

A GREAT EDINBURGH SCHOOLMASTER

D. FRASER HARRIS

Professor of Physiology, Dalhousie University.

ARCHIBALD HAMILTON BRYCE was not just an ordinary schoolmaster. He was a scholar of Scoto-Irish descent whose scholarship was so widely recognized that at some time in the seventies of last century Oxford University conferred on him the D.C.L. degree, an honour shared by very few of his contemporaries in Edinburgh. He possessed also the degree of LL.D. of Dublin. Because of his Irish extraction he was always known as "Paddy Bryce" in the Edinburgh Collegiate School which he had founded. There was nothing, however, about Dr. Bryce of the conventional Irishman as we know him on the stage—irresponsible, light-hearted, and amusing even in his mistakes. My old schoolmaster's whole character in its caution, in its insistence on economy in money, thought and word was essentially Scottish.

He was closely related to James, afterwards Viscount, Bryce whom he closely resembled in face and figure. Dr. A. H. Bryce was one of the best teachers of the classics or of anything else whom it has been my good fortune to know. He began with the safe assumption in teaching that those in front of him knew nothing of the subject; and from that he proceeded to make the driest subject as full of common-sense as it was possible to make it. He made us feel the interest, the vitality, the importance of the scope of the topic in hand; he lifted it out of the dryness of the dust, and placed it in the vitalizing realm of its human relationships. Although he had to be occupied with the minutiae of the scholar, Dr. Bryce did not leave us floundering in that morass, but guided us to some sure foothold whence we could get at least a glimpse of the extent of the subject. He was the expounder of meanings rather the hearer of "lessons."

He was, of course, greatly feared in the school where he was a terror to evil-doers. The other masters could pronounce no more awful sentence than "you do down to the Doctor for a caning", the tawse—so familiar a mechanical adjunct to Scottish learning—being the only instrument of punishment permitted to be used by

those lesser lights. The cane could be applied to the unwashed palm only by Dr. Bryce, the full reason for the differential use of these methods of correction being always obscure. In all justice to the memory of the Doctor, it should be stated that he used the cane as seldom as possible, and this added to the solemnity of a caning.

There was a venerable belief in the efficacy of a human hair laid across the palm to split the cane longitudinally. I do not recollect ever having known any boy who had been able so to split the cane, but to split the cane was something to be striven after with the same high resolve as we should have had not to split the infinitive. It was a matter of solemn debate whether the hair had to be human, and what its precise position on the hand in order to effect the most satisfactory results. As far as I remember, there was no doubt that it did not mitigate the pain of the process. Pope has remarked that beauty draws us by a single hair; but to this single hair drawn across the palm we boys attributed powers quite as great as those of the poet's verse.

As far as we could gather, Dr. Bryce wore the scarlet gown of his D.C.L. degree only once a year at the public presentation of prizes at the close of the session. This was a gala day; the gathering of boys, parents and other relatives usually took place in one of Edinburgh's large halls,—that of the Freemasons in George Street. Some distinguished Edinburgh citizen—the Lord Provost or a well known preacher or one of the professors—would preside and hand out the prizes. Great merriment was once occasioned when the eccentric John Stewart Blackie, Professor of Greek, was presiding and called loudly for "Cleland" to come up and get his prize for drawing—Cleland not being a boy at all, but the aged teacher of drawing himself.

In his earlier days, Hamilton Bryce had been one of the classical masters at the famous old High School of Edinburgh, the school of such contemporaries of Sir Walter Scott as Francis Jeffrey, Lord Dalhousie, and Lord Cockburn, to name no others. Bryce could have taught English literature just as effectively and with just as much interest as he taught Greek and Latin. Indeed he edited a volume called *Readings from the Best Authors*, in which he collected typical passages from the greatest of the English men of letters—Shakespeare, Milton, Addison, Steele, Byron, De Quincey, Macaulay, Dickens and Thackeray being all represented. He believed in the best wine of literature being brought out early in the literary feast, so that the youthful palate should be accustomed to the best first.

