the precise point those experiments were undertaken to prove. And that assumption is the sole basis of the theory. Further those animals were produced on the animals? Koch ignored those conditions and their effects, and by so much vitiated his conclusion, even if that conclusion had been otherwise established. These objections, the validity of which is incontestable, are either of them necessarily fatal to the Bacteriologic Theory, and it is easy to show that this theory is neither in accord with, nor capable of affording an adequate explanation of all the known facts of the disease. But Koch's experiments add another link to the evidence that proves that where animals are subjected to the conditions that reduce their breathing capacity below a certain point in proportion to the remainder of the body, there you have consumption directly produced. His successful experiments were due to the presence of those conditions, and his unsuccessful ones to their absence in the required degree. I have repeatedly and recently shown at the meetings of the British Association that wherever those conditions are present in man or animal, there consumption is found; that wherever they are absent, there the disease is absent; that their introduction is followed by the appearance of the disease, and their removal, in time, by its complete recovery, and that this interpretation of the real nature of consumption is both in strict accord with, and capable of affording an adequate explanation of, all the known facts of the case. Fortunately for the human race it is not to the bacilli tuberculosis we have to look, but to our own habits and surroundings. Consumption is not an infectious disease, but a disease of civilization, with which we shall, ere long, successfully cope. At the commencement of my letter I stated that Professor Koch had made a great discovery. It is a source of special pleasure to me, and under the present circumstances an imperative duty, to point out and fully acknowledge the great service he has rendered to science. The immense increase of knowledge of the smaller forms of life that is the direct result of Professor Koch's investigations will produce a great and permanent effect upon the science of biology.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Geoffrey W. Hamilton.

* * * The Editor of this Review does not undertake to return any Manuscript.*
How many a Vlasch, Skiptar, and Bulgar, has heard this song tingle in his ears in the mad revel in some mountain glen.

Mingled with this wild spirit of light some melancholy chants of the love-sick maiden and the hopeless swain. The Minstrel's Dream, with the refrain—

"O' er an evening in the month of May,
When from the heavens like a burning tear,
The sun dropped down——"

is Sapphic in its deep erotic agony, and sounds like an echo of the cry—εὐχαρίτως and that other fragment—

"τό εὐθυσίαν καθαλλεῖαν;"

Or again, the song of the Barren Women, with the refrain—

"Mine ear is full of the murmur of rushing streams.
For a single cradle, said Nature, I would give every one of my genes.
Joy shrinks and turns from me, like the setting sun from the earth.
Fruited women shew wish me, and tenderly close my head.
My threshold makes question and asks me: 'Speak, o, when will be come?'
I am filled with hate for the earth, that is fruitful and faineth not.
Only the graves I love, for in them neath quickens more.

Here is a quaint, and stanza—:

"Two birds flew into the sunset glow.
And one of them was my love, I know.
Alas, had it but flown to my heart, its nest!
Two stars remembered thee long ago
And one of them was my heart's great woe.
If it had but forgotten, and sailed in the west!"

For what Mr. Ruskin has named the "pathetic fallacy," or passion giving life to the lifeless world, it would not be easy to find happier examples.

The Black Heart is a fine thought. Poor heart, it prayed the doves to drop their soft white wings over it; it begged the moon to gaze upon it with her silvery smile; the rivers, the rain, the sun all tried their utmost to bleach it white. All is in vain. At last came by a happy heart—happy, for it was white—touched the black heart so that it broke into fragments, but each fragment became as white as the feathers of a turtle-dove.

The little book should be read, for, as the Queen says, the Romanian folk-songs "are an addition to the literature of the world."

FREDERIC HARRISON.

THE "INTERVIEWER" ABROAD.

