and some can read infinity into the words—"Raise the stone and you will find me. Cleave the wood and there am I." I submit that when one is in harmony with the spirit that informs the movement, one has a clearer vision of the vital things in life, and becomes impatient of rhetoric and the rhodomontade of unessentials. The

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

danger is that if we rid our souls of the glamour of unessentials and of rhetoric it may happen that there is no glimmer of a soul to be seen.

If a child were to ask—"What is Post Impressionism?" I think I should tell that child about the Sermon on The Mount, and say—"If the spirit that gives life to the movement we call Post Impressionism is in your heart you will always be trying to express yourself, in your life and in your work, with the simple and profound simplicity of the Sermon on The Mount. You will say what you have to say as if there were nobody else but you and Nature or God."

Expression, not beauty, is the aim of art. Beauty occurs. Expression happens—must happen. Art is not beauty. It is expression; it is always decorative and emotional. And it can be greatly intellectual too. There is as much intellect as emotion in the Parthenon and the Sistine Vault. Art is more than the Emotional Utterance of Life. It is the Expression of Personality in all its littleness, in all its immensity. A man who expresses himself sincerely can extract beauty from anything. There is a beauty of significance lurking within all ugliness. For ugliness does not really exist. We see what we bring. He who expresses his emotion rhythmically, decoratively, seeking the inner meaning of things, is artist. He who represents the mere externals is illustrator. Frith was illustrator—delightful and competent; Cézanne, the true parent of Post Impressionism, was artist. To him the spiritual

AN OPENING AVENUE

meaning was everything. Few are the artists. Many are the illustrators. The founders of Post Impressionism, Cézanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin, were artists.

II

Obviously, Expressionism is a better term than Post Impressionism, that avenue of Freedom, opening out, inviting the pilgrim who is casting off the burdens of mere representation, and of tradition when it has become sapless. Degas once said—"If you were to show Raphael a Daumier he would admire it; he would take off his hat; but if you were to show him a Cabanel, he would say with a sigh, "That is my fault." Post Impressionism or Expressionism seeks synthesis in the soul of man, and in the substance of things; it lifts mere craftsmanship into the region of mysticism, and proclaims that art may be a stimulation as well as a solace. It tries to state the sensation or the effect. It is cheering, and it is as old as ecstasy. It has been called by many names. It informed the work of Botticelli when he expressed the gaiety of spring, Rembrandt when he expressed the solemnity of a Mill, Cozens when he expressed the serenity of Nature, Swan when he expressed forsakenness in his "Prodigal Son." It is in the work of all who are artists not illustrators, and it would have glided on, coming unconsciously to the initiate, uncatalogued, unrecorded, had not three men—Cézanne, Van Gogh, and Gauguin—flamed its

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

principles abroad, and by the very intensity of their genius forced the world to label their performances. The label chosen, when a very incomplete exhibition of such pictures was opened at the Grafton Gallery in November of 1910, was that of Post Impressionism. Little did the originators of the exhibition anticipate the storm those pictures would arouse in torpid art England—abuse and praise, gratitude and groans, jeremiads, and joy that a new avenue of expression had been opened to all who are strong enough to draw life from the idea behind the movement, and not merely foolishly to copy the pictures, the failures as well as the successes.

III

When the exhibition of Post Impressionist pictures at the Grafton Gallery closed I sighed, supposing that the stimulus to thought, talk and writing of the pictures was ended—for the present. But no. A week later my morning paper contained a report of three different meetings in different parts of the country raging round Post Impressionism. This whirl of argument had continued, week by week, ever since the opening of the exhibition. What does this mean? Why should a mere picture exhibition stir phlegmatic art England? Moreover, it stirred people who are not particularly interested in art. Why should this be? There can be but one answer. Behind the movement there is a purpose, an idea partaking more of the spiritual than the



PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST

BY PAUL CÉZANNE

In the collection of M. Vollard

AN OPENING AVENUE

material. Mere picture-making was lifted into a larger region. A few perceived the goal of the search, and wondered.

But the differences of opinion were bewildering. To some, the pictures were a crime, sprung from the devil ; to others, they were a revelation, God-inspired.

To me they opened avenues : beginnings, yes, often imperfectly realised, often leading to regions where there is more reality than in the visible world. But the pictures themselves vary as widely as the personalities of the painters. What could be further apart in vision and technique than Van Gogh's lovely, spring-illuminated "Orchard in Provence," and the angry realism of his "Mad Girl" ; than the faded, pathetic "Woman with the Beads," by Cézanne, and that brilliant expression of artificial modernity, Matisse's "Woman with the Green Eyes" ; than the fierce intensity of Van Gogh's "Self Portrait," everything stated with a kind of scorching force, and the massive eloquence of Cézanne's Portrait of Himself, fatigued yet eager, as of a soul struggling for release, the paint a means not an end, the idea everything, the real man grown old searching for that which can never be wholly found ? Like them or loathe them, but admit that these men at their best are themselves, naked souls before the living God, searching eye and eager heart, seeking the soul-meaning behind the bodily forms, dutiful to tradition, but violently aware of being alive—a Van Gogh actively, a Cézanne passively.

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

IV

Suppose one who had been devoted all his life to art merely for æsthetic enjoyment, found slowly, after long years, a new meaning in art—would not that be strange?

Suppose one found spiritual stimulus in the patient insight shown by Cézanne in a half articulate portrait of the glimmering soul of an old woman, and in what Catholic theologians call the "substance" of a mere bowl of fruit; in Van Gogh's agony of creation and in the patterned gold of his harvest fields; in the weight of sorrow that bears Gauguin's "Christ" to earth, and in the solemn forms of his Tahiti women; in the intellectual striving of a Picasso, and in the search for simplification and synthesis in peace and in bustle of a Derain, a Vlaminck, and a Friesz—would not that be strange?

Art is but an episode of life. The artist's life is but a part of the whole. To be effective he must express himself. Having expressed himself his business ends. He has thrown his piece of creation into the pond of Time. The ever-widening ripples and circles are his communication to us, the diary of his adventures. We read the diary. We are comforted, stimulated, consoled, edified, helped to live according to the degree of life-force in the diary, and the idea behind it.

The Idea behind it! So I come again to my original statement as to the idea, the force, at the back of the

AN OPENING AVENUE

movement. But first the ground must be cleared if we mean to understand the Idea behind Post Impressionism, if we mean to peer out, uplifted, through the opening avenue, noting that art can be great even when dealing with what the world calls little things, and that profound vision can be clothed in cheerfulness and gaiety.

CHAPTER II

CLEARING THE GROUND

I

GLANCE backward and note certain racial differences between England and France. We "worry through" art as through war, and often emerge triumphant. Our great artists happen, sporadically. They soar to fulfilment. Roughly speaking, in British art there is no continuity, no logical growth. When a school dies it dies utterly, like Pre-Raphaelitism. The followers of great forces such as Reynolds, Gainsborough, Turner, Constable, Whistler, Sargent, merely imitate; they do not develop a master's vision or technique.

In France—logical, art-saturated France—it is different. The newest men may dazzle by their pyrotechnics, offend by their ugliness of line and form, outrage our conventional sense of beauty, but, in spite of all, we feel their utterances in paint are not sporadic. They are a development of what has gone before. Perhaps the re-birth of Expressionism happened when Delacroix cast away the fetters of classicism. A patriot might say that it began when he repainted the sky of his "Massacre of Scio" after seeing Constable's "Hay



STILL LIFE
BY PAUL CÉZANNE

CLEARING THE GROUND

Wain," or when Claude Monet first saw Turner's water-colours with amazement; a patriot Dutchman might claim that there is a curtain in a picture by Vermeer of Delft at The Hague that is the parent of Seurat's pointillism; a patriot Italian might claim that pointillism began with Alesso Baldovinetti.

We all know what Impressionism is. But do we? Its advent was merely the younger generation becoming vocal and voluble—the old game. Briefly, it was the reaction in France against convention and the chilly formalism of official art. Two men of genius, Edouard Manet and Claude Monet, were the captains of the movement, and among the brilliant lieutenants were Signac, Seurat, Sisley, Pissaro and others. As the movement developed new titles were invented. The practitioners were called neo-impressionists and proto-byzantines.

These men with the new vision, and new ways of speaking in paint were, of course, scorned, attacked, and refused admission to the Salon. They persevered. Time and intelligence were on their side. In the course of years they were recognised and honoured. One of the art events of this century was the hanging of Manet's once reviled and rejected "Olympia" in the Louvre.

II

By 1880 the hard-fought battles of the Impressionists were won: by 1880 Impressionism was a vital force.

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

Manet has been called its genius, Monet its best marksman.

What followed? Young men hustled to the front, ill-content, eager to push the new movement further. They allied science with art; they studied colour scientifically; they pored over books, not poems, not art histories, but learned works on colour. Chevreul and Helmholtz were their favourite authors. So the decomposition of colour came to birth, the science of complementaries, the division of tones, pointillism, which is the putting on of pigment pure upon the canvas in spots, or blobs, or squares, the aim being to represent the vibration of light in nature. Seurat and Signac were the chief apostles, and as their method was a development of Impressionism, they were called Neo-Impressionists. They were scientists, and when science becomes allied with art, you may write—Finis. Science, like Balbus, builds a wall. The scientific dreams of sunshine in the alcove of the Grafton Gallery were but dreams. They were really attempts at representation, not expression. Those children of Seurat and Signac were still-born, the mother being Science.

III

But the Manet impulse was not exhausted. There were still men who were ill-content, fiercely eager for Expression, who pressed on to a goal of which the literal genius of Manet never dreamed, who broke through Impressionism, who revolted against Monet's



LANDSCAPE
BY PAUL CÉZANNE

CLEARING THE GROUND

analysis. The aim was synthesis. They desired to express, vitally, without rhetoric, emotions that their eyes garnered, and that the soul in them felt. They stalked out from Manet's clearing into a trackless land where only their great native strength, fire, force, and resource saved them from obliteration. These pioneers were Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890), and Paul Gauguin (1848-1903). To them the name of Post-Impressionists has been given; they, for better or worse, have exercised an enormous influence upon "les jeunes" on the Continent, especially in France, Russia and Germany, Scandinavia, and at last in Great Britain. Although the Salon des Indépendents, which was first opened in Paris in 1884, began as the citadel of the Neo-Impressionists, flaunting their oriflamme, it is the Post-Impressionists who latterly captured it. There the wildest orgies of the followers have been exhibited. Some of these extremists, by their very extravagances, would have killed the movement; but in the background were the pioneers, dead yet speaking, very serious, very insistent—the austere, reserved Cézanne; that fiery furnace, Van Gogh, burning with a passion for self-expression; and Gauguin, the "great barbarian," who fled from Europe and civilisation, painted the walls of mud-huts in Tahiti, and died on one of the islands.

What did these three men do? What was their new vision? They desired to express the sensation an object presented to them, never the imitation of it—the

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

significant sensation of a bowl of fruits or pots of flowers, the rankness of a sunflower, the rhythm of a field of corn, the mass of a dusky body, the lethargic patience of a peasant, the glitter of colours in the hat of a woman of fashion, the look of a tree. To get their effect, their sensation, they use colour apparently arbitrarily, and play serious pranks with drawing. And the Post-Post-Impressionists have pushed the idea still further. I believe I am the only man in London who can talk of Matisse without losing my temper. He is serious and he means his expressions seriously. Submit yourself to his intention and his works will repay the effort. They have life. They communicate life. They are a synthesis of his sensations: they stimulate, and the memory of them remains—a stimulation.

Cézanne stands alone, a solitary figure, the "sage," as he was called in life. But Van Gogh and Gauguin! They are the forces of the movement, Van Gogh the fiery spirit of revolt, Gauguin the brooding barbarian. And the others—the many? Some preserve their sense of beauty; perhaps, because it will not leave them ("When me they fly I am the wings.")—Laprade, Marquet, and Redon, whose "Femme d'Orient" is a flashing jewel, and whose "Le Christ" is a glimpse into mysticism. Some apparently woo ugliness, at least what conventionalism calls ugliness. But ugliness, I repeat it, should not exist. Remember the story of the dog's teeth.

CLEARING THE GROUND

These men say: "What *you* call beauty is merely a convention; we open new avenues of expression, infinitely more significant than mere beauty; we eliminate the unessential; we give the salient effects of life, not the facts; to express our sensations we use drawing and colour as servants, not as masters. What you call our ugliness is merely revealed beauty in another form. We are vital. We are alive. We stimulate."

A lady, looking at a huge, vivid painting of Sun-flowers by Van Gogh, said: "It's horrible. It has no beauty. It gives me merely the sensation of the rank glare of a sun-flower."

"Madame," I replied, "that is precisely what Van Gogh desired to express."