If we had "done our lesson" particularly well, Dr. Bryce would reward us by reading one of Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome," or one of Aytoun's "Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers." I can remember yet the very sound of his rather sing-song voice as he declaimed how Horatio kept the bridge in the brave days of old, or how Claverhouse fell at the battle of Killiecrankie. His influence on the characters of the boys under his care was of the best. He had a wholesome detestation of anything mean, sneaking, underhand or cowardly. A scholar and a gentleman himself, he was exceedingly pained if any of his "men"—for so he always called even the youngest of us—ever fell short of his high standard. He never called us "boys", even the most junior class of all, the I B, he always alluded to as, "You men of the One B". The class of the youngest boys was number one, and it was divided into a Senior division I A, and a Junior I B. Only after the Edinburgh Collegiate School passed into the hands of Englishmen were the classes called "forms" after the English manner.

What struck us boys about Dr. Bryce was, as might be supposed, not his learning or his skill in teaching, but the marvellous control he had over his temper. None of us had ever seen him angry, or even ruffled; nothing threw him off his mental equipoise. Not that he couldn't be displeased and caustic when the occasion demanded it, but he was always dignified and never caned any one in a fit of anger. He would purposely, I believe, postpone the caning, merely remarking to the offender, "You will come to see me at 3 o'clock"—the hour the school closed. His patience, we believed, was inexhaustible, for the utmost he would say when we had been unusually trying through our stupidity or laziness was "Oh, Job, Job, come and try this yourself"! He really seemed to be a realization of the apostle's desire, "Let your moderation be known to all men".

The result, of course, was that though Dr. Bryce was disliked by some boys, he was respected by all. Even he was not without his weaknesses, one of which was a great fondness for quoting Scripture. Some of these allusions he made in a very amusing manner. The room in which he generally taught, which was known as the Greek room, was occupied immediately after his hour by some other class; and if, as sometimes happened, he kept us a few minutes beyond the hour set for closing and the next class could be heard waiting impatiently outside the door, he would exclaim in mock fear—"The Philistines be upon thee, Samson" and so dismiss us.

Our love of good authors was wisely fostered by our having

to use in the higher classes the well known text-book, Collier's *History of English Literature*. Herein we became acquainted not only with the lives of the authors but with the scope and contents of the of British literary periods. While Dr. Bryce never gave the impression of anything with a savour of irreverence in his attitude towards the Bible, he regarded portions of the Old Testament merely as narrative, and not as embodying or concealing some deep theological doctrine. Thus when he had questioned the class on the book of *Ruth* and received some most disappointing replies, he said, "Well, well, I thought you men might at least have been trusted to read the story of a goodlooking young woman like *Ruth*." He was the author of several excellent grammars of both Greek and Latin, the exclusive use of which was naturally expected in the Collegiate School. As these books were used far beyond the bounds of the city of Edinburgh, it is to be presumed that the learned Doctor supplemented his income from their sale.

Two twin sons of Dr. Bryce were at the school at the same time I was, and were being constantly mistaken the one for the other. It was a general belief that not even their own father knew which was which, as the following seems to prove. The name of one was David,—the name of the other should have been, but wasn't, Jonathan; I forget what it was, and happily for the story it makes no difference. The Doctor met one of them in the hall one day, and clapping him on the shoulder said, "I wish, David, that you would run and fetch so-and-so for me, but if you're not David it doesn't matter, go all the same".

Boys trained at the Collegiate could pass directly into the Navy, or into Sandhurst or Woolwich, or into the universities. Many men afterwards well known in public life had been Collegiate boys, and Dr. Bryce seemed to be able to remember where each one was and to what position each had attained. Shortly after I went to St. Andrew's University to lecture on Physiology, I saw Dr. Bryce for the last time when he came over to St. Andrew's to take the place of Dr. Roberts, the Professor of Humanity, who was in poor health that session. We had a long talk one afternoon when the old gentleman came up to my rooms for tea. He seemed to remember everyone I could mention at school in my day, and as I asked where so-and-so was and what he was doing, Dr. Bryce supplied the information without hesitating and without emotion, somewhat as follows,—“And where is A.B.”? “Oh he's the Lord Mayor of—” “And what is C.D. doing”? “C.D. is the Governor of Abyssinia”; “And E.F.”? “E.F. has gone to the Devil”; “And G.H.”? “Gone after him.” His equanimity never deserted him.