Those persons who watch with interest the latest developments of French literature probably found some amusement and some instruction in the series of "interviews"—for the word as well as the thing has been adopted from us by our neighbours—interviews with men of letters, and especially with young men of letters, which appeared not long since in the pages of the Echo de Paris. M. Jules Hurot, the skilful Chief Inquisitor, has now collected his memorials of the torture-chamber into a volume, and it may be feared that a good many English readers will be frightened away from a highly entertaining book by the somewhat alarming pomp of science in its title—Era de l'Évolution littérature. If this book be fairly representative of the intellectual movement in France—and a book containing confessions from MM. Renan, De Goncourt, Zola, Anatole France, Maurice Barrès, Jules Lemaître, Mallarmé, Verhaere, Moraç, Mirbeau, Leconte de Lisle, Callovo Mendès, Coppée, Vaucqueri, Rod, and some half a hundred of other writers may be considered representative—the characteristic vices and foibles of the man of letters assuredly play no inconsiderable part in the "Evolution of Literature." Here may be learnt the art of literary self-advertisement in both the direct way, which thrusts forward the "I," naked and unabashed, and the indirect way, which reflects the "I" in the mirrors of admired and admiring friends: here may be witnessed the indignant revolt of youth against age—youth, which, after centuries of venerable folly, has at last found the secret of all beauty and the key to universal truth; here may be seen the scorn of selfish and age for aspiring youth; here the pride of mystification; the war of schools, the hatred of successful rivals, and the bitter hatred of successful contemporaries. "I have read your Enquêtes," writes M. Gustave Guiches, "which move so picturesquely through the countless anathemas of the day. It is as if I were reading over again the Tentation de Saint Antoine. From these studies of yours there creeps over me a nightmare as distressing as that caused by the vision of religious chaos in Flaubert's book. I have seen delfing past me symbolists, instrumentalists, decadents, naturalists, neo-realists, supranaturalists, psychologists, Permanents, mages, Positivists, Buddhists, Tolstoiizers; I have heard fierce imprecations, bitter laughter, cries of pity, solemn anathemas, subtle analyses, absolute syntheses, proclamations eloquently improvised. Everything has been said, re-said, unsaid." And M. Guiches thereupon proceeds to add his own particular speech to the confusion of Babel. "Literary Evolution!"
cries M. Paul Bonnetain, "evolution of a tortoise wriggling on its back!"

M. Émile Joffre, author of Young, and of the more recent Le
Clairvoyant, a study, in the form of a novel, of the more obscure hypnotic
phenomena, is one of the few who faced round upon me with a
nervous and courteous manner, confronting me with a direct nega-
tive. "I cannot persuade myself," he wrote, "to behave the
masters, to use my finger-nails on the writers of my own generation,
to cleave in twain my younger brethren, nor in any way whatever to
trumpet mediocrity or what is beneath mediocrity. . . . Nay, I
cannot even utter my own éloge." It was a magnanimous resolve;
but the interviewer was not discouraged; on the contrary, he was
well content to have secured so striking a communication. More
trying was the reception given to him by M. Guy de Maupassant,
whose reputation is that of the man in all Paris most difficult to
approach. M. Huret tells, with a touch of pathos, how longingly
he had anticipated this particular interview. From early youth the
ideal author of his imagination had been Guy de Maupassant; true,
he had heard the great days of Flaubert styled "uninan," but to
what calamities is not genius exposed? and now the crucial
moment of audience was come. I quote from M. Huret the recital
of what followed:

"I ring. A servant, or rather a footman, appears; you know
that insolent eye which we see in all the ante-chambers of the
ambitious bourgeoisie. 'Monsieur is not at home.' I wrote some
words, notwithstanding, on my note, and I was introduced in the
anteroom, passing through an antechamber, entering a luxurious
room which I have no time to describe, where tender colours raged,
and which in its general effect seemed to me to be
in far from excellent taste.