CHAPTER III

ITS EFFECT UPON US

I

MANY times I visited the exhibition of Post-Impressionist pictures at the Grafton Gallery, usually haunted by the desire to look again upon Gauguin's "Christ in the Garden of Olives," so strange, so unlike any contemporary or past rendering of the Agony in the garden, yet suggesting as in no picture that I have ever seen, the essence and spirit of the words—"And began to be very sorrowful and very heavy."

But I could rarely reach that poignant picture by "the great barbarian." For each time, on the way to it through the rooms, I met a friend or acquaintance. I was button-holed. These pictures, these experiments in a new method of expression made even the silent talk. Before Van Gogh's "View of Arles" one friend said, laconically, "Beautiful!" and another, "Hideous!" And of his "Fields," that vivid expression of the untidy land, order in disorder, where you feel the wind and scent the air, one said, "Wonderful, but it isn't art!" "All right," said I, "call it 'Arable Land to Let Within Easy Distance of a Market Town.' Call it



THE FIELDS
BY VINCENT VAN GOGH

ITS EFFECT UPON US

what you like : it remains a delight and a stimulation. That's what matters."

The wisest critic I met was a physician. His mind is open. Not being a painter, these pioneers are not trespassing on his preserves. He treated each picture as a new case, and his comment, after careful consideration, was always, "This man gets me," or "That man does not get me—yet." He is open-minded. He seeks for the intention. He never condemns an artist to the everlasting bonfire because he does not paint as he, the physician, would paint if he were a painter.

On another occasion I accompanied an esteemed, successful, and conservative painter round the gallery. He did not laugh ; he was interested. Soon he began to pick out things for praise. He perceived, almost against his will, the new avenue opening. He recognised that the ring-fence with which art is encircled is not necessarily fixed for all time. He realised that daring men may crawl under the fence, or leap over it, and find in the dim world beyond spaces of light.

After an hour of Post-Impressionism he said, "I wouldn't have missed it for the world. It's stimulated, excited me ; I want to go right home, get out of myself and my traditions, and begin again to—paint."

I smiled, for this well-trained, high-stepping, valuable carriage horse was proposing to behave as if he were a young colt in a meadow.

Oh, and I have a letter from a lady who went to Paris to study art. To her I gave an introduction to

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

the leader of a group of Scottish and American painters who are pursuing Post-Impressionist methods in Paris. So delighted was she with her experiences that she broke into something which, if the political situation were a little more cheerful, I might call poetry. Her letter began :—

“Whether we want it or nay,
Laugh or scorn it as we may,
It has come to stay.

Because

Its impulses are philosophic,
Its inspirations are psychologic,
Its expressions are symbolic,

With the most beautiful line and colour that is in them to display.”

Another enquirer, who at first had been antagonistic, became drawn to the movement, and wrote the following :—

“Of primary things,
Red, yellow, and blue ;
Of the sunset of Life
And the morning dew ;
Of the shout of mirth
And the cry of pain ;
The murmur of death
Or the joy of gain ;—
What is left to any
That care to tell
But the pain of breath
And the depths of Hell ?”

ITS EFFECT UPON US

Indeed, I could fill volumes with the essays, letters, and addresses provoked by these pictures, an extraordinary collection of tributes.

Why should a group of pictures arouse such enthusiasm and interest? Because of the spirit, the enduring idea at the back of them, spiritual rather than material, the cry for freedom, for a clearer, simpler, swifter, more salient and more personal way of expressing what we see and feel in this wonderful world. It needs a poet to lift the veil of paint, of partial successes, and successes that are flecked with failure, and see the spirit that worked, and is still working, behind the Post Impressionist movement. Mr. Binyon, who is a poet, writing of Post Impressionism, said :—

“Perhaps, at bottom, it comes from a desire to recover something of the spirituality which modern art has forgotten in its search for ‘sensations of well-being’ and realistic imitation. We crave for an art which shall be more profound, more intense, more charged with essential spirit, more direct a communication between mind and mind. . . . Few are there in any generation who can discard the non-essential and the superficial without exposing their own spiritual poverty.”

Amuse yourself by recalling certain popular pictures, and try to imagine what would be left if they were stripped of their rhetoric, and their heaped-up unessentials. What would be left, say, of the Eclectics of Bologna?

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

II

Read a fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm, who were scholars, then read one by Hans Andersen, who was a child who never grew up, and you get near to the difference between, say, Gauguin and Orchardson, and between Van Gogh and Frith.

All four were fine craftsmen. Orchardson was a superb craftsman with frank gifts of taste and the tact of omission, but there was something more than great craftsmanship in Gauguin and Van Gogh, as there is something more than craftsmanship and deep knowledge of folklore in the fairy tales of Hans Andersen.

There is spirituality, the child-soul speaks, and when Hans Andersen first published his *Tales Told for Children* in 1835, their "naïvetés and their innocent picturesquenesses were at first an absolute scandal." The outcry against the methods of Hans Andersen in Denmark in 1835, the anger of conventionalism that he dared to be himself, was much like the outcry against Gauguin and Van Gogh in London in the autumn of 1910.

For or against, what does it matter? The movement moves. There are many now realising that rhythm and emotional expression are nearer to the heart of things than representation and photographic imitation; that the world that is felt is greater than the world that is seen, and that to express the Divine laws of spiritual

ITS EFFECT UPON US

vision it is often necessary to break the man-made laws of material vision. But the disagreements on this subject are awful. The two camps are hotly antagonistic. On a certain afternoon, while Mr. Roger Fry was delivering a lecture at the Grafton Gallery explaining learnedly, logically, and with charm, the spiritual and æsthetic meaning of Post Impressionism and the avenues that it opens, Sir William Richmond was telling the students of the Royal Academy that he hoped God might preserve them from Post Impressionism. I am afraid He won't take action in the matter.

The spirit of Post Impressionism wandered restlessly over the country. Late in December, when I called upon an eminent art authority in Edinburgh, he did not exclaim, "Well, I hope you've had a Merry Christmas?" What he said was, "Well, how about Post Impressionism?"

I rose to the lure. Our merry talk lasted for one hour. We hammered out something like this: that Orthodox art is painting the imitation of things, that Impressionism is painting the effect of things, that Post Impressionism is painting the psychological feeling or sensation of things. Or, more briefly, the old way was representation; the new way is—expression. Yet the new is not new, and the old is not old.

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

III

The foes of Post Impressionism cannot retard the onward march of the spirit that has made it vital. Of course, we resent it as a nation. We always resent ideas.

The question which English people address to themselves before a new, unconventional play is precisely the question they address to themselves before a new, unconventional picture. This question, according to Mr. Montague, in his wise and witty book called *Dramatic Values*, is—

“‘Can it be seen without giving me any disease?’ as if plays were a species of drains that exist to convey, or abstain from conveying, diphtheria and typhoid.”

Our frolicsome author gives a list of the words and phrases used when Ibsen's plays were first acted in England, such as “an open drain,” “putrid,” “sewage,” “fetid,” “disgusting,” “malodorous,” and adds: “You see how strictly the vocabulary used is that of medical officers of health.” In certain quarters just such a vocabulary was used with regard to the Post Impressionist pictures.

Indeed, were I inclined to dislike Mr. Montague's book—which I do not, I delight in it—I should be converted to his attitude of mind by his advocacy of Post Impressionism. Perhaps it is not intentional, but I have marked three passages wherein he finds in

ITS EFFECT UPON US

modern literature the few essentials that the Post Impressionists seek in art. Here they are :

“They (the Irish actors) seem all alike to have seized on the truth that the way to do big things in an art, as it is to get into the other parts of the Kingdom of Heaven, is to become as a little child.”

“Many times in the growth of the theatre some dramatist of the first rank has seemed to cast back instinctively towards the robust melodramatic structure of primitive tragedy.”

“Most come at the feast by the bookman's route ; Synge's people come by the child's.”

If only our monumental sculptors would cast back to the robust melodramatic structure and child-like mystical vision of, say, the Assyrian Winged Bulls, craftsmanship allied with mysticism in perfect marriage ! The young vision ! The visions of the youth of art ! Surely monumental sculpture has never since reached the height of The Sphinx, and the Assyrian Winged Bulls. Wisely is the latest movement in sculpture allied to the inspiration of Egypt and Assyria.

IV

Michael Angelo was Superman, in life as well as in art. He sits throned above our voices. But we, children of the present, are what we are through the Past. And Cézanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh, although dead, are also children of the present, and of the past, little

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

men compared to Michael Angelo, but not little compared to their contemporaries, or to the living. I am loyal to their memory. I think I love their shades, and I cannot see that in their lives and works, in their degree, they were less earnest in their search for truth, and, in their degree, less worthy of our esteem and gratitude, than Michael Angelo. All, it seems to me, were of the Household of Faith. Van Gogh certainly had not the tranquillity of Michael Angelo, or the wisdom, or the balance, or the power; yet he was true to himself. Not for him to fulfil the tremendous task of painting the Creation and Redemption of man on the Sistine vault, working as a man and with men and women as models and preserving the Idea throughout. No, for poor Van Gogh earth and agony, and the recompense of cheering seamen with a symbolistic portrait of a seaman's mother, seated in her rocking-chair, her earth-worn body and her bright clothes, and the bright wall-paper they know so well, such a portrait as they would understand, universal art, not a "masterpiece" in a costly frame for an exhibition, but something cheerful for the wall of a seaman's tavern. Yet Van Gogh was a great artist; so was Gauguin, so was Cézanne—artists and thinkers, too. And Michael Angelo was a Superman. Peace be to them!

The world moves. The Past remains, but the Past cannot always direct the Future. Happy is he who can enjoy Past, Present, and Future: happy is he who can adore Michel Angelo, and yet not be afraid of new



A SEAMAN'S MOTHER

BY VINCENT VAN GOGH

In the collection of Bernheim Jeune & Cie

ITS EFFECT UPON US

visions, of the Present and of the Future. The Deity will not interfere to preserve us from Post Impressionism. But the movement has certainly caused trouble in families as well as in studios. One day at the Grafton Gallery I heard the following scrap of dialogue between an ardent young man and a languid young woman :—

He (excitedly): “ I’m going to buy one of these pictures.”

She (angrily): “ I won’t live with you if you do.”

You never hear that sort of dialogue at the Royal Society of British Artists—yet.

CHAPTER IV

A DIVERSION ON CRITICISM AND COLLECTING

I

IN the Ideal State the critic of art will be unacquainted with artists. Thereby much trouble will be avoided. The most thankless, the most disagreeable of the duties of the critic is that of criticising the works of his contemporaries. He dislikes it; they dislike him for doing it. His words do them no good: their words, under the smart of criticism, do him no good. Indeed, I believe, that criticism is only fruitful where it is appreciative. To see the good in a thing is to give a lilt to life. To see what seems to the seer to be bad, is merely to irritate, to add to the discord. I do not suppose any artist was ever improved by criticism. What, then, is the use of the critic?

The other evening I happened to be a lamb among lions. In other words, I was the only critic in a company of seventeen painters and sculptors. My face faced the good fare provided, but my back was against the wall the whole time. Near midnight, in a lull in the attack, I said to a sculptor, "What, then, is your game?"

He answered, "I create something. I try to sell it.

ON CRITICISM AND COLLECTING

If I sell it I've done with it. Then I create something else. And what's your game?"

I answered, "My game is as simple as yours seems to be. You express yourself by creating something. Then you've done with it, you say. Maybe. But the world hasn't done with it. It may need explanation or interpretation. You can't pluck a flower without troubling a star, as Francis Thompson said. In other words, communication must always follow expression. You throw a stone, say, into a pond. That is your expression of yourself. Then you depart, and throw another stone into another pond, another expression. Meanwhile the stone that you have thrown into the first pond produces ripples in ever-widening circles, disturbing the surface of the water, disturbing even the flowers and sedges at the edge of the pond.

"Those ripples are your communication to the world, the inevitable result of your expression. The critic examines those ripples, analyses them, relates them to other ripples in other ponds, explains them, interprets them, perhaps fishes up the stone, examines that, too, and tries to discover the effect of the communications on himself, and on the denizens of the pond, the bank, and the air.

"To me one of the great interests of Post Impressionism is the effect of its communication. Some regard it as a new disease, others as a new religion. And yet I ask you could any man or woman, who is artist at heart, fail to see the significance of Cézanne's

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

"Bathers," fail to see how infinitely more than mere illusion or imitation there is in this expression of the idea of robing and disrobing?"

II

I do not think the sculptor was convinced. I do not think we are ever convinced by sermons.

The attempt to analyse each of the ripples in an exhibition, which is but justice, would need a book. If all the painters represented had one composite ear and mouth I might say to it, "Why don't you paint single figures like Holbein and Velasquez, and groups like Giorgione's 'Concert' and Rembrandt's 'Syndics'?" In the Ideal State the prompt answer would be, "Because we can't."