It may interest university readers to know that the originator of the idea of organizing a "Students' Representative Council" for the Scottish universities was an old Collegiate "man", Robert Fitzroy Bell, an Edinburgh advocate. The scheme ultimately developed very much as Bell had originally sketched it, and the S.R.C. soon became an important body representing, as it purported to do, the opinion of the majority of the students on any questions being debated between them and the Senate or the University Court as the case might be. The Representative Council has continued to this day to be a most useful organization in the Scottish universities. I was elected a member of an early council at Glasgow University, and had the privilege of signing my name along with other officials below an address of congratulation to Professor Sir William Thompson on his elevation to the peerage as Baron Kelvin of Largs.

One of the best known Scottish meteorologists, Omond, was a Collegiate boy; he climbed Ben Nevis daily at one time, taking observations at the base and at the summit; and after the observatory was built on the mountain he lived up there and would be snowed in for many months. Other Collegiate men whom I happen to have been at school with are—the present Lord Provost of Edinburgh; the present proprietor of *The Scotsman*; the Regius Professor of Anatomy at the University of Glasgow; the late H. N. Dickson of the Meteorological Office. Lord Haig, of immortal fame in France, was a pupil, 1870-72.

Dr. Bryce's birthday fell on February 29th, so that he might be said to have had one only once in four years. This was not too often for the school to present the Doctor with some tangible token of its regard. Accordingly everybody subscribed something (which was, of course, ultimately paid by the boy's father) towards the piece of plate or whatever was to be presented. On one occasion I recollect our old schoolmaster concluding his speech of thanks thus; "And so each occasion of this kind, men, brings me one step nearer to the next world"—words which called forth tremendous cheering. The real meaning of the applause was, of course, not any satisfaction at the contemplation of the shortening span of Dr. Bryce's life, but merely that we were glad the speech was done and that the usual birthday holiday would be announced for next day. I should explain that his health was so good that he was never absent from school through any physical indisposition, and that therefore the school never got a holiday on the ground of the illness of the Head.

While, of course, we boys were in no position when at school to appreciate Bryce's scholarship as grown men could have done, and

while we certainly feared his cold, gray-blue eyes if they looked at us in displeasure, yet we respected the Doctor as we respected very few other men, for his skill as a teacher, for his equanimity of disposition, and for the perfect fairness of his dealings with everybody in his charge. I am certain that I am not the only Collegiate man living to-day who can say with truth that his character and outlook on life has owed not a little to the excellent training of the mind which we underwent in the Edinburgh Collegiate School under the wise and strict tutelage of Archibald Hamilton Bryce.

IN A BARBADOS GARDEN

JOHN HANLON MITCHELL.

O'er rosy walls of coral
 Within a fragrant tree
 The blackbirds mate or quarrel,
 While, home for roaming bee,
 The bougainvillea bower,
 As sweet as lovers' words,
 Extends each tempting flower
 To questing humming birds.

The violets, richly blooming,
 Raise heads of azure blue.
 Rare roses are perfuming
 The dusk and rising dew;
 And when the moon is shining,
 And silver is the grass,
 Pale fire-flies designing
 Quaint patterns drift and pass.

Yet all these blossoms glowing
 I'd gladly change, I know,
 For one frail crocus growing
 'Mid melting city snow.
 And all the bright birds fitting
 Hold for me less of thrill
 Than hungry sparrows twitting
 Upon a northern sill.

LORD DUNSANY

A HERALD OF THE NEW ROMANCE

J. P. D. LLWYD

Once upon a time the Queen of Fairyland rose from a long sleep and fared forth among the dwellings of men. She bore her wand of Wonder, whose tip was gemmed with a jewel like a star. She passed into lowly cot and golden palace, into street and lane and castle square, into the halls where children make music with their laughter, among the fields where lovers walk, and the red plains where brave men die. She touched all with the mystic wand, and lo, over the dull and sordid and mean there shone a wonderful light, that gladdened the hearts of men. But, alas, the soul of Titania herself was sad. She pined for something rich and strange, something as yet unborn. So again she lay her down and slumbered. Then passed by a young man in workman's blouse. His face was rugged; his form was full of the accent of command. Bending, he touched her: she woke and looked with terror and amaze. His eye held her with its fire. "I am the Real", said he, "but men will have none of me for my uncomeliness. I seek a love who will clothe me with her beauty and her grace, while I in return clothe her with my Truth". Titania arose with her wand of Wonder, placed her hand in his, and so together the forms of Beauty and Reality took their way among toil-worn mortals. And wherever they passed the world was bright with a new and radiant loveliness, and in their footsteps sprang up all manner of exquisite flowers, children of the marriage of Romance and Science.