"Enter the master. I surveyed him with curiosity and remained
speechless: Guy de Maupassant! Guy de Maupassant! For so much time as it takes
to ring, choose a chair, and sit down I inwardly repeated the name, and
stood at the little man before me: shoulders not too broad; heavy, blue-
coloured moustache, chestnut hair if they had been steeped in alcohol.
He courteously begged me to be seated. But on the first words referring to litera-
ture, a consultation, i.e., he assumed a disagreeable aspect, as if I had a
headache or in some way thoroughly uncomfortable. 'Oh, monsieur,'
he said—and his words come weirdly and his whole air was splendid, 'I beg of
you, do not speak to me of literature! I am suffering from severe neurasthenia;
I start for Nice the day after to-morrow,—so my physician orders me—the
atmosphere here in Paris oppresses me, the noise, the agitation; I am really
very far from well.' I sympathised, and approaching the subject again with
the utmost precaution and my best skill, tried to elicit some vague expression
of opinion. 'Oh, literature, monsieur! I never speak of it. I write with
what it gives me pleasure to do, and speak of it not! Besides, at present I know
not one man of letters. I am on good terms with Soln, with Goncourt, in
spite of his Mémoires, but them I rarely see, and the rest never. I know only
the younger Dumas; our provinces are not the same and we never speak of
literature. . . . there are so many other things.' I opened my eyes like port-
holes. 'Yes,' I said, knowing his taste for this amusement, 'shackling
'And so many others. Sir, monsieur, the proof that I am telling you the

truth is this—long ago they promised me a seat in the Academy—twenty-
years ago at least, and I refused it, and to this day and all that, no, really, it does
not interest me; let us, I beg, speak no more of literature.'

And such, adds the interviewer, with a touch of pardonnez me,
are the views of M. de Maupassant on the contemporary evolution of
literature.

The immediate occasion or excuse for M. Huret's inquiry was the
appearance of two noteworthy books: the Jardin de Béatrice, the
last volume of M. Maurice Barrès, the young Boulangist
deputy, who "dines with Stendhal, and sups with Saint Ignatius," and the
Pèlerinage de M. Jean Moréas. If M. Barrès can be ranged in
a class, we must reckon him among the "Psychologists," whose
boast is to have displaced the Naturalists in prose fiction. M. Moréas,
Greek by birth, rejecting the leadership of Mallarmé and Verlaine,
both, alas! now beyond the fatal fortieth year, and therefore in the
cold and shalows of extreme antiquity, proclaims himself with no
uncertain voice as the Symbolist, and it would seem that
his claim has been allowed if a banquet (2nd February) in his honour
be the proper proof of poetical leadership. "Passionate pilgrim!"
exclaims one of the tribe, himself a symbolist- decadent, "pilgrims
without a pilgrimage, and passionate—oh no! No one has ever
met two of these pilgrims together on the same route." Yet the
Pèlerinage of M. Moréas is a volume to note, if not for its
contents, at least for its aims with respect to style and metrical
form. The author was born in 1856, and having reached, in 1894,
the happiest age for a poet, is said by his malicious friends to have
grown since then no older. As the Psychologists have in prose
fiction succeeded to the Naturalists, so in poetry the Symbolists aim
at the overthrow of the Parnassian dynasty; and thus the two books
which have been named served sufficiently well for a centre around
which to group the questions and answers of the inquisitor and his
victims.

Before setting to work, M. Huret considered the order in which he
should call his witnesses, and carefully prepared his questions.
Of the Psychologists he inquired: What is the significance, and
what is the future, of the present reaction against Naturalism? Is
there a bond of kinship between the Psychological school and the
Symbolists? Is there not, again, something in common between the
Naturalists and the Parnassians in their disdain of personal
sentiment on the part of the writer, in their tendency to pessimism,
and in their aim at plastic or concrete presentation of what is positive
and real, rather than the suggestion or evocation of things invisible?
Of the Symbolist-Decadents he inquired: What is the meaning of
this word inscribed upon their banner? what are their poetical aims?
how are they related to the Parnassians? who are their representative
writers? what are the works which embody the purposes of the movement? and in a similar manner suitable interrogations were framed for the elder schools of Parthenas and of Nature. But, like an accomplished interviewer, M. Huret did not tire himself to his own order of examination; he kept his hands free and his eyes open; he was alive at every point. If he could not run down his game, there might still be some profit in the accidents and incidents of the chase. If he could not come to the winning post, he might yet pick up some Atlanta's apple on or off the course. To touch in now and again a bit of local colour was a relief from the scientific severity of his Etiquette. The doctrine of M. Anatole France on the elision of e mute was interrupted, not altogether unhappily, by the incursion of a charming child of eight or nine into the critic's study; her terra-cotta frock and her floating hair come well into the picture, and the suavity of the critic, who could so gracefully reply to a cartele from M. Leconte de Lisle, is here shown in pretty pleading with his little daughter that she should not desert him at the luncheon-table. "Ces jeunes gens! Tous funistes!" exclaimed a feminine voice at the moment when the interviewer entered the study of M. de Hérédié. It was madame, who was reading aloud from the Echo the last words recorded in the interview with the great poet when M. Anatole France had been so unlucky as to offend. The ladies, too, but not without a feminine outbreak of criticism: "Oh! vos symboles! Je les exécute." Instantly the words were transferred to the fortunate reporter's note-book. "But this is not part of the interview, surely?" "No, madame," I replied, with a smile in response to her, "but it is colour—and so local!"