And if the composite mouth said to me, "Why don't you write like Pater, and Fromentin, and Delacroix and Van Gogh?" my answer would be, "Because I can't." So we rule out the achieved past and come to the futurity of the present.

The critic is often reproached that he sees more (or less) in the ripples than they contain. Well, that is a large question. Large, too, and difficult is the question, "Should a work of art be born of the spirit or of the eye?" Once I wondered why Rodin's "John the Baptist," a cast of which is in the South Kensington Museum, should have for me such unending communications. Now I know. It was born



THE BATHERS
BY PAUL CÉZANNE

ON CRITICISM AND COLLECTING

of the spirit. Before Rodin's hands touched the clay he had the idea of News, a figure striding through the world proclaiming the Great Tidings. A John the Baptist born from the eyes, from studying, however intently, the model in the studio, can never have that profundity of communication.

Art may be in its infancy. Some artist some day may arise who will express the "unpaintable." The vital words in the following couplet by Olivia Meynell are: "Oh, passionate loss."

I sought Him in my soul—oh, passionate loss!
All that I found was a forsaken Cross.

Art may be in its infancy. Some day someone may paint the emotion of those words, "Oh, passionate loss." Then, indeed, will Post Impressionism be perfected, and art be related to the life spiritual as well as to the life material.

III

We are all too apt to regard art as a sort of solemn affair of wealth and connoisseurship, much too portentous to be part of humble daily life. We suffer not only from the tyranny of exhibitions, but also from the tyranny of the masterpiece. Cézanne, Van Gogh, and Gauguin were disdainful of exhibitions and masterpieces. They expressed themselves on canvas, and when they had said all they had to say, sometimes they

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

left their canvasses in the fields, or tossed them into a corner of the studio. They painted for themselves, not for exhibition. They lived to paint, not to exhibit. They made sonnets and songs rather than epics and oratorios. We need more sonnets and songs if art is ever to be, what it should be, universal. The wayfarer as well as the wealthy should be a collector. Art can be cheerful and intimate and yet dignified. The members of a confraternity called the Friday Club are cheerfully human. They enjoy making lyrics in paint, and let them go even if they are not perfect. They throw off things: they are not haunted by the idea that every work must be a masterpiece. And they are young enough to be frankly imitative.

Many of them openly adopt the manner and method of their heroes—Augustus John, for example, and Maurice Denis and Monet, and lesser men who must be pleased to find that they are founding a little school even while they are seeking their own way.

There were a dozen things I should like to possess in their last exhibition which was saturated with Post Impressionism. And yet if I acquired an assortment, what should I do with the mixture? My walls are crowded, and, honestly, I don't think I want to frame such pleasant ephemera, and reopen the business of adding more picture fixtures to my house. Once hang a picture on a wall, and after a week you rarely look at it again, and hardly ever talk about it. There should be some way of dealing with such crest waves of talent

ON CRITICISM AND COLLECTING

as those at the Friday Club, interesting, discussable, and pleasing experiments. I have an idea.

The idea came to me at a house where I was dining the other evening for the first time. In the drawing-room after dinner I was somewhat alarmed to see my host place a card-table in the centre of the room. I was alarmed, because I am a bad bridge player, and consequently do not care to play with folk who are worse than I am. At least two of the guests were worse. But my fears were groundless.

Instead of placing cards upon the table, our host produced a kind of glorified book-rest; then he arranged chairs in front of the table, and opened an enormous, very beautiful Sheraton case. It contained etchings, a fine collection. One by one he placed them on the book-rest, explaining them, appraising them, while we sat in comfort, joining the discussion when we desired, and enjoying for two hours a rare intellectual and æsthetic treat.

Now that is the way small pictures that are really not important enough to be framed and accorded wall space, but which have the merit of being alive and provocative of discussion, should be treated. I would like to see a club formed where no exhibited work should exceed a certain small size—suggestions, experiments—which the ordinary householder might buy for very small sums, and show to his friends as our host showed the etchings. Cards might be sent out for “An evening with a few Art Things of my own that I rather Like.”

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

Such an evening would be a change from bridge, conversation about nothing, and the gramophone. Some years ago one might have bought any number of Cézannes, Gauguins, and Van Goghs for a few pounds apiece—glimpses of vision, the sensitive, lyrical and romantic utterances of artists, arresting statements, simply yet fiercely felt, pathetic, catching at the throat, religion related to reality yet essentially a decoration, such as Gauguin's "Wayside Christ." How mild, how fierce is its pathos—the wooden figure, the patient, unreflective peasants, the truant children, the abstract landscape, all the mystical realism of this naïve statement of an undying faith. You say that this "Wayside Christ" by Gauguin is not great art. Yet it brings tears, and it affects me more than Tintoretto's "Crucifixion." It is stamped with sincerity, and, from it, deep things of the spirit may be evoked even on a casual evening with chance friends.



THE WAYSIDE CHRIST

BY PAUL GAUGUIN

CHAPTER V

THE THREE PIONEERS

I

THE English reader whose art adventures are confined to a visit to the Royal Academy once a year would be amazed to read Meier-Graefe's¹ chapters on Cézanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin, with their fury of exegesis, their ecstasy of appreciation, and their treatment of certain phases of modern art as a living, vital, aye, and art-world-moving event. Hardly a whisper of the intellectual hubbub reached England until the exhibition of Post Impressionists set critics, artists, and some of the public talking, reviling, and revering. One English critic ended his article thus: "The source of infection (i.e. the pictures) ought to be destroyed." What good would that do? The descendants of the pioneers would merely paint more.

Cézanne's art influence on the Continent is far-reaching, but during his life the man Cézanne was hardly known, and what was known was wrong. He was called the "Ape of Manet"; he was styled "that communist! that barbarian!" When in the year 1902 the Director of the Beaux Arts was asked to decorate

¹ *Modern Art*, by Julius Meier-Graefe (Heinemann).

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

Cézanne, he replied, "What, decorate that barbarian!" Certainly Cézanne had shouldered his musket in 1871, but he was nearer akin to a market gardener than a communist. He was a recluse, a seer, not a clubable man, but certainly not a barbarian. In early life, before he tired of the exactions and excitements of the painting world, and retired to Aix, where he died in 1906, he was the boldest and the profoundest spirit of the artistic revolutionaries who gathered round Manet in the so-called École de Batignoles. You may read cheerfully about Cézanne, of his friendship with Zola (he was in part Claud Lantier in *L'Œuvre*), of Emile Bernard's visit to him at Aix, and also of the "little father" to painters, Père Tanguy, in the chapter on Paul Cézanne in James Huneker's *Promenades of an Impressionist*. It was Père Tanguy, once a plasterer, later an artist's colourman, and the friend of all the unfortunate, who really made Cézanne, and others, too, known to Paris. He had faith, had good Father Tanguy, wise and kind patron of the unregarded. Van Gogh painted him and Rodin bought the portrait. You may see the apotheosis of Cézanne in Maurice Denis's "Hommage à Cézanne," exhibited in the Champ de Mars Salon of 1901. "He was a very reserved person; of the younger generation none ever saw him; artists who owe him everything never exchanged a word with him." M. Maurice Denis admits that about 1890, when he made his first visit to another little shop, he thought that Cézanne was a



PÈRE TANGUY
BY VINCENT VAN GOGH

THE THREE PIONEERS

myth. That "little shop" was, of course, the "maison" Vollard in the Rue Lafitte, a dealer of vision, a connoisseur—another of those "little fathers" hardly known in England, who bank on work, not on names.

Cézanne's reputation was established by his friend Choquet's sale at Petit's in the summer of 1899. We read how on three hot afternoons in the dead season "purchasers fought for his best things, collected by an oddity who had been laughed at as a madman a short time before." Such episodes would not have troubled Cézanne the recluse, who exiled himself at Aix in order to work out in peace projects which would, he believed, "revolutionise the technique of painting." His friend Dr. Gachet—he with the blue eyes whom Van Gogh painted—rightly described the man Cézanne as the antithesis of the man Van Gogh.

II

Van Gogh was born in 1853 at Groot Zundert, in Holland; he died in 1890, at Anvers, of a wound self-inflicted. The intensity of his temperament, his mania for expression, outraged, outwore his body. Some of his most personal pictures were painted when he was an inmate of the Arles Asylum, at the end of his life. His dementia was caused by a sunstroke contracted one day while he was painting under the burning sun of Provence. A terrible story is told of his quarrel with Gauguin in an Arles tavern, when a fit of mania was

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

already possessing him. He attacked Gauguin with a razor, was restrained, went home, and cut off his own ear at the root as penance.

He lived the life of a hundred men in intensity. Early in his career the passion for expression found vent in religion. He preached to miners; he preached Christ in London; but at length the artist in him awoke, the passion for colour dominated him, and "painting and gasping" he strove to realise his sensations of form and colour, to synthetise his burning impressions, in the hot light of Southern France. Three-fifths of his pictures, numbering several hundreds, were painted at Arles between 1887 and 1889.

It depressed Van Gogh to think that "life is created with less effort than art." We are told that a letter he wrote to Aurier is "the most complete revelation of an artist's psychology ever penned, and that every picture he painted was 'holy ecstasy,' even when the theme was a bunch of lettuces—Vincent Van Gogh, madman and genius, pure artist and pioneer, who carried about 'a sun in his head and a hurricane in his heart,' and who wrote, 'The more ill I am, the more of an artist do I become.'"

III

Gauguin's mother was a Creole; he was born in Paris in 1848, wandered, had wild adventures by land and water, and did not exhibit a picture until he was thirty-two. In 1887 he went to Martinique. Finally



WOMEN OF TAHITI
BY PAUL GAUGUIN

THE THREE PIONEERS

he virtually took up his abode in Tahiti—the call of the blood. He had, in Strindberg's phrase, "an immense yearning to become a savage and create a new world." His first exhibition of "savage" pictures had no success in Paris, and Strindberg, who wrote the preface to the catalogue, disliked his prepossession with form, and the uncouth, savage models that he adored. Gauguin's reply is historical: "Your civilisation is your disease; my barbarism is my restoration to health."

This "great child" died in 1903 on the island of Dominica. The bulk of his work was immense. Much has been lost, "much may adorn the huts of Tahiti, where cataloguing ceases." But no one who visits the Salon d'Automne or the Salon des Indépendants, no one who has studied the swing-back in art to significance and simplicity, can doubt the influence of these pioneers, Cézanne, Van Gogh, and of Gauguin, who wrote :

"I am a savage. Every human work is a revelation of the individual. . . . All I have learnt from others has been an impediment to me. It is true I know little, but what I do know is my own."

CHAPTER VI

A CONNOISSEUR

I

AT the Grafton Gallery one Sunday I had a little art adventure. On the way through the silent streets I reflected that the bitterest opponents of the Post-Impressionist pictures have been not critics but painters. There have been some noteworthy exceptions.

All honour to them, but, as a rule, the most furious opponents of the French movement in art towards simplification, synthesis, and the search for the spiritual signification of things have been British painters. This is strange. One would have thought that the right man to appreciate the intentions of an artist would be a fellow artist. I fear that is not so. Worse: many of the British painters whose speeches I listened to and whose articles I read do not even criticise; they merely abuse. But I rather like the phrase of a gentleman who called the movement, in a kind of expiring gasp of protest—"a protean fad."

One thing I learned from this long-drawn-out and exciting discussion, and that is the uselessness of attack, of abuse. One line of real appreciation, of

A CONNOISSEUR

understanding, is of more use to the individual and to the world than a page of condemnation.

So now when anybody asks me, "What should I look for in a picture gallery?" I answer, "While seeking spiritual and mental nourishment and stimulus for yourself, seek the intention of the artist, and when anything he does seems strange and bizarre, remember it may be that he sees deeper and farther than you, that he has struggled for a clearer and subtler vision, and that you are not yet attuned to his clairvoyance. Above all, be tolerant, always a pupil, even if you be a patriarch-pupil."

II

And now for the little art adventure that gave me such great pleasure. On the steps of the Grafton Gallery was a man, a stranger, who was evidently hoping to be allowed admittance. I offered my services. He gave me his name, which I immediately recognised as that of a connoisseur and collector of European reputation, living abroad. He had arrived in London the night before and hoped to be allowed to see the pictures before they were removed on the following day. Then the door was opened, and after a word or two of explanation we entered the gallery together.

Here I should like to stop. Words are so powerless to express the delicacies of the expressions of personality and the purposeful divagations of a well-stored,

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

cultivated, and urbane mind. It was not so much what this connoisseur said about the pictures as his attitude towards them. Of course, he was fully informed as to the movement; he had studied it for years as he had studied the art of the past, and if a picture did not wholly appeal to him, or did not appeal to him at all, in each he found something of interest or stimulation. He did not like the Matisse bronzes, but he did not snap out the word "disgusting." He looked a long time and said, "Yes, I see his intention."