THE name of Lord Dunsany will be new to the majority of readers. Some may know that he is an Irish peer, and that he made for himself a war record of high merit. But few are aware of his literary power, and probably a smaller percentage still have read his books. Yet he has behind him more than ten years of authorship, and, when one considers the nature of their contents, his books appear to have sold well. One or two have passed through several editions. His portrait, which forms the frontispiece of one volume, shows the figure of a young man in his early thirties, clad in an officer's khaki. The features are clean-cut, nose aquiline, eye

full and dreamy, hair straight, close-cropped and dark, lips firm beneath the slight moustache, with a leaning to the satirical in expression, chin rounded and strong. The ensemble of a man about town, scarcely that of a poet or a writer, although closer inspection brings to view a certain look of thoughtfulness, and if the coinage can be permitted, *far-awayness*.

Perhaps the public ignorance of his personality is more or less to the good. It admits of a stricter concentration upon his work; it intensifies the force and freshness of that work's appeal. Nothing whets the edge of curiosity about a writer more than the fact that our first introduction to him comes through the product of his genius. And in a certain sense Lord Dunsany is a genius. For in the "heirs of his invention" that lie before us we are lifted into a world of romance that shines with a light and interest all its own,—a world of charm and beauty almost entirely new in prose to our generation, though in poetry it finds a sort of parallel in the work of Walter de la Mare. The volumes are no doubt assisted in their impression by the eerie drawings of that very interesting artist, Mr. Sime; but none the less, the subject-matter strikes a peculiar and individual note which in its way is unforgettable.

The literary work of this writer falls into three divisions, his poetry, his tales of the war, and his tales of imagination. To the first of these no reference will here be made. In familiar phrase, they form another story. Nor shall we linger long upon his narratives of the war. They are characterized, as one would expect, by the outshining of experience. They are marked by graphic quality in the telling; indeed in some the realism is so convincing as to suggest pen-pictures drawn upon the spot. They sparkle with all the urge and directness of a first-hand impression made while the mind was still in contact with its material. There is in them a strong feeling for Nature. It is a question whether any other writer has grasped so seriously and described so vividly that element of pathos in warfare,—its devastation and its ruin. Other hands, such as Latzko in his *Men in War*, have painted with almost brutal detail the slaughter, the bloodshed, the ferocity of men turned for the moment into fiends, the strange perils, the terrible fears, the awful waste of energy and human life. This writer is one of a few whose chosen task is to present the wreck of everything that man's hand has wrought, the chaos which remains after the glory of cities, the emerald of meadows, the golden glow of harvests, the fine straight lines of ancient highways have come under the driving hurricane of the barrage, and the razor of military necessity.

In one of these war-pictures, the "Last Mirage", the Kaiser

sees the vision of a lovely France that is his conquest. Alas, it proves a Dead Sea apple!

As he comes near to them the cities crumble, the woods shrivel and fall, the farms fade out of Picardy, even the hedgerows go; it is bare, bare desert. . . . There is nothing good for him in the desert of the Somme. Bapaume is not really there, though it be marked on his maps; it is only a wilderness of slates and brick. Peronne looks like a city a long way off, but when you come near it is only the shells of houses. . . . And the advances that look like victories, and the ruins that look like cities, and the shell-beaten broken fields that look like farms,—they, and the dreams of conquest, and all the plots and ambitions, they are all the mirage of a dying dynasty in a desert it made for its doom.

The same note is touched in "A Walk to the Trenches":

You come to the trenches out of strangely wasted lands; you come perhaps to a wood in an agony of contortions, black, branchless, sepulchral trees, and then no more trees at all. The country named Belgium—or whatever it be—is all gone away, and there stretches for miles instead one of the world's great deserts, a thing to take its place no longer with smiling lands, but with Sahara, Gobi, Kalahari, and the Karoo; not to be thought of as Picardy, but more suitably to be named the Desert of Wilhelm.