There is colour, too, in the picture of M. Octave Mirbeau, the celebrated author of Calvina and Séduction Ruche, in his garden near Rouen, amid his Japanese lilies and German irises; or pointing out to his visitor the Chineese Moreas, with its great orange peels, "worth many Moreas of Athens (the author of the Passionate Pilgrim). I assure you." But English readers, at the present moment, will prefer another picture—that of the Flemish Shakespeare" (writer of genius, surely, but a very Flemish Shakespeare), of whom M. Mirbeau was the discoverer, and about whom we have already heard a good deal, and shall soon hear more. In order to find M. Maurice Materlinck, it was necessary to take the train for Ghent. The weather was unseasonable, and under the melancholy sky the interviewer expected to see, in a suitably gloomy environment, the spectral figure of the author of Les Princes Matrin.

(1) "I have never been wanting in the respect due to M. Leconte de Lisle. If he generously forgets in my favour that he was born in 1855, it is my duty not to forget the fault. Must I needs tell him that he is one of those glories which we dare not touch?"

-A surprise. Twenty-seven years old, hardly built, square shoulders, hair moustache cut close, Materlinck, with his regular features, bright eyes, and cheeks of rosy bloom, realizes exactly the Flemish type. This added to his very simple manners, his almost timid bearing, the absence of gestures and the absence of embarrassment, aroused at once a feeling of very agreeable surprise. This man, with his correct dress—black, with white silk cravat—will play his part of the precocious genius, nor deal in mystery or menace, is modest and he is sincere. It is calculated to counterbalance it: if I do not succeed in making my interlocutor forget the interview, which terrifies him, I shall claim nothing for my Etiquette, nor reach to nothing from his large tranquillity. A quarter of an hour, and I began to reckon my gains; not a word about himself or others, or hardly a word, brief phrases, many admirable replies to my questions, a slight gesture, a nod of the head, a movement of the lips or eyebrows, such will be all I glean from the subject of my interview so long as he feals himself a victim of the interviewer. Little by little I must make him forget the purpose of my travel, and break up his habit of this blood piece of silence. And again I feel that there is nothing elaborate in his attitude, nothing affected. He, with entire simplicity, gives me silence as others gave speech. We lunched together and exhibited a charming appetite. 'Yes, I have a savage appetite,' he said, 'I take so much physical exercise, canoeing, dumb-bells; in winter, skating, often to Bruges, as far as Holland; every day bicycling, that is when I am not in the courts, and I am in the courts so seldom.' 'You are a lawyer,' I exclaimed. 'Yes—a little, as I have said. Now and again a poor peasant asks my aid and I plead for him in Flemish.'

Once in motion, in the shadow of the venerable buildings of the city—for the rain had ceased—in the old streets or among the network of canals and quays and bridges, M. Materlinck grew communicative, and his discussion arose his apparent placidity disappeared; the observer could recognize that keen nervous sensibility which shows itself in his literary work. He spoke freely and he spoke well; few indeed of M. Huret's interlocutors uttered themselves more clearly and effectively on the subject of the symbols in art. There are two kinds of symbols according to M. Materlinck; there is first the designed and deliberate symbol; the artist starts from an abstraction, and endeavours to clothing this abstraction with humanity and concrete form. A typical example of such symbolism, which approaches allegory, may be found in the Second Part of Pand, and in the Malheur oder Milanchen, translated long since for English readers by Carlyle. "The other kind of symbol is unconscious, comes into existence although the poet be not aware of it, or even against his will, and almost always has bearings which reach beyond his conscious thought; this is the symbol which is found in every general creation of humanity; capital examples may be seen in the dramas of Euphrosus and Shakespeare. I do not believe that a viable work can be born of a symbol; but a symbol is always born from a work which is viable. . . . As regards what is symbolic, the poet ought to be passive; the symbol should be the flower of the vitality of the poem." Asked as to what philosophic influences had most affected him, Materlinck replied, "Kant, Carlyle, Schopenhauer,
The "Interviewer" Abroad.