It was an education to hear him soliloquise, purring like a cat with pleasure, on the subtleties of Cézanne's landscape "The Bay." "It should be hung alone," he murmured. "It is too delicate to be contrasted with Manet's 'Un bar aux Folies-Bergère.' Manet was a very great painter, but his Bar is like a brass band playing—the Cézanne is the half-heard wail of a violin."

And so on, and so on, to the quality of the paint in Cézanne's "The Great Pine Tree," those eloquent passages of paint, so great a joy to the true connoisseur; and it was more in sorrow than in anger that he pointed out certain parts of the picture that some restorer had worked upon, attempting to "finish" what the great Cézanne had left tentative because he had said all he had to say.

I left the gallery edified, uplifted, feeling that I had listened to a sermon in manners and taste on the text that nothing human should be alien to our sympathy.



THE BAY

BY PAUL CÉZANNE

In the collection of M. F. Dinet

CHAPTER VII

LOOKING BACK

I

HERE, perhaps, I may look back and reconsider the march of my acquaintance with Post Impressionism. I was fortunate in approaching the movement by stages. Thus the inevitable shock to the emotions of a Van Gogh or a Gauguin, an extreme Matisse or a "cube" Picasso, was eased. I propose to set down, as lucidly as I can, the stages of my education.

For some years certain names had been dimly familiar, and certain pictures at the Salon d'Automne, and the Salon des Indépendants had—I being like the rest, conservative and prejudiced—aroused in me wonder, and sometimes protest and mirth. But they also aroused interest. One could not be indifferent to them. But I asked myself:

"Can a man who loves the work of the master of the 'Life of Mary' tolerate Matisse or Othon Friesz? Can one to whom beauty means a definite and cloistral thing, to whose life the finest work of the masters of the past has given joy and consolation, find in his heart any corner of appreciation for Van Gogh and Gauguin?"

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

Can one who adores the frescoes of Puvis de Chavannes countenance the decorative pictures of Maurice Denis? Can one who loves a nude by Botticelli or a landscape by Giorgione feel anything but disgust before a nude by Friesz or displeasure before a geometrical, cubical landscape by Picasso?"

The answer is: "Everything is possible to one who will give." But the point of view must be shifted. Admit that, conventionally, many Post Impressionist works are ugly, according to our conventional ideas of beauty, but they are also vital, life-communicating.

Really it is amusing to find how almost everybody that one likes, and whose opinion one esteems, unites in disliking the work of the Post Impressionists. Photographs of works by Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, and Matisse have for months adorned one of the walls of my study. I have learnt to need their communication, but everybody who enters my room scoffs, and upbraids me for liking them. I urge that "like" is an elastic word, that we do not like sorrow, but that "*rien ne nous rend si grands qu'une grande douleur.*" They laugh: they merely dislike Cézanne's "Woman with the Beads," so true to the heart of this old woman, so vital compared with the ordinary or extraordinary portrait of the smart clothes of a smart mondaine. But they certainly loathe Matisse's portrait of himself and also of his wife. Looking at the Matisse self-portrait, a lady said: "That's what I do when I try to paint." That remark would please



WOMAN WITH THE BEADS

BY PAUL CÉZANNE

In the collection of M. E. Druet

LOOKING BACK

Matisse. A friend, after looking at one of his paintings, said :

"Why, your little boy might have done that."

Matisse replied gravely :

"It is my aim to see as my little boy sees."

Expression is their aim—an expression of interior, not exterior, life. Here I must pause. I am anticipating. I wish to note the stages of my education in Post Impressionism briefly and, if possible, lucidly.

II

Before the spring of 1910 my knowledge of the New Movement was meagre. Of course I had seen hordes of strident examples in secessionist Paris, Munich, and Berlin, and a few at the exhibitions of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers ; but it was plain that the advocates of Post Impressionism on the committee of that society are in a minority. In the Secessionists' exhibitions of Paris, Berlin, and Munich the eyes were wearied by the numerous experiments of notoriety-hungry followers. It is always the imitators who outrage and then fatigue a movement. England, of course, until the recent exhibition at the Grafton Galleries, was indifferent to the Post Impressionists. But London has embracive arms. At the private view of the penultimate Royal Academy exhibition I observed a gentleman walking with so uncommon an air of dandy assurance that I said to my companion : "Why does X

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

behave as if he had just stolen an epigram successfully?"

Assuming a knowing, mysterious air, my companion replied: "Hush! He has just bought a Matisse."

Now my ignorance in those dark days was such that I thought there was only one Matisse in the world: he who paints dark, oily seas, instinct with the sullen under-movement of vast waters—Auguste Matisse—whose work has for years been for me one of the attractions of the Salon. My companion saw no smile ripple upon my face. How could I smile? I was yet to learn that *the* Matisse, the *ermite terrible* of modern French art is—Henri Matisse né au Cateau (Nord).

Well, in the spring of last year I made a journey to Berlin to see the collection of American pictures exposed in Berlin and Munich. There, little expecting it, I was encompassed in the atmosphere of the New Movement. I found that *les jeunes* of France, Germany, and Russia, and indeed of most nations, are in the throes of the rebirth. Not, of course, the Emperor's party in Germany; not, of course, the official representatives of art in any country; not, of course, the People. But the movement, within its boundaries, is vociferous. I addressed questions to several important functionaries in the German art world. One said brusquely: "Art in Berlin has been spoiled by Cézanne." Another was so angry that he would hardly discuss the topic, but I gleaned from him that in his opinion Berlin art had been wrecked by Liebermann (why Liebermann? I

LOOKING BACK

asked myself), Van Gogh, Matisse, Meier-Graefe, and the dealer Cassirer. I spent an hour at Cassirer's Gallery, and was disturbed. All the names—Klein, Diepold, Slevogt, Nägele—were new to me. Ah! new is a weak word to describe their vision and their technique. But I was not bored. I did not emerge from Cassirer's depressed and indifferent as I did the other day from the gallery at Amiens, with its packed walls of mid-nineteenth-century banalities and futile illustrations in paint.

From Berlin I returned home by way of Amsterdam and Paris, and in those cities Fate directed my education in Post Impressionism.

At Amsterdam I wandered into the new building rearward of the Rijks Museum reserved for modern pictures. Anticipating the joy of enjoying the pearly, luminous, atmospheric landscapes of Jacob Maris and Weissenbruch, I entered and—found myself gasping in a room decorated with pictures by Cézanne and Van Gogh. The first impression was one of harsh and glaring ugliness, of bright and discordant colour, of a kind of solid, synthetic Impressionism. Indeed, a quotation from Cézanne himself, that I read later, precisely described some of these pictures: "What I wanted was to make of Impressionism something solid and durable, like the art of the museums."

A curious feeling was evoked by these works. Antagonistic to the accepted canons of beauty, yet they opened avenues of vision and emotion palpitating with

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

vivacity even if they led only to precipices. I dallied there, held almost against my will, and made the following notes :

Van Gogh's "Portrait of Himself."—More like the portrait of a criminal. Metallic self-analysis, well drawn, constructed, shrill—relentless revolt against so-called truths.

A Van Gogh "Still Life"—not "still," quivering with scintillating, sunlit atmosphere. Subject? Lemons in a wicker basket on a sand-dune against the blue-green of stunted pine branches, contrasted with an intense blue sky—the blue repeated in a blue glove lying in the foreground. No lack of drawing, but only the broad truths given. A "Landscape," stunning, a rough, crop-raising country, giving the sensation of the strength of the earth and its procreative force. Another—racing clouds and the land rhythmically alive, wind-blown, the feel of nature on a gusty day.

His "Cornfield on a Hillside": only the contour of the hill, the gold of the grain, the wind racing in undulating lines, and a man reaping rhythmically.

And Cézanne? His work is massive and well balanced. He feels the empty spaces. Not so much the science of picture-making as the science of painting reality released from restraining present vision. A new discovery in the way of seeing. Instantaneous first impression of life. Cézanne's great quality is his equilibrium. He is so fine and forceful that all other sensation seems trivial when looking at his pictures.

LOOKING BACK

There is a solemnity even in his common white dish holding green and red apples.

So you see my education in the New Movement had really begun. Cézanne had captured me ; but he really stands apart from any movement. He is by himself ; he looms up, an austere figure, in his austere desert. But Matisse——

III

In Paris I was offered an opportunity of drinking the cup of Matisse to the last wry drop. The orgy was made possible by a chance—a visit to a Parisian friend who unfurled the red flag of Matisse, an onslaught, a fight, a truce, then the information that Mr. and Mrs. Michel Stein, Californians, have in the Rue Madame a collection of Matisses unequalled in range and number anywhere in Paris. Mr. and Mrs. Stein are Matisse enthusiasts. They do not attempt to proselytise, but they are willing to allow others to share in their great contentment with his paintings, drawings, and sculptures. In a word, they are “at home” on Saturday evenings at certain seasons. . . .

The vast studio was crowded with visitors. One heard the usual giggles and protests, the usual disdain and disgust. Here and there were some who were half convinced, and a few who were wholly convinced. My first sensation was one of dismay, almost of horror. That group of nudes in flat, house-painter's colour, one green, one pink, one pale yellow ! that abortion of the

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

female form so grotesquely naked! those vivid streaks of paint pretending to represent a figure emerging from foliage into sunlight! that head with the blatant smear of green shadow under the chin! that abominable bronze!

Thus I soliloquised. An hour passed. I did not want to leave. These wilful things, that look at first glance as if a precocious child had stolen his father's paint-box and smeared, with his chubby finger on canvas, certain aspects of life that had dazzled his young eyes, possessed a strange fascination. I realised that Matisse paints his sensations, never the mere imitation of objects; his temperament, never contemporary ideals. To state that sensation he will use drawing and colour arbitrarily, caring little for accuracy and less for realism, so long as his sensation is expressed. He does flagrantly what many academic painters long to do. I did not feel the "tranquillity" of which Mrs. Stein spoke, but I did feel a sense of excitement and stimulation. Here and there, as I waited and watched, an eccentricity seemed to start from the walls and say, "I am alive. I am movement. I am rhythm. I exist." That head of himself—bearded, brooding, tense, fiercely elemental in colour—seemed as I gazed to be not a portrait but an aspect of the man, the serious Matisse, almost a recluse, indifferent to opinion, whose aim it is to approach a fresh canvas as if there were no past in art, as if he is the first artist who has ever painted. He never theorises



PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST

BY HENRI MATISSE

In the collection of Madame Stein

LOOKING BACK

before or during painting. Theorising may follow when the work is done. He will never paint if he is troubled or annoyed ; it is his wish to begin every new picture virginally with an unanxious, a pure soul.

No ! I am not a Matisse, but I am very curious and very interested. And some of his productions haunt me, will not let me go, and I would walk a mile to see a new Matisse. He troubles me, does this strange Matisse, with his ache for expression, his sympathy with primitive artists and Oriental decorators, his plastic power and abstract colours, his elongation or attenuation of the figure to suit his architectural or decorative designs.

IV

But why attempt to explain Matisse? when he has explained himself. The editor of the *Revue des Arts* invited Matisse to place himself under the microscope, and he replied with an article called "Notes of a Painter," from which I take a few passages.

"I do not repudiate one of my canvases, and there is not one which I would do differently if I had to do it again."

"That which I pursue above all is Expression. . . . Expression for me does not reside in the passion which breaks upon a face or which shows itself by a violent movement. It is in the whole disposition of my picture."

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

"At one time I did not leave my pictures upon my walls because they reminded me of moments of over-excitement, and I did not like to see them when I was calm. To-day I try to put calmness into them."

"Impressionism renders fugitive impressions. A rapid translation of the landscape gives only a moment of its duration. I prefer, by insisting on its character, to run the risk of losing the charm in order to obtain more stability."

"For me everything is in the conception."

"The principal aim of colour should be to serve as much as possible the expression. I place my colours without preconceived intention. . . . I try simply to place or use colours which give (or express) my sensation."

"I condense the signification of the body by looking for the essential lines."

"That of which I dream is an art of equilibrium, of purity, of tranquillity, with no subject to disquiet or preoccupy, which will be for every brain-worker—for the man of business as well as for the man of letters—a sedative, something analogous to a comfortable arm-chair which eases him of physical fatigue."