The nightmare countries stand all night in the starlight; dawn comes and they still are there. The dead are buried out of sight, and others take their places among men; but the lost lands lie unburied gazing up at the wind; and the lost woods stand like skeletons all grotesque in the solitude; *the very seasons have fled from them.*

The style throughout in this particular is not only descriptive of the actual scene; it breathes a sorrow which must be the child of a true romantic feeling for Nature, a love for and a joy in the beauty of the earth most conscious of the pity of her outrage at the hands of man.

But the talent of our writer shows most distinct and special in his tales of pure fancy. The graphic power of these etchings of the scenes of war, and the sympathy for a wasted and ruined soil, are not of such signal importance to the art of authorship as to be infrequent in their occurrence. With our author, certainly, the creations which reveal the spark of genius are his flights in the realm of romance, his ascent into the world of the centaurs, the *chateaux en Espagne*, the magic swords of ancestors, the world that is rich with the enchantments of Undine and Sintram—the world of baffling names and awesome experiences—the world which haunted our dreams in boyhood, and whose strange opiates have potency even to-day in the cup of life for thinking men.

This Kingdom of the Imagination—once as big as the universe itself—has shrunk into a mere Toyland. One by one the lovely folk that peopled it have faded first into mere wraiths, and then into thin air. Elves and fairies, Pucks and hobgoblins—all the tricky sprites whose feet used to twinkle on the green have gone; and with them the giant and the Gorgon, the “amphisbaenas and chimeras dire” who made our terror as the others made our joy. Old Santa Claus still lives in some holes and corners of the world, but he too is a wraith, and the wise six-year-old knows now the hand that really fills his stocking. The angels are gone; the Age of Enlightenment buried them at Mons—the spot where they last burst the bonds of the invisible to show their ministry to earthly eyes. Gone also are the genii of the Ring and of the Lamp; the instructed child reads his Arabian story with an incredulous droop of the eyelid. Beautiful old legends like that of St. Christopher have vanished under the lens of criticism, or have dissolved under the acid of its tests. Homer has ceased to be the old blind harper, and has become the spirit of an Age. Like the hero in Vergil, we open our arms to embrace what seems to be a man, but alas! it is only a shade. The imagination must now satisfy its appetite upon a diet of exact science and of the nexus of trade, with huge draughts of sensuous pleasure or excitement to wash such indigestible products down. “Soul thou hast much goods laid up for many years; therefore take thine ease eat, drink, and be merry”:

The fair humanities of old religion,
The power, the beauty, and the majesty,
That had their haunts in dale, or piny mountain,
Or chasms and wat'ry depths;
All these are vanished,
They live no longer in the faith of reason.

The problem is how to nourish the inner life upon things that are not like itself. The sense of the beautiful will not thrive on steel ingots, nor can the fancy roam with delight through the chill halls of the Dismal Science. Our zeal for Truth may have given us things as they are, but it has left them very dull and prosaic. Like Louise de la Vallière in the convent, we have peace, but we are not glad. Even our efforts at recovery, such as spiritualism, are on the same dull and sordid level. Childhood, whose life is spent mainly in the world of imagination, is driven to the movies, the dime novel—those dark reflections of the vital flame within. Adult life is a steady drive for wealth or pleasure, unrelieved by the lightness of heart which is one of the flowers of the culture of imagination.

Nothing will save us from this dry rot of the mental life but a return to the belief that the world is alive, and that our science and our commerce are not imperious jailers of the beauty that dwells in things, but open doors into a poetry and a romance of exquisite freshness and grace. The universe can never be rightly interpreted through one method; it is wider than we know; the divine gifts of love, and poetry, and imagination are the necessary instruments through which each century must convert forces and laws into a sweeter phrasing, wherein they can be realized as loveliness.

The merit of Lord Dunsany's work lies in this, that it is an attempt after this attitude. On principles of strict literary criticism, much will be found wanting, no doubt. Perfect artistic expression is almost rarer than genius itself. Our author does not always show mastery of his medium, nor is the elaboration of the idea always as finished as could be desired. Such reservations apart, just as certainly these stories have caught a spark of the pure, ethereal fire.