who consoles you even in the presence of death." Of Shakespeare: "Oh yes, Shakespeare above all! Shakespeare! When I wrote the Princess of Boeotia I said to myself, 'I am going to attempt a play in Shakespeare's manner for a theatre of marionettes,' And that was what in fact I did." Among recent English writers and artists the favourites of M. Verlaine are Swinburne, Rossetti, William Morris, and Burne-Jones. Edgar Poe is dear to him: but the Poet of the House of Usher is qualified for his temperament by the whirling spirit of the bicycle.

Just now, when English readers are discovering a most interesting, if not a great, poet in Paul Verlaine, and when the name of Stéphane Mallarmé rouses curiosity as that of a distinguished, if not a great, unknown, the younger representatives of the Symbolist movement in France declare their leadership, and assert their independence by declaring that Verlaine has halted at a point which it is impossible to regard as a resting-place. Mallarmé, whose nature is more sympathetic, whose temperament is less aggressive than Verlaine's, protests against so-called "schools" in literature, proclaims himself a solitary, yet bends graciously from his height of pride towards "les jeunes gens"; and hence he retains their affection. Even in presence of the interviewer, who at the moment was noting (in the graceful way of the profession) his medium height, his poet's beard already grizzled, his long sandy hair, his eyes which shone with extraordinary lustre, M. Mallarmé retained "un grand air de bonté." When he speaks the word is always accompanied by a gesture, a liberal gesture, full of grace, precision, eloquence; his voiceingeres a little on the ends of his words, with a dying fall; his personality affects you with a powerful charm; you feel in the man an undying pride, which floats calmly over all, the pride of a god or of an illuminated adept, before which you must needs bow the head—when once it is understood. It is unfortunate for us that M. Mallarmé has so rarely put himself, as they say, in evidence by his writings. He cannot understand, he told a friend, what induces a poet to go to the publishers; the birds sing in their bowers, but these are not commonly situated in Paternoster Row.

To print our poems is surely nothing less than an indecent exposure of the soul. The author of L'Ajris-armi d'un Prune has not often offended in this way, and has on those rare occasions preserved something of his mystery by affixing an almost prohibitive price on the article so indifferently offered for sale. For Mallarmé literature is essentially an outcome of the individual, bearing the impress of a distinct personality. Formerly poets may have sung, as it were in a choir, to the great organ tones of the official metres; now each singer retires into his corner to play upon the flute the air he loves. The demand for a versification, more free, more elastic, more living than that so grandly wrought in bronze or in gold by the great Passions, has been recognised and admitted as just and inevitable by M. Anatole France. The official verse—the Alexandrine—is not rejected by M. Mallarmé, but he would reserve its use for great occasions, when solemn movements of the soul require an utterance, and even then it should be freer, more spontaneous, more vital than the Alexandrine as too commonly it is written. With this for grave use, as it were, imperial use, the poetry of the future will exhibit an infinity of motives derived from the peculiar sensibility of finely-organised individuals. The themes of which future singers will treat must include all in thought, action, and emotion which is susceptible of poetic handling, and these themes will not be presented directly and four-square after the manner of those old rhetoricians, the Permane poets; the younger poets will choose rather to suggest than to depict; they will not fear the indefinite or the mysterious; if they present an object it will be in order that the object may call up or reflect some spiritual, some emotional state or mood; or they will, through some state of the soul, shadow forth an object; they may be charged with obscurity, but all art which demands the co-operation of the spectator's or the reader's feelings and imagination is obscure to those who do not bring that one thing needful. In this statement of M. Mallarmé we have perhaps a better account of the aims of the symbolist school than can be obtained from any other of the subjects of M. Huret's examination.