Has Matisse succeeded? With the few certainly, but assuredly not with the many. I find, as I have said, in him stimulation, but hardly tranquillity. And yet I do not know! That photograph of his portrait of himself, which I see whenever I raise my eyes, does, I believe, evoke a growing sense of tranquillity. A

LOOKING BACK

bewildering man, this Matisse. I captured a distinguished British painter and conveyed him to Mrs. Stein's collection. He was speechless, but it was with anger; he left the house hurriedly and absolutely refused to discuss such puerilities. Now hear Mr. Berenson's opinion. When a contemptuous reference to Matisse's pictures appeared in the *New York Nation*, Mr. Berenson wrote a letter of indignant protest to that journal, in the course of which he said:

"I have the conviction that Henri Matisse has, after twenty years of very earnest searching, at last found the great high road travelled by all the best masters of the visual arts for the last sixty centuries at least. Indeed, he is singularly like them in every essential respect. He is a magnificent draughtsman and a great designer. Of his colour I do not venture to speak. Not that it displeases me—far from it. But I can better understand its failing to charm at first; for colour is something we Europeans are still singularly uncertain of—we are easily frightened by the slightest divergence from the habitual."

He has liberated our eye, says M. Desvallières, who introduced him to the readers of the *Revue des Arts*; he has enlarged our understanding of design.

But it is necessary to dissociate Matisse from the great past of European art, and certainly from the charming "desire-to-please" French art of the seventeenth century. You wander through the Louvre; you look with delight at Watteau's "Embarkment," Fragonard's "La Leçon

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

de Musique," Lancet's "La Leçon de Musique," Peronneau's "Portrait of Adam," and you say: "How can I like these and Matisse?"

You can if you remember that they are different, that the world may be very young, that infinite avenues may yet spread out from the narrow boundaries of art, and that Matisse and his kin may be among the path-breaking, stumbling, perfervid pioneers.

I had been told that the Salon d'Automne included two Matisses. That, I admit, was the excitement of my visit. There are many stalwarts in the forefront of the movement, but Matisse's place is unique. Commercially he is, I believe, the most successful, and when sticks are thrown, which is often, he is the dominant Aunt Sally.

I found Matisse's two decorative panels with the greatest ease. Ascending the staircase, I paused a moment to assimilate Maillol's severe and consistent statue of "Pomone"—a fitting prelude—passed on, and there, before me, glaring over a large portion of the large wall of the first room, were Matisse's latest "sedatives," startling, disconcerting, terrifically ugly in the conventional sense—essential Matisse.

One is called "La Danse," the other "La Musique." Each is flat, unmodelled, and each is composed of three colours, rank red, rank green, and rank blue. All the figures are nude. In "La Danse" five—what shall I say?—cave-men, dance a "fantastic round" wildly, grotesquely, hand in hand on a hill-top, an extra-

LOOKING BACK

ordinary rhythm of movement that may be likened to the order in disorder of a Grieg dance. In "La Musique" three aboriginals squat in a meadow listening while two of their number make primitive music, one sitting, the other standing. Elementalism indeed! The kind of pictures a cave-man might have painted had he found a rock large and smooth enough upon which to smear his ochreous colours. I gazed, blinked, shuddered, gazed again, and said, "Abominable; thank heaven at last I am cured of Matisse."

But I was not cured.

My eyes dropped from the Matisses to two pictures hanging lower on the wall by Othon Friesz, "Le Pêcheur" and "Indolence." More ugliness! That lumpy, distorted fisherman posing before his ridiculous fishing village is caricature; that indolent, paleolithic family lolling in a forest is—well, oddly enough, it does evoke the sensation, full, ripe, of indolence; and that fisherman does suggest the Stevensonian romance of the mariner.

I proceeded through the rooms, observed an American lady drop her lorgnette, indicate the entire Salon d'Automne with an expansive sweep of the hand, and heard her say: "Nobody would believe it, my dear, who hadn't seen it."

I encountered a French family before "Les Patineurs" by Saint-Delis, and waited patiently while they laughed. They passed on giggling. The aspect of these skaters was new and odd to them: therefore they laughed.

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

They did not attempt to understand the artist's intention. Yet it was quite plain. He had seen skaters bending and swerving on a Swiss lake high in the mountains; he painted his sensation of their rhythmic movement, not the co-ordination of facts garnered by the leisurely eye. To me the memory of his impression is infinitely more vivid, yes, and more realistic than if a Bouguereau had drawn the figures with awful accuracy.

I proceeded through the interminable rooms, observed how *les jeunes* of almost all the nations seem to be intrigued by the New Movement. Some I liked, some—well, there are boundaries even to catholicity. And all the while (even when I was looking at something quite beautiful, such as Renadout's "Femme en blue," or something quite empty, such as Alcide le Beau's "Le Pot de Cyclamens") those two paleolithic panels by Matisse were drumming in my inner consciousness, sprawling in my inner vision. He will not be denied. I returned to them, looked, and looked, and looked. His personality overshadows the other exhibitors. There is some sort of elemental force in these panels that projects itself into the consciousness of the spectator. Admit their incongruity, their so-called ugliness, their disregard of all the canons of the best European art, yet they are insistent, unforgettable. Death, I fancy, will find me still trying to explain Matisse.

CHAPTER VIII

RECONCILING PUVIS DE CHAVANNES AND MATISSE

I

MEANWHILE there is life—to be lived. We try to remain young, but, alas! we grow old and settled. We think that because we have ceased to be interested in new movements that new movements are tiresome and unjustifiable; when we hear the younger generation knocking at the door we shuffle into another room.

The cure for such valetudinarianism is to plunge boldly into the new things again. Those two mornings at the Autumn Salon completely cured my incipient old fogeyism, so much so that I quite resented M. Maurice Denis's strange backsliding to something very like academicism in his eight panels called "Soir Florentin." Is he, is Maurice Denis, who shocked Brighton a year ago with his delightfully naïve and revolutionary decorations, also suffering from incipient fogeyism? All the nations except the English seemed to be represented at the Autumn Salon. Scotland had a doughty champion of the new movement in Mr. J. D. Fergusson, whose alluring "Dame aux oranges" has a sobriety informing its brilliance that so many of the

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

other experiments lack. Young America, too, has flung itself into the new movement. Miss Rice's "*Deux danseuses égyptiennes*" (since seen in London) had a place of honour. It is an expression, an emotion, of a scene from the Russian ballet that excited Paris in the spring of 1910. The colour is exhilarating, vivid reds, violets, greens, and yellows; the flesh of the dancers is like opal; the static rhythm of their movement arrests the eye; and because this decoration is a new vision, nine people out of ten will say, "I don't like it." I protest that the exhibition was a cure for the dumps, and at the same time I am quite ready to admit that most people would refuse to allow many of the works to be catalogued under the sacred name of Art. But the experiments were alive, and most of the practitioners are serious. An honourable British portrait painter whom I met in one of the rooms said to me: "Upon my word, I envy them. My hands are tied. I'm the slave of my patrons. These youths do things that I often long to do, smash in colour here and there, where I know it's wanted, but where I daren't put it because I fancy it is not right. They deform the figure, they outrage drawing to get their effect, to produce the sensation of the thing seen, not the imitation of it, as I am obliged to do. O, to be young again!"

He left me and I thought I would like to be young again. It is quite easy in Paris. You simply hurry to Montmartre or Montparnasse, revisit the old haunts, find a friend, and spend the evening with a gang of

DE CHAVANNES AND MATISSE

intelligent, ill-attired, happy, struggling artists and eager students. I found the man I wanted in one of my old haunts high up on Montparnasse. We talked, then we went out to one of the crowded little restaurants in the Quartier, where you eat and drink as much as you will, and it never seems to cost more than one franc fifty. Painters, sculptors, musicians, architects, and writers joined us, and we talked, oh! how we talked! Then, about the hour of ten we all trooped down to the café of the moment on the Boul' Miche, and midnight found us still interrupting one another.

II

I had been told that art talk in Paris cafés had ceased, that every art topic had long ago been threshed out and exhausted, that there was nothing more to say. Merely Fogey's ostrich-like way of pretending that ideas and ideals have ceased because his youth has left him. Art talk has not ceased in the cafés. *Les jeunes* are as spirited and as bouyant as ever. But the point of view has changed. The talk now, judging by the night I spent at the great, crammed, noisy café on the Boul' Miche, is all of the new movement, of Matisse and the swing back to "sublime elementalism," of the cube painting of Picasso, of men whose names I have never heard of. Would you believe it? Degas, although treated with reverence, is almost regarded as a fogey, and Monet as one who has already passed by. But

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

these young men have their gods among those who are dead—Cézanne, of course, and Van Gogh and Gauguin. A youth had a photograph of Gauguin's "Tahitian Pastoral," that amusing and significant decoration, a whiff of beyond the seas, but a monumental whiff. It is not realism, it is expression. They abhor realism, and spurn imitation, and to them it is death to art to try to get a likeness, and landscape painting is geometrical, and the things that matter are elimination, and synthesis, and vitality, and the pure expression of the artist's sensation, that must be expressed at any cost. And they are fine fellows and delightful companions, and when about midnight there was a great shouting on the Boul' Miche we jumped to our feet, and I saw that the traffic was in confusion, and that the road was given over to a dancing, gesticulating, shouting line of young men, perhaps a quarter of a mile long, joined one to another by their walking-sticks. "What is it?" I shouted through the din to my neighbour, a "sublime-elementalist" in sombrero-hat and pegtop trousers. "Oh," he said, "it's only the students of the Sorbonne going home."

"Only Paris," I murmured, as I returned to my hotel to bed.

"Only Puvis," I murmured the next day as I stepped out of the train at Amiens. For after those hours of excitement with the new little masters of the new movement, I had the desire to see the frescoes of grave, sweet, magisterial Puvis de Chavannes on the vestibule



TAHITIAN PASTORAL
BY PAUL GAUGUIN

DE CHAVANNES AND MATISSE

walls of the museum at Amiens. It is so easy. You catch the one p.m. train from Paris, you spend an hour with gracious Puvis—so quiet, so restful—you attend vespers in the cathedral, you gaze at the carven figures of patient, waiting saints, and kings, and warriors, and you are in London long before midnight.

That I did. One thought troubled me all the journey. It troubles me still. How can one find a place in one's appreciation for the mural paintings of Puvis de Chavannes and the mural paintings of Henri Matisse? How reconcile them? The strange thing is that I can. Each is an evocation of personality; and the personality of the artist, the document that he gives to us expressing his own temperament, is really all that matters. Our part is merely to determine which personalities, among the many rounded ones, and the many poor perishable fragments, are—vital.

CHAPTER IX

MATISSE AGAIN AND A DIALOGUE

I

I ADMIRE Matisse because he has the courage of his convictions. He has pressed the expression of his primitive sensations when looking at an object to its logical limit.

One day I bought a large photograph of a recent picture by Matisse, and in the evening, some friends being present, I displayed this photograph and said, "Please look at it for some time, and having fought over your dislike of it, merely because it is unlike what you are accustomed to, please tell me if you can find anything to say in its favour." They looked, winced, and I said, "The reasons of your dislike are obvious. You find the model an objectionable type, yet God made her ; the drawing of the left shoulder is distorted, the hands are deformed, and yet they have the very look of hands, haven't they? And there is no modelling, and everything is sacrificed to the rhythm of the lines of the body and the sulky sensuality of the face. Well?"

Then one said, "It's a decoration ; it isn't a mere heavy blot on the wall."



STUDY
BY HENRI MATISSE

MATISSE AND A DIALOGUE

Another said, emitting the words with difficulty, "It has life—it's alive!"

That is what the opponents of Post Impressionism have to face. We are now offered the beginnings of an art that gives to a thing the part that endures, the soul, whether it be good or ill. Van Gogh gives the soul or substance of a sunflower or iris, Cézanne the soul of his world-weary wife, Gauguin the massive and silent eloquence of the savage, Matisse the sensation of an unlikeable woman. The work of these painters appeals to the imagination.

II

Here let me interpolate a dialogue between an Imaginative Painter and an Ordinary Painter.

The Imaginative Painter, who for some minutes had been in a deep reverie, moved in his chair and asked suddenly:

"Was Rembrandt a Jew?"

The Ordinary Painter, a little annoyed at his friend's peremptory manner, answered testily, "I don't know, and really I don't care." After a pause he said, "Forgive me; your question, which is useless, disturbed my train of thought, which was interesting."

"Not useless," said the Imaginative Painter. "I know that Albert Dürer was a Puritan. If Rembrandt had only been a Jew, I should have the framework and the spirit of a lecture that I have promised to deliver before the members of the 'Know Thyself' Club. But

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

it can wait. Tell me, what was your interesting train of thought?"

"Yesterday," said the Ordinary Painter, "I heard a lecture by Mr. Walter Sickert on 'Impressionism and After,' a neat and suggestive lecture, brimming with appreciation of Cézanne and Gauguin, but unfair to Matisse. Mr. Sickert judged and derided Matisse by the scrappy examples of his talent exhibited at the Grafton Gallery, calling them his 'playful fireworks.' I regarded them rather as serious bombs."