Let us look first at the *Book of Wonder*. Its preface is brief but suggestive: "Come with me, ladies and gentlemen who are in any wise weary of London; come with me; and those that tire at all of the world we know, for we have new worlds here". The table of contents spreads a menu like the following: The Bride of the Man Horse; The distressing tale of Thangobrind, the jeweller; The injudicious prayers of Pombo the Idolater; The Loot of Bombasharna; Miss Cubbidge and the Dragon of Romance; The Hoard of the Gibbelins; How Nuth would have practised his art upon the Gnoles; How one came to the City of Never; and other viands of a like kind. The list of illustrations in the weird and picturesque manner of Mr. Sime includes such titles as The Edge of the World; Zretazoola; The Ominous Cough; The House of the Sphinx; The Lean, High House of the Gnoles; and one with a slight echo of Kipling, The Coronation of Mr. Thomas Shap. The Practical Demon who haunts our laboratories and counting-houses will no doubt launch a heavy sneer at effusions which have nothing to do with eight-hour days, or gasoline engines, or radioactivity, or pragmatism, or mental healing. But the Practical Demon is really a vampire. In the night of our civilization, he spreads his wings over us men while we sleep, soothing us with their gentle murmur, that he may drink our life blood.

In the first of these stories, "The Bride of the Man Horse," Shepperalk the centaur, exulting in the ripeness of his strength, and filled with a yearning for his mate, races across the rivers and mountains of the world to the city of Zretazoola, where dwells in her temple Sombelene the beautiful, woman, lioness, and sphinx

in one. "She was unwed, unwooed. The lions came not to woo her because they feared her strength, and the gods dared not love her because they knew she must die." He dashes past those who would greet or hinder, clatters over the stones of the streets, rushes through the waters:

Finally, he galloped with half shut eyes up the temple-steps, and only seeing dimly through his lashes, seized Sombelene by the hair, undazzled as yet by her beauty, and so haled her away; and, leaping with her over the floorless chasm where the waters of the lake fall unremembered away into a hole in the world, took her we know not where, to be his slave for all those centuries that are allowed to his race. Three blasts he gave as he went upon that silver horn that is the world-old treasure of the centaurs. These were his wedding-bells.

Lord Dunsany has the gift of atmosphere. There is the magic of rush, space, and laughter in the galloping centaur. You can feel the cloven air behind him come together in thunder. He is not a being, but an arrowy passion, launched from the bow of love. We are carried away from staid and sober things into the age of the primitive, when youth swept straight to its desire, defiant, reckless, and unafraid.

He who has the power to spread atmosphere around his creations is not always possessed of the power of dramatic contrast. Atmosphere is part of the descriptive gift: it is a stimulus leading towards the illusion of reality. It helps to make the improbable probable, the superhuman natural. The dramatic instinct is often somewhat careless of such treatment, gaining its effects in bolder and more striking ways. Our writer gives here and there a sign that this weapon is not wanting to his quiver. He knows the art of throwing a small fact on to a canvas so huge that the tiny fact swells out in keeping and becomes prodigious. Browning, in the portrait of Lazarus after his resurrection, enhances the realism of his conception by the use of this method:

Speak of some trifling fact—he will gaze rapt
 With stupor at its very littleness,
 (Far as I see) as if in that indeed
 He caught prodigious import, whole results;
 And so will turn to us the bystanders
 In ever the same stupor (note this point)
 That we too see not with his opened eyes.

In the *Book of Wonder* this dramatic gift seems to us most striking in the story of "The Ominous Cough". Thangobrind,

prince of jewel-thieves, who steals nothing smaller than the Moomoo's egg, and in all his life stole only four kinds of stone—the ruby, the diamond, the emerald, and the sapphire—and “whose honesty, as jewellers go, was great”, steals the diamond that is larger than the human head, and is to be found on the lap of the spider-idol, Hlo-hlo, in his temple of Moung-ga-ling. The deed seems at first successful; he makes a clean escape, but hears a velvety footfall in the rear:

He listened attentively; there was no sound now. Then he thought of the screams of the Merchant Prince's daughter, whose soul was the diamond's price, and smiled and went stoutly on. There watched him, apathetically, over the narrow way, that grim and dubious woman whose house is the Night. He was all but come to the end of the narrow way, when the woman listlessly uttered that ominous cough.

The fight with the spider-idol begins:

He wounded Hlo-hlo with terrible long gashes all over his deep soft body till Mouse, the sword, was slimy with blood. At last the persistent laughter of Hlo-hlo was too much for the jeweller's nerves.

He sinks, aghast and exhausted. They carry him away to the house where two men hang, and put the venturesome jeweller on the hook whence one has been taken down, and the ire of the envious gods is abated. Mr. Sime's picture draws out the mass effect of the story, with its background of mighty trees, enormous cobwebs swinging in festoons between, the huge log spanning the ravine, the tiny figure of Thangobrind with his sword, the diamond flashing behind, the spider-idol's gigantic claw just visible, and the cloaked figure of the old woman on the other side. One catches a hint of symbolism in the tale in the puny cunning of man pitting itself in vain against the irresistible and ironical might of Fate.

The same lingering suggestion of a hidden meaning reveals itself in “The Gods of Pegana”. Here our author forges a cosmogony of his own, with a hierarchy of gods at the head of whom stands, or rather sits, Mana-yood-Sushai, equivalent of Brahm or Infinitude, or pristine Force. Like Brahm in the Hindu mythology, he wakes from the sleep of ages, throws off a universe or two, and straight returns to his slumber:

In the mists before the beginning, Fate and Chance cast lots to decide whose the Game should be; and he that won strode to Mana-yood-Sushai and said: “Now make gods for me, for I have won the cast and the Game is to be Mine. Who it was that won the cast, and whether it was Fate or Chance that went through the mists before the Beginning to Mana-yood-Sushai—none knoweth.

The first game of the gods is Creation—the making of the worlds—their plaything for a million years. Here and there are fine touches like the following:

And They made the Star of the Abiding, and set it in the North. Man, when thou seest the Star of the Abiding to the North, know that somewhere among the worlds is rest.

The second game is the Creation of beasts and at last of Man:

But when the other gods saw Kib—the sender of Life—playing his new game, They came and played it too. And This they will play until Mana arise to rebuke them, saying: "What do you, playing with Worlds and Suns and Men and Life and Death?" And They shall be ashamed of their playing in the hour of his laughter.

And so on throughout the pantheon. There is Mung, the Lord of all Deaths, at whose sign life departs; Limpang-Tung, the god of mirth and melodious minstrels, who paints pictures in the sky, sends jests into the world and a little mirth, lures the melody out of the stream, and steals its anthem from the forest, and for whom the wind hath cried in lonely places and ocean sung its dirges; Roon, the god of Going, through whom the worlds are never still, for the moons and the worlds and the comets are stirred by his spirit; Dorozhand, the god of Destiny, whose eyes regard the End; and there are tales of those who set themselves up to be prophets, and whose finish was calamity; all closing with a chapter on the End, when Mana wakes once more, and gods and creation alike must chant the anthem of their passing.

The question again arises: Is all this a jet of pure fancy, or is there a purpose behind? Is it a satire upon the philosophies and theologies of the past, or a grave and serious theory, cast in symbolic form? There is no indication of such a meaning—if it exists, it is an inference of our own.

In one of the more recent of his books, however, the writer has himself gone far to strengthen the right of every reader to draw such an inference. *The Chronicles of Don Rodriguez*, published only last year, clearly points a moral, or at least gives a picture of the wanderings, disappointments, and the restful close of a human life. In the years of the Golden Age of Spain, the Don, a young cavalier of fallen fortunes, sets out upon the quest for his castle. He encounters enemies, whom he silences with his good sword, finds a Sancho Panza to be his servant and yet his monitor and comrade, learns the art of chivalry and love, reaches the wars but fails to achieve the castle as a conquest, and finally finds satis-

faction both for his heart and for his ambitions in the House built by magic in the Shadow-Valley, whose King had become his friend. One can easily discern the author's interpretation of experience peeping out among the pages, as in *Don Quixote*, or in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, or in *The Tempest*.

But whatever may be the original intention, whatever *Weltanschauung* may lurk within the depths, at least we are in debt to Lord Dunsany for a sail over a rarely-travelled sea. He lets us leap into its waters, luxuriating in their light and warmth, and dazzled by the strange and brilliant creatures that inhabit them. Fancy has been the sprite that has swept him out of himself into these worlds of myth and imagery; and without fancy none will understand him, for the bearings of his work lie in the interpretation thereof, and interpretations depend upon the congenialities of spirit. He is still in the early prime of authorship, and we may venture to predict works yet more original and fascinating from so young a pen. It is in him, we think, to be a new Hans Andersen. The genius of Celtic romance has cast its mantle upon him, and it would not be surprising if the outcome were a new cluster of stories like those of the Mabinogion.