For his own part, Mallarmé acknowledges that, with the marvellous mastery of verse possessed by certain recent writers—Baudelaire, for example—the Alexandrine admits of infinite variety, is flexible for every purpose, can respond to every movement of human passion. In an interesting paper on Modern Poetry, by Mr. Lewis Morris, published last July, the writer speaks of French as "the one European language in which poetry is the highest possible." It may attain to fine rhetoric, it may even mount to the height of a tender and graceful lyric, but beyond this it cannot go. Doubtless, a nation which feeds exclusively on frogs cannot produce true epic verse, and any one British poet can beat any three French. That is a pious and patriotic opinion to which I give a loyal adhesion. Matthew Arnold informed us nearly thirty years ago that the power of French literature is in its prose-writers, the power of English literature is in its poets; and he added that the main vehicle for poetry in France, the Alexandrine, is an inadequate vehicle. I confess that I have always ventured to regard this statement as evidence that Mr. Arnold's feeling for what is excellent in French literature had its limitations. No one possesses of a true sense for what is great in French poetry can think of the Alexandrine in its history from Racine to Hugo, and Baudelaire, and Leconte de Lisle, with a stinted
admiraton. It is capable of infinite grace, sweetness, subtlety; its fall and folds of the robe of an antique statue are not more exquisite than it can be; and yet it can, when there is need, advance with the bounding, mounting motion of a wave of the sea, all strength, all joy, all harmony. I am glad to confirm my feeling, that of one to whom the more intimate beauties of French verse can never be fully known, by the words of such a master as M. Cattulle Mendès: "The Alexandrine," he says, "has been modified in a thousand ways; it may hereafter perhaps be transformed in a thousand other ways; I admit it, but—and this is its high distinction and its glory—from the chanson de geste, where it appeared for the first time, and down through Ronard and Malherbe, it has remained, and it will remain, that marvellous thing which the greatest artists have found adequate in so many magnificent masterpieces—the French Alexandrine."

Mr. George Moore has given to English readers a vivid portrait of Paul Verlaine—the "bald, prominent forehead, the cavernous eyes, the uneven expression of burnt-out lust smouldering upon his face" —and we need not confirm this portrait by reproducing M. Huret's sketch. On this occasion it did not require a journey past factories and canal, and dim streets and clamorous courtyards to find Verlaine: he was easily run to earth in his accustomed café, the François-Premier, Boulevard Saint-Michel. His attacks of black melancholy, his wild fits of silence, says M. Huret, vanish with the least glimmer of sunshine. He has that beautiful resignation which made him declare, in a soft voice, only faintly suggestive of asiatic, "I have no mother now but one—the Assistance publique." During the long preceding the interview he had taken pains to replenish his pockets, and now under his ample Macarlané of black and grey checks, gleowed a superb yellow silk necktie. This was indeed splendor which contrasts favourably with the filthy night-out, the greasy shirt, the discoloured trousers, in which the author of Segesse received Mr. George Moore.

"Verlaine, as everyone knows, is no great talker; he is a purely insidious artist, who utters his opinions in quick fits and starts, by means of sonorous imagery, sometimes with designed brutality, yet always qualified by a gleam of unconscious kindness and charming boulangerie. ... When I asked him for a definition of symbolism, he said, 'You know I have some common sense; perhaps I have nothing else, but I have that. Symbolism?—don't understand it. Must be a German word, eh? What does it mean?—it doesn't matter a straw to me. When I suffer, when I am enjoying myself, or when I weep, I know well that that is no symbol. Look now, all these definitions and abstractions are just Germanisms; what does it matter to a poet what opinions Karl Schopenhauer, Hegel, and other blockheads may have on human emotions. For my part, I am French—you take me—I mean, not to be rash."

"But how is it that you have accepted the title of décadent, and what do you understand by it?—It is a very simple affair. They flung the name at us as an insult; I picked it up as a war-cry; but it means nothing in particular, that I know of. Decadent! Is not the twilight of a glorious day worth many dawns? And then, the sun which seems to set, will it not rise next morning? Decadent at bottom means just nothing at all. I tell you again it was a cry and a banner and nothing more. To fight, we want phrases! Three colours and the black eagle—that is enough: men will fight for the banner."