"You are the one man of my acquaintance who defends Matisse," interjected the Imaginative Painter.

"That is because I have no imagination," said the Ordinary Painter. "I look at the facts of life. I'm obliged to do so, earning my living by painting race-horses, and designing posters for steamship companies. As you know, I live on Brixton Hill, so I am quite respectable. But once, when I was in Paris, I was taken to—well, I won't say where! It's a well-known, very exclusive and swell café. There I saw a girl, the last thing in exquisite artificiality, sitting bolt upright against a brilliant silk wall-paper, and there were Chinese vases in an alcove just above her head. She was 'made up,' decorated, and adorned to an extent that on Brixton Hill we supposed existed only on the stage, and in her loveliness there was the menace of a bird of prey. I only saw her for a few seconds as I was passing out, but the sensation of her flimsy splendour made an ineffaceable impression upon me."



THE WOMAN WITH THE GREEN EYES

BY HENRI MATISSE

In the collection of Mme. L.

MATISSE AND A DIALOGUE

"Well?" said the Imaginative Painter.

"Don't you follow me?" asked the Ordinary Painter. "That sensation is just what Matisse has painted in 'The Woman with the Green Eyes.'"

"I will be bold. If the Executive Committee of the Grafton Gallery had said to me, 'Take one,' I should say, 'Give me "The Woman with the Green Eyes," by Matisse.' Matisse is unafraid. He is absolute present-moment Post Impressionism. Some of the others have qualms of conscience. Maurice Denis, for example. But Matisse is always pressing on alone, always audacious in his sincerity, a Danton in audaciousness. He has pluck and grit. Yes, I should choose 'The Woman with the Green Eyes,' even at the risk of being confined in a lunatic asylum.

"I'm told that he is a very simple, serious man, something of a recluse whose aim it is to keep—what shall I say?—his soul and his vision pure yet sensitised, so that when the right thing—I mean the right thing for him—flashes before his vision, he can instantly reproduce his sensation of it. When he painted his 'Woman with the Green Eyes,' he must have seen somewhere in Paris a similar sight to that which I saw. If I could draw well enough, if I had spent ten years on the figure, and could then use my technique unconsciously like Frans Hals at the age of eighty, when he immortalised the Old Women at Haarlem, I could paint my sensation of that girl, merely from the few seconds I saw her. The model is the foundation-stone of art ;

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

it can also be the Old Man of the Sea of art. The solid aspects of things have been painted superbly. Our sensation of them, which is really a much commoner experience to all of us, is rarely touched. That's why pictures are not popular. They deal with only a fourth of life. When a man like Matisse audaciously flashes something of the unexplored three-fourths on canvas the newness of it startles and angers us."

"Whew!" ("Whew!" means, according to Webster, "a sound like a half-formed whistle, expressing astonishment, scorn or dislike") said the Imaginative Painter. "I'm astonished that a person of your calm exterior and calmer pictures should have such wild thoughts."

"They're not wild thoughts, they're merely tame instincts. When I was listening to Mr. Sickert lecturing I said to myself, 'How should I paint you—the real you?—not the ingratiating figure, not the braided coat, but that instant smile that comes when you think you have lost the thread of your discourse, and suddenly and joyfully catch sight of it again, winding out to the next point. Merely a smile, but an essential, and much more indicative of the inner man, which is the only thing that matters, than the face and figure.'"

III

"We all need to be born again every morning," continued the Ordinary Painter; "we all need stimulus.



STREET AND TREES
BY VINCENT VAN GOGH

MATISSE AND A DIALOGUE

That is Van Gogh's great gift to the world, a more fiery gift of stimulus than even that of Rubens. He did not always succeed in successfully expressing himself—who does?—but the stimulus of his gasping endeavours for new methods of expression remains. Did you ever see his 'Street and Trees' picture? How big it is, how furiously constructed, how alive! It's an exploration. Van Gogh broke a path into that three-fourths of life which, I repeat, has never been explored in painting. One-fourth has been explored and expressed perfectly. Man, are we to stop? The world may last for a million years yet. Is a board to be stuck up before that one-fourth of life which has been explored, a board inscribed with the words, 'Thus far shalt thou go and no farther?' Tut, tut! It needs an ordinary man, with no imagination, to see these things. Rembrandt was inspired by the idea of Post Impressionism when he painted his 'Polish Rider.' He broke into the three-fourths of life. I could go on for ever on this subject, but it's getting late. And it's only polite to ask you now why you want Rembrandt to be a Jew. He wasn't, of course."

"Oh, it was nothing," said the Imaginative Man, passing his handkerchief wearily over his bald head, "nothing, and your Vangoghian eloquence has almost driven my little pet lamb idea out of my head. I have been to an exhibition in Bond Street. I have seen wonderful etchings and engravings by Rembrandt and Dürer, and I seemed to find in Rembrandt's deep-hearted, large-visioned outlook a rebirth of the spiritual

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

splendour of the Hebrew prophets, as in Dürer all the hard, fearful genius of the Puritan. But, as Rembrandt wasn't a Jew, I'm gravelled as regards my lecture. Perhaps Rembrandt was inspired by the idea of Post Impressionism when he painted his 'Polish Rider.' Perhaps he broke into the three-fourths of life. I suppose you consider some of his etchings a glimpse into the unexplored three-fourths as well as part of the one-fourth of life that art has perfectly expressed?"

"Assuredly," said the Ordinary Painter. "And now, being a coward, and having to earn my living, I'm going to add to that congested one-fourth with a picture of 'The Last Days of a Derby Winner' for the racing number next year of an illustrated paper. Don't repeat what I have been saying to you about Matisse. My editor, who is a churchwarden, wouldn't like it."

CHAPTER X

THE MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND: EPSTEIN AND GILL

I

SEEK and ye shall find. I find the spirit that inspired Post Impressionism moving in the work of many artists working in England.

I visited a picture exhibition. I walked through the rooms, lingering here and there, interested, often delighted. Sometimes I was annoyed by flashiness and insincerity. Let that pass. I could give you a list of twenty good things in a good show. But I was quite calm. My mind was untouched. Only the art sense in me was stirred. I went on, and suddenly, down the length of the last room, a long room, I saw something that stirred me, evoked the feeling, always sought, rarely found, of a relation to the whole, not to the part which we call the Present, to Eternity, not to Time. I felt, in little, the feeling that I have in standing before those unapproachable examples of the union of craftsmanship and mystery—the Assyrian Winged Bulls.

The Something that I saw wasn't a masterpiece, neither was it a mere exhibition piece of sculpture, but something between, both strange and stimulating. It is a detachment, a facet of an idea, one of a group of figures, symbolising—what shall I say?—a primal fact

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

of life, an Eternal Verity, that may be finished ten or twenty years hence.

Emerging from a cube of stone I saw the big head of a chubby child, not the child of the present or of the past, but the Eternal Child that has crowed and capered from Egypt and Assyria to the present moment. The treatment is severe yet humorous, essentials only, and the symbol of the flat, roguish features is in harmony with the symbolic treatment of the hair, carved in severe lines like the hair of an Egyptian Superman. Cut on the pedestal was the word "Rom," and the name of the sculptor is Jacob Epstein.

It fascinated me. It has the "something more" that lifts mere technique into mysticism. As I gazed someone said to me, "I don't understand it any more than I understand Epstein's 'Euphemia.' I suppose 'Rom' means Rome, and this is intended for a milestone." I made no answer. I was not in the mood for facetiousness. Instead of arguing, I sought "Euphemia."

She stood in the alcove in the large room, the face in ecstasy, the limbs awaking as if conscious of the sap of a new birth. This, too, lifted mere craftsmanship into the region of the imagination that has no frontier. Then I sought Epstein's third contribution, the portrait head of a living woman, and in this again there is something more than mere craftsmanship; the material is respected; it is a joy to trace the trail of the life-communicating chisel. I left the gallery and journeyed to Chelsea to see Epstein.



EUPHEMIA
BY JACOB EPSTEIN

EPSTEIN AND GILL

II

I had literally to climb into the studio over enormous blocks of stone that six workmen were just delivering. They are for the Oscar Wilde monument in Père Lachaise Cemetery, for which Epstein has the commission. A candle was lighted, and, surrounded by strange, white, dimly-seen figures in the act of creation, we talked.

The "Euphemia" is one of a group symbolising reincarnation. From the living water of life she rises, fragments of her former existence still clinging to her, but on her face is the light of a new cycle of life. And the "Rom"? It is, as I have said, the Eternal Child, one of the flanking figures of a group apotheosising Man and Woman, around a central shrine, that the sculptor destines in his dreams for a great temple. The word "Rom" is merely an abbreviation of Romily, Augustus John's little son, who was the unwilling, willing model for the Eternal Child.

Epstein is never commonplace, nor is he ever smart, yet everything he does communicates something that is neither stab nor blow, yet partakes of each, and in his creations hovers and hides the interior knowledge of the immemorial, silently eloquent past. He discards unessentials; he never represents; he presses forward to Expression. In him moves the spirit of Post Impressionism. It moves in Eric Gill, too.

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

III

A certain wise Frenchman, who is also an exquisite artist, cultivating his own particular garden of the arts, said to me the other day, with the half-amused, half-paternal shake of the head possible only to a Frenchman, "We are approaching a crisis. I am not in it, but I am watching it." His remark followed our amiable discussion on Post Impressionism, and my description to him of the sculptures of Jacob Epstein and Eric Gill. He realised that the intellectual movement towards Anarchy or simplicity, call it which you will, that has invaded painting, has also invaded sculpture, and that there are signs that the fortress of architecture, the oldest of the arts, is about to receive the blows of the new movement. The work that Messel and Grose have done in Berlin spreads. It may reach these shores soon.

Eric Gill, before his two bold reliefs of "The Woman" and "The Christ" were bought by the Contemporary Art Society, was known only to a few as a gifted master-carver of ornamental letters. He was also known to a certain artist, with a mind, who bought one of Gill's sculptures expressing the idea of maternity, not, mind you, the mere representation of a woman and her child, but the idea of maternity, reduced to the simplest form of archaic expression. This artist encouraged Gill to persevere, and the group of sculptures by him exhibited at the Chenil Gallery was the



THE CHILD
BY JACOB EPSTEIN

EPSTEIN AND GILL

first statement shown publicly of his vigorous and fearless personality.

Maillol, the French sculptor, has for some years been the apostle of the essential, of the elemental. He is pure craftsman, but Gill and Epstein (I class them together because they are inspired by similar creative intention) are more than craftsmen. They are determined to promulgate tremendous ethical ideas through their work. I abhor their propaganda (as I interpret it), but their interest to me is that their creations are inspired by ideas, and that they are as logical as they are fearless in expressing their faith.

In a word, through them, sculpture, like painting through Cézanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin, is lifted into loftier regions than mere craftsmanship, into the aura of life itself. They do not stimulate the emotional faculties only: they stimulate the mind. You may like or you may dislike the oriflamme of his faith that Gill has flaunted before the world in the shape of two reliefs carved from Portland stone, a Living Woman old as time, eternally young, provocative, and sure of her power, and a Dead Christ. These two reliefs hung side by side. The woman is not conventionally pretty, some might call her diabolically repulsive, and Christ is not the conventional Christ; but they convey, in fewest words, the Life worship of Paganism and the Denial of Christianity, the lust of the eye, and the renunciation of the flesh. The two figures are carved

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

superbly, and there are details that I cannot enter upon here, showing how the sculptor has thought out his idea to the last outpost of symbolic ingenuity.

IV

So we are face to face with this : the Grafton Gallery show was hardly closed when a young English sculptor made us talk and fight over sculpture, as the Post Impressionists had made us talk and fight over painting.

I love a concrete example. Here is one. I will call her Martha. I took her to the Chenil Gallery. She saw the *Eternal Wanton* outrageously proclaiming her Joy of Life, tingling with vitality, sure of her day, and she saw the *Dead Christ*—infinitely more eloquent. (Oh, yes, the Cross has conquered.) She looked, and she was speechless ; her anger found vent ; she nearly cried ; then she went away more in distress than anger. Hours later I found her still much moved by what she had seen. And she said, “I should like to go back there and guard that *Dead Christ*, cover him up and protect him with my garments.” Then she sobbed.

Astonished, I said, “But this is strange. You have told me again and again that you rarely look at modern sculpture, that you find it dull and uninspiring. Yet here you are, wrought up and still angry at the recollection of a carven woman and a carven Christ, hours after you have seen them. If the aim of art is

EPSTEIN AND GILL

to communicate emotion to the spectator, then this young Eric Gill has succeeded wonderfully."

"It's a shame, it's a shame!" she cried.

"Well," said I, "we live in strange times. First painting, then sculpture, lifted into the larger life, insisting on feeding or disturbing the mind and the soul, as well as the mere æsthetic emotions. What next?"

The larger life, the universal life, the life where the seemingly little may be the truly great! When the aim of the explorer in art is significance by the stages of plastic mass, line, and colour; when he disregards science and tries to express his sub-conscious emotions; when he ignores the model and mere representation of nature and endeavours to state rhythmically, decoratively, the significance of what he has seen and remembered—the result is interesting, amusing, stimulating, and pleasant, as well as disturbing to the mind and soul.

Such explorations may lead to a day when art shall be universal, expressing all life, the daily walk as well as the month's holiday, buying a piece of finery as well as burying a child. It is born of the imagination. It is the painting of trained memory.

CHAPTER XI

THE MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND: AUGUSTUS JOHN

I

I READ, and growled. What I read was this: "Mr. Augustus John's 'Sketch During a Thunderstorm' is evidently something of a joke."

I crumpled the newspaper and muttered, "Why does the average person yawn before a work that he understands, and laugh before a work that he does not understand?" Over-dressed, over-nourished folk actually think that it is to their credit to laugh before the pictures of Van Gogh and Gauguin. They say to me with fatuous pride in their eyes, "You should have seen me laugh." I keep my countenance. I restrain my temper. It is difficult. A lady said to me, "I couldn't hang Gauguin's 'Negresses' in my drawing-room." To which I answered, "Don't! Gauguin did not paint his pictures for drawing-rooms. He painted for himself and for a few others to whom they are an eternal joy."

But the critic who considered that the "Sketch During a Thunderstorm" by Augustus John is "something of a joke" is neither over-dressed nor over-nourished. He is pale, proud, cultured and anxious, and I suppose he has his own strange definition of "a joke." A few

AUGUSTUS JOHN

hours before I read his article I stood before this very "Sketch During a Thunderstorm" at the Chenil Gallery, delighted and exhilarated by its decorative and romantic beauty and the originality of its vision. It shows a Johannine family group, in fresh, flat, primary colours, feeling in the atmosphere the threatening of the storm. The study is practically in two dimensions, yet the subtlety of the drawing and the confident washes of abstract colour suggest depth.

I had the ache to possess it. That confession is really more to the point than a column of critical appreciation. But had I been a buyer, I fear I could never have made up my mind between this and some of the forty-seven other Provençal studies, say, "The Bundle of Lavender" or "The Yellow Head-dress."

Let me whisper something. John is the chief of the English representatives of the new movement in art. His artistic antennæ have long drawn in the stimulation of the spirit that inspired the movement. He does not copy. In a flash he will suck the essence from a Cézanne landscape, from a Gauguin savage, inform the essence with his own personality, and lo! it is not imitation, it is new life.

All the art world is his hunting-ground in these Provençal studies. Each is entirely his own, each is vital, and yet I can see in them the breathing of the spirit of an Egyptian mummy portrait, of a Greek face, of a Japanese rhythm, the gesture of a Giotto, the grace of a Piero della Francesca, the placidity of a Raphael.

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

Each passes through the alembic of his personality and comes out—personal, vital.

II

Three years ago he painted his "Smiling Woman," and if Post Impressionism means simplicity, significance, synthesis, monumental design, clear eyes looking clearly through apparent realities to true realities, then his "Smiling Woman" is Post Impressionism or Expressionism.

I do believe there is something symbolistic of the age in that smile of John's "Smiling Woman." Her inward amusement is more robust than Mona Lisa's, but there is so much more to be ironical about in these days than in Leonardo's time. Is John's Woman smiling at the efforts of modern mankind to find a way through the maze of modern art and other matters?

From thinking of her subtle, inward smile, I passed (such windlestraws are we) to the thought of Mr. Jinneway's outward spacious smile. Who is Mr. Jinneway? He is an old friend whom I often consult when I am stimulated and restless. He has a monumental disdain for all new movements, yet he is a tonic, because he always confirms me in my own opinion.



STILL LIFE
BY PAUL CÉZANNE

CHAPTER XII

MR. JINNEWAY ON POST IMPRESSIONISM

I

I FOUND this courteous, correct and contented gentleman of the old school sunning himself in the Embankment Gardens on a seat in front of the statue of the late Sir Wilfrid Lawson.

"Well, Mr. Jinneway," I said, jocularly, "there is nothing of the Post Impressionist about you."

He smiled, as an oak might smile on being informed that it was unlike an orchid, then said, gravely, "Sir, I have read your lucubrations upon the—er—persons at the Grafton Galleries. I saw their—er—pictures. In my opinion they are 'pulling your leg,' sir." I started. He noted my surprise at such a phrase proceeding from his lips, and added in some confusion: "Their inspiration is merely the vulgar desire to *épater le bourgeois*."

"Believe me, my dear sir," I said, "you are in error. The leaders of the movement, the unconscious leaders I must call them, are dead, and all three died far from the voices of praise or dispraise. They died sorrowing rather than shocking: in sorrow that, with the poor tools at man's command, they were unable adequately to express their visual sensations. Cézanne was hardly

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

known even to his fellow artists; Gauguin spent the last years of his life in Tahiti, content to be forgotten, content merely to be allowed to express himself in decorating the walls of the mud-huts of the natives. Van Gogh, fiery idealist, died by his own hand at the age of thirty-seven, unable, poor man, longer to bear the agony of frustrated creation which possessed him."

Mr. Jinneway was silent. His fine brow was lined with thought. "But there are others," he remarked. "I will qualify my statement. I maintain that the desire of many of the exhibitors, I will not call them painters, at the Grafton Galleries, was merely to shock and startle, not to edify and to sublimiate, which should be the aim of art."

"All great movements," I suggested, "are fatigued and made ridiculous by the tail of notoriety-hunting followers and imitators; but I do not think that there was any sign of a tail at the Grafton Galleries. There was intention even in Matisse's sculptures. The pictures did not please you, Mr. Jinneway, because their vision is new, unconventional, elemental, decorative; because they try to express the sensation of the thing seen in a personal way, regardless of academic tradition in art. After looking at their works, other pictures, not of the first rank, seem tame and tiresome."

"By God, not to me, sir. I esteem conventional art. I see no virtue in this preposterous new movement."



RAIN EFFECT
BY VINCENT VAN GOGH

ON POST IMPRESSIONISM

"The movement, my dear Mr. Jinneway, is not very new, it is really thirty years old. In thirty years' time some of the Grafton Gallery pictures may have honoured places in our National Gallery."

"I doubt it, sir."

"There were three landscapes by Van Gogh worthy the honour—'Boulevard at Arles,' 'Fields at Anvers,' and his wonderful 'Rain Effect,' a picture unequalled in the sensation it gives of a blinding, criss-crossing storm of rain streaming from the leaden sky and deluging the sodden earth. And that wall of Gauguin's—their decorative splendour, their colour. They were a revelation."

"I did not observe the pictures you refer to, sir. I was so disgusted at the general effect of this prostitution of art that I had not the patience to look at individual works. The pictures were anarchical. The prospect of anarchy in art more than distresses. It alarms us."

"But consider, sir. European Art may be in its infancy—a mere baby of six hundred years. Surely you permit the possibility of growth? The world may last for six thousand years, six million. How the people of the year 6000 will laugh to read our solemn statements that the canons of art had been established before the year 1911! I admit that the masterpieces of the past are perfect in the convention that has been developed during six hundred years. It is just because such masters as Giorgione, Titian, Velasquez, Ver-

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

meer, to name but four, have sealed the convention with the seal of perfection that the modern artist, conscious of power, dazzled by the myriad sights that he sees in the world around him, longing to be himself, feels an ungovernable and perfectly justifiable impulse to express his individual sensations."

"You have a plausible tongue, sir. I derive no satisfaction from this new vision, as you term it. I cannot imagine any vision more excellent in every respect than that bequeathed to us by the divine Raphael."

II

I was silent for a while. Suddenly I recalled some drawings and water-colours by his little nephew, Alphonse, aged eight.

"You remember, sir, the pictures by Alphonse that you showed me last Christmas, and perhaps you have not forgotten your comment upon them. You said, at your own table, 'These attempts by Alphonse, although ridiculously ill-drawn, have a naïveté that sometimes suggests the look of the objects to a greater degree than a more accurate drawing would do. The geometrical lines of the sea in Alphonse's pictures of "Pegasus Flying over the Waves," evoke a stronger suggestion of the ocean than many of Mr. Clarkson Stanfield's excellent pictures.' Those were wise words, sir, and please remember that the Post Impressionists do not discard training. They train themselves as

ON POST IMPRESSIONISM

completely as any academic painter, but having acquired their technique they strive to forget it, and to look at the world with the childlike, elemental, pure-hearted vision of a child."

"That may be," said Mr. Jinneway, "but it is no reason why they should despise beauty and make their pictures hideous."

"Beauty! Ugliness! Mere terms. To me there is great beauty in Van Gogh's picture called 'The Field of Gold,' a massive primordial beauty as of some eternal harvest in an eternal sunset, and I can see the awful beauty, as of the warning of a flaming sword, informing his derided 'mad' picture of 'The Mad Girl.' This was not an exhibition work. The story of this mad girl affected him, and he expressed his emotion quickly in line and colour, without premeditation, as we do in talk. Life is not all beauty. Art is not all beauty; it is for the world, not for a few connoisseurs."

Mr. Jinneway nervously rearranged his stock and said, "This pernicious movement is, I am afraid, spreading to literature and music. My attention was drawn the other day to an article in a weekly journal called 'Pop Goes the Past.' I should like to read Dr. Johnson's comments upon that article. The past is sacred. It should be our exemplar. The example of these pictures are bad examples for youth. It is insane art. I have been informed that most of the practitioners were crazy."

"Absolutely untrue. Vincent Van Gogh, towards

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

the end of his life, spent six months in an asylum at Arles, but his insanity was entirely due to a sunstroke contracted while he was painting. Poor Vincent! He died at the age of thirty-seven. Do you remember his portrait of himself painting?—the almost intolerable intensity of it, the direct elemental treatment of the stubbly red hair, the rough flesh, the deep green eyes, the twirly technique of the blue coat, streaked with yellow, the brilliant palette. Van Gogh took life in his two hands, as it were, and tore it apart to seek the meaning. Always his ideals haunted and spurred him. Always an ideal. When he was an assistant in the art firm of Goupils' his ideal was a confraternity of artists, wherein each man of worth should have a fixed wage and paint only what he loved. In his evangelistic period that followed, his ideal was the consolidation of Christ's kingdom on earth. He preached Christ in London, and to the miners of Belgium. I have seen an essay by him, written in his minute, exquisite handwriting, which is really a sermon inspired by a picture by Boughton; and the letter that he wrote to Mr. Obach, when he retired from the firm of Goupil, might have come from a devout evangelist. Strange man! When he finally decided to be an artist, he threw into his work the same gasping intensity, the same idealism, that had spurred him onward and upward as art dealer and preacher. That quarrel in the tavern at Arles with Gauguin, his friend, whom he tried to kill after his sunstroke, was the beginning of his six



PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST

BY VINCENT VAN GOGH

In the collection of Mme. Gosschalk Berger

ON POST IMPRESSIONISM

months' mania. That night he cut off his own ear with a razor as penance for his act. Then the asylum at Arles, and, later, death by his own hand; death about which he had written so beautifully, the delicate, delicious lover, sung by Walt Whitman; rest at last for this fierce spirit tormented by the passion for creation and expression."

III

Mr. Jinneway gasped, which he turned cleverly into a cough.

"These pioneers," I continued, "had mind power, too. They had reasons for every experiment they made in paint: they were men of letters, thinkers, as well as craftsmen. Read Van Gogh's 'Letters to his Brother.' Read Gauguin's strange and profound prose-poem called 'Noa-Noa.' Each was for the whole. Each was brooder, and each was conscious of the spiritual essence that gives life to matter. Gauguin was the philosopher who found reasons for all he did. Van Gogh was the man of action, who had always to be doing. A friend of mine who knew Van Gogh in Antwerp describes how he carried lumps of red and blue chalk in his pockets; how he would rush into the room and feverishly begin to draw something he had seen or imagined, on walls, on table-cloth, on anything. My friend says that, to protect his property, he had to cover everything with white paper whenever he expected Van Gogh."

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

"I am beginning to understand," said Mr. Jinneway, "the lack of repose in the—er—art of these gentlemen."

"You can hardly expect repose to be among the qualities of explorers," I remarked. "Yet there is infinite repose in the works of Gauguin, in many by Van Gogh, and in the landscapes, portraits, and still-lives of Cézanne. There is infinite repose in such a figure as Gauguin's 'Tahitian Group' of three figures. I fancy the richly-endowed mind of Gauguin must have influenced Van Gogh, in the way that the unique combination of literature and art in the many-coloured mind of Rossetti influenced the young Millais."

I must admit that while I was talking Mr. Jinneway grew more and more fidgety. He rose ere I had finished, grasped his umbrella firmly, and said:—

"I am sixty-seven years of age, sir. I am incapable of change even if I were convinced, which I am not, that this new movement in art will bring either edification or happiness to mankind. I am loyal to the old Masters, and to such manifestations of art in our time as are based on the accepted canons of antiquity."

With that he walked across the grass-plot and placed his hand affectionately upon the pedestal of the statue of the late Sir Wilfrid Lawson. Benignantly he gazed up beyond the symbolic figures of the cardinal virtues to the trousered legs and morning coat of Sir Wilfrid Lawson, in imperishable bronze. He looked like a rock of Tradition saying to the restless twentieth-century waves—"No further."



A TAHITIAN GROUP
BY PAUL GAUGUIN

ON POST IMPRESSIONISM

IV

I saluted the good man and went my way. I wanted to be alone. For when I am alone, all that the lives of these pioneers meant, and may mean, seems very present and prophetic. "Suppose," I thought, "suppose that through them this elusive, insistent something that we call by the vague term of religion, rejoins art; suppose that through their fierce desires for true realities, the veils of sense and stupidity, for some of us, are torn away, the walls parted, and the essence of things, the quest for the unseen part which is eternal, be seen in everyday art in simplicity and beauty, would not that be very strange—and wonderful?"

But oh, the search—the agony of it, the loneliness, the misunderstanding, the failures, sometimes only just tinged with success! When Maeterlinck had the spiritual idea of putting the soul of the dog and the cat, and the substance of sugar and bread, upon the stage in "The Blue Bird" (as Cézanne tried to do with fruits and flowers) the attempt was half failure; but how fine was the idea—the search! When the children in the last act of "The Blue Bird" tell their wonderful adventures in the Seen-unseen to their parents, their mother at once says to her husband: "They're ill. Fetch a doctor." Which is precisely what obtuse folk say about the Post Impressionists when they tell us things of the Seen-unseen through their pictures. Fiercely, often without hope, they

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

followed the gleam, they pursued the quest, and they had consolation by the way. For did not Someone say, nineteen hundred years ago, "Let not him that seeketh cease from his search until he finds, and when he finds he shall wonder, wondering he shall reach the Kingdom, and when he reaches the Kingdom he shall have rest"?

If—if—that be true, will not that also be very strange—and wonderful, and worth while?

To follow the gleam, to take to heart that profound thought of the late Professor William James in his little book called *Human Immortality*. "Suppose, for example, that the whole universe of material things—the furniture of earth and choir of heaven—should turn out to be a mere surface-veil of phenomena, hiding and keeping back the world of genuine realities. Such a supposition is foreign neither to common-sense nor to philosophy."

Post Impressionism, at its highest, in its purest, is the search for "genuine realities."

CHAPTER XIII

A POST IMPRESSIONIST ESSAY

I

AMONG the things that happened during the year that Post Impressionism broke upon London was something that I wanted to write about ; that I meant to write about ; and that I have not written about. Perhaps the reason of this negation is that I have told it so often in conversation, and as expression in one form or another is the chief satisfaction of mankind, and as self-expression in talk is easier than self-expression in writing, it has happened that I have not yet written about the Big Drum Major.

II

Maybe the time for telling it in print had passed, but something happened, something attached itself to my memory of the Big Drum Major, so that one morning, when I awoke, it seemed that the moment had come to write. That "something" was a newspaper article by——, well, as he chooses to use a *nom de guerre*, I must respect his anonymity. But it may be said that he is an eminent novelist, and that he writes with his brain more than with his heart

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

(a good brain, by the by). So much for that. Now for his article. Ostensibly it was an appreciation of, almost a thankoffering to certain members of the group of painters belonging to the Post Impressionist movement, the value of which, to quote his own words, "is permanently and definitely settled outside London."

But there was also an idea at the back of his article. He is unafraid of ideas, even sharp-edged ones, and does not put on the armour of self-complacency even when they cut and pierce. No work of art, as every one knows, from an epic to a paragraph, is of value unless there be an idea at the back of it, and those painters at the Grafton Gallery, in varying degrees of perspicacity, did express their ideas. Gauguin in "Christ in the Garden of Olives" conveys his idea in a manner that adds profoundly to my mystical knowledge of art and life. In his "L'Esprit Veille," that elaborate and arresting decoration, he expresses, forcibly, fearfully, yet quite simply, the method, current for centuries in Tahiti, by which a ghostly presence may be evoked. But I have not yet explained the mother idea at the back of my friend's article. Being unafraid, he proceeds to inquire what kind of an effect the idea that has produced these paintings (which again I say is merely the old cry for freedom, the passion of the individual to be allowed to express his glimmering knowledge of the Infinite, in his own infantile way), has upon him as a writer. He is disturbed; he writes this frank confession: "I have permitted myself to



L'ESPRIT-VEILLE

BY PAUL GAUGUIN

In the collection of M. E. Dinet

A POST IMPRESSIONIST ESSAY

suspect that supposing some writer were to come along and do in words what these men have done in paint, I might conceivably be disgusted with nearly the whole of modern fiction, and I might have to begin again."

III

He calls this a fine thought. It is. When Success, in search of something finer, prepares to put a pin into its own blown bladder, and agonisingly to re-tread the ancient mystic way which begins in purgation and ends in illumination and union, the thought even is fine, is it not? But my friend will have to think very hard, and thought usually leads to inaction. Indeed, he says elsewhere in his article: "This awkward experience will in all probability not happen to me, but it might happen to a writer younger than me."

Now the Big Drum Major did not have to think at all. He was one of those happy-starred people, a man of action. He just lived his idea without fuss; he carried it on to the unending end; it lives, although I know it merely through the medium of a song. And now I come to the point why, having renounced the notion of writing about the Big Drum Major, suddenly I had the desire one morning to approach the subject.

Could you not write, I said to myself, about the Big Drum Major in the way that these men at the Grafton Gallery painted—giving the synthesis of the thing seen, not the imitation of it; the spirit, not merely the

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

well-formed letters; the "geist" of that chapter in Ephesians, that was the foundation of Wesleyanism, not the hard dogma into which Wesleyanism has been moulded? Could you not write about that Big Drum Major, I reiterated, as Gauguin painted "Christ in the Garden of Olives," just the sensation of the heaviness of grief; as Van Gogh painted the sensation of rankness that informs the sunflower, and the raininess of rain in darkened sky and sodden earth in his wonderful landscape called "Rain Effect"; as Matisse painted the sensation of brilliant and naughty artificiality in the vivid flimsiness of his coquette with the green eyes?

I thought I might do it. I find I can't. I think I could tell it to a sympathetic listener, but I cannot write it any more than I can express in words the emotion, the sensation, that Rembrandt's "Polish Rider" awakes in me. I think Rembrandt, had he heard the song called "The Big Drum Major," might have painted a picture of that soul march that could hang side by side with "The Polish Rider."

IV

I heard the song of "The Big Drum Major" at a late hour after a Bohemian dinner in London. You would have said that ideality could not blossom there. Hilarity, rather primitive and roughly spontaneous, was the note. We joined in choruses, smiled fitfully at Corney Grain imitations, and blinked at conjuring

A POST IMPRESSIONIST ESSAY

tricks seen hazily through tobacco smoke. When the performers were inadequate, crusts of bread and oranges were aimed at them. The hilarity waned. In groups of two and three, men edged towards the door with lingering farewells, for it was a wild night outside.

Suddenly they stopped to listen. The laughter and talk lessened. A little, unobtrusive man was singing. He began singing from his seat. Then he rose. His elbows, I remember, were tight against his ribs, his closed fists out-jutted from his body, and his head was erect. He walked to the platform chanting rather than singing. His accompanist at the piano watched him. Standing upon the platform, he sang through the many verses of the song, his hands, body, and head remaining quiescent. The song, I understood, was not his own. He was interpreting the author's idea—wonderfully. He made no attempt at dramatic gesture; he just went on. He was an artist. He knew that the weight of the words, and the idea behind them, sufficed. He realised that he was but the medium of the idea, and when he drew near the end of the song, he did not prepare for smirk and bow. He moved slowly, with military step, to the edge of the platform still singing, and so he returned to his seat, and only ended his song then. But the illusion that the "Big Drum Major" was still marching on did not cease. He marches still. I see him marching for ever, smiling at destiny.

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

V

What was this song? What was the idea that the little, unobtrusive man proclaimed so simply yet so magnificently? Merely that there was once a regiment in that land of dreams east of the sun and west of the moon where all beautiful and enduring things happen; that this regiment had orders to march. So they marched forth, with the Big Drum Major in front twirling his big baton. Men, unable to bear the strain, fell. More fell. And as years, or centuries, or æons passed, all the men dropped, fatigued, worn out; but the Big Drum Major still kept marching on, twirling his big baton, cheerful in spite of the apparent wrongness of everything, victorious in apparent failure, marching on still, because the order had not been given to halt.

As the little unobtrusive man sang this song of a dateless and deathless idea, there came over the room the hush that always comes when a flash of the things of the spirit illumines matter, as when, in reading, we chance upon such a line as "love that had robbed us of immortal things, this little moment mercifully gave." That hush was magnetic. It deepened as he sang, and when he had finished I was not the only one who could not see where he had gone because of a mist of tears.

It is well worth thinking over, and as I said at the beginning, I should like to write about it in the way that those misunderstood men, Van Gogh, Gauguin,

A POST IMPRESSIONIST ESSAY

and their kin painted pictures. Yet why write about it? When an idea has been expressed perfectly in one art, nothing is gained by translating it into another. The story of the Big Drum Major has been told in a song, and the spirit of the song has been perfectly expressed by that little unobtrusive man, an artist, who conquered his environment. I thank him, and, on reflection, I delete the story of the Big Drum Major from my list of things undone, because it has been done finally. Nothing can stop the onward march of that brave and buoyant Big Drum Major, who obeyed. The fact may be unhistorical. The idea is eternal.

VI

I had ended there. One must end somewhere. Have I been able to illustrate the intensity of the achievement of these painter pioneers? We who sit at home in ease constructing arm-chair theories can hardly realise their white-hot, fever-tossed mania for expression. It is well. Goya looked into gulfs. Van Gogh strained into the furnace and was scorched and shrivelled. But the flame of their lives enables us to understand why the New Movement in Art has prospered and spread, seeing how fierce were the pioneer fires. In the background the lonely and majestic Cézanne, a kind of Moses, looking within himself for the promised land ; in the foreground, in the midst of the battle, Van Gogh and Gauguin, with their elemental

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

craving for expression, their passion for creation, for seeing, for living, and——

. . . I had ended there ;
But a great wind blew all the stars to flare.

That great wind ! Those stars blown to flare ! Who knows what suns of the future these men with their great wind of creation and vision may not fan into being ?

INDEX

A

Alcide le Beau, 52
Andersen, Hans, 18
Angelo, Michael, 21

B

Berensen, B., 49
Binyon, L., 17
Botticelli, 3

C

Cabanel, 3
Cassirer, 43
Cézanne, 2, 3, 5, 6, 11, 12, 26, 27,
31-33, 38, 44, 76, 91
Constable, 9
Cozens, 3

D

Daumier, 3
Degas, 3, 55
Delacroix, 8
Denis, Maurice, 28, 32, 53
Derain, 6
Desvallières, 49
Dürer, 59, 63, 64

E

Epstein, Jacob, 66, 67

F

Fergusson, J. D., 53
Friesz, 6
Frith, 2
Fry, Roger, 19

G

Gauguin, 3, 6, 11, 12, 14, 27, 30, 34,
35, 56, 76, 86, 88, 91
Gill, Eric, 68-70
Grimm, 18

H

Hals, 61
Huneker, James, 32

J

James, William, 84
Jinneway, Mr., 75-84
John, Augustus, 28, 72-74

L

Laprade, 12
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid, 82
Liebermann, 42

M

Maeterlinck, 83
Major, The Big Drum, 85-91
Manet, 9, 10, 38
Matisse, 5, 38, 40, 41, 46-52, 57, 58,
61, 88
Marquet, 12
Meier-Graefe, 31
Monet, 9, 10
Montague, 20

O

Orchardson, 18

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

P

Picasso, 6, 40, 55
Puvis de Chavannes, 56, 57

R

Raphael, 3
Redon, 12
Rembrandt, 3, 59, 63, 64
Rice, Miss, 54
Richmond, Sir William, 19
Rodin, 26

S

Saint-Delis, 51
Seurat, 9, 10
Sickert, Walter, 60, 62
Signac, 9, 10
Stein, Mrs., 45
Synge, 21

V

Van Gogh, 3, 5, 11, 12, 13, 14, 27, 33,
34, 44, 63, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 91
Vlaminck, 6



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