

famous for its castles, made hers an equivalent of the soul—a castle not built on this earth but *in the air*; and these, both literally and metaphorically, are the hardest of all to keep up. Her book is a triumph of sustained imagery and exactitude in words. Again in contrast, Kafka's book is a work of the imagination, with a castle not set in the air but earthbound and surrounded by *air*. This is a vital distinction. For what a reader must do is first follow K.'s journey, seeing the castle through his eyes, and then on re-reading the story, he must try to forget the castle and concentrate more on that enveloping insubstantiality which seems so alive with mysterious birds ("swarms of crows") and celestial presences ("other forces"). But the book is *only* a novel, some may retort; yet none the less it is the kind of novel which demands a concentration of effort similar to that which a reader should be *prepared* to give to a spiritual classic. For authors such as St. Teresa and Kafka do not make concessions; they ask to be read with an inner silence and spirit of contemplation such as they themselves experienced when writing. Moreover, if this degree of concentration is given to the air that surrounds K.'s castle, to the grace that enfolds it like the grace which upholds that "interior castle" St. Teresa calls the soul, then a geography is established, not perhaps easy to chart, but at least as real to these two writers as the air that they breathed. A castle, whether on the ground or in the mind, is inconceivable without air. Yet once air is accepted, then at that moment all things become possible.

POET TO CHILD IN A LIBRARY

Norman M. Davis

God turn you from me; may God strike you blind
To all the horrors of an opened mind:
Asleep to spring, be mind-asleep, unshy,
And, being blind, be happier than I!