The interviewer, who had enjoyed the dramatic quality of Verlaine's declamations, closed with a courageous stroke—"Is it true that you are jealous of Moréas?" He drew himself up, improvised a long gesture with the right arm, moistened his fingers, rhythmically..."
twisted his moustache, and with strong emphasis uttered himself: 

"Vous ! ! !" And so this document in the study of French letters and of the poetical temperament came to a close.

The writer whose Passionate Pilgrimage was the convenient occasion for this inquiry, M. Jean Morias, while he admits that Verlaine will occupy a high place among the immortals of French poetry, refuses to acknowledge the master as other than a Parnassian—a disciple of Parnassianism, if you like, but essentially of that school. For his own part, he rejected the name of " decadent," which Verlaine had adopted as a war cry, and, in 1885, proposed the term "symbolist," as indicating sufficiently the direction of the new departure in poetry. On this our English side of the narrow sea, literature somehow contrives to live and move and have its being without banners and battlecries, schools and manifestoes. We have not found it necessary to label Mr. George Meredith a "psychologist," or Mr. Swinburne a "decadent." Perhaps we do not take art quite so seriously as our neighbors are accustomed to take it, for in politics and in theology, where we are certainly serious, Englishmen are not unpromised with parties and schools. Perhaps we have a deeper sense of the primary importance of individuality in art. Perhaps we care less for intellectual abstractions, and are content without reducing everything that is excellent to a doctrine or a formula. At least, before a school is formed in literature or art, we suppose it would be well that there should be some work to show. Work done is certainly not the strongest point in the school of symbolists. But what shall we say of M. René Ghill and his "evolutive-instrumentalist" school, which can reckon up the names of twenty-six poets—two baker's-dozen of poets—all containing nobly, side by side with their master, for "the evolutive method," all from twenty years of age to eighty-and-twenty, and nearly all of whom, as regards published work of distinction, are still perishing in the paupére-post-futuro tense? Shall we repeat a word of M. Renan which sums up his judgment on many of his young contemporaries and their endeavours: "Ce sont des enfants qui se sentent le pince"? It is a gentle word, describing a harmless and perhaps a wholesome pastime.

With not a little happiness we find ourselves for a few moments in the presence of that "august master," the word is M. Huret's, and it is the right word—Leconte de Lisle, who needs not to point to the monumental works with which he has enriched the literature of France, for they are known to us all, and we cannot praise them enough. But it is good to be assured that the master himself is noble as his work is great. For all of us," said M. de Hèredia, "for Coppée, Sully-Prudhomme, Mendes, Mallarmé, Silvestre, Canali, France, and so many others, and for myself the least of them, but not the least in sense of gratitude, this great poet had been so admirable educator, a worthy master. By his illustrious example, even more than by his advice, he has taught us respect for our noble language, and a disinterested love of poetry. We owe to him our artistic conscience. And thus anything that we may have done should go to honor part of his sum of glory." Generous words, telling of the better and happier side of the life and character of the man of letters! The speaker not unjustly commented on the lack of fraternity among the aspirants of the new movement, and their irreverence for the elder masters. "We, in the Parnassian days, I assure you, were not like this... I can remember with what pleasure we met—Boulevard des Invalides—at the house of our great friend, Leconte de Lisle, where we went on Saturdays, "as Musulmans go to Mecca." The phrase is Coppée's, and it does not say too much. Leconte de Lisle! he taught us all the art of poetry! and the counsel that he bestowed on us was not given in order that we should make verses like his own; he entered into the position of each of us: 'In your place I should write this, I should alter that.' All said brightly, fraternally! Yes, indeed, we must honor, venerate, love him, as he has loved us, with a deep and devoted affection.

"Tout favorable, ces jeunes gens!—such in brief is the judgment of Leconte de Lisle on the motley band who follow the banner of symbolism. Several of these young men are personally known to him; he has told them his opinion. When they call upon him they speak well, with a clear intelligence, like Frenchmen; and the moment they put pen to paper there is a total eclipse of all that is characteristically French, of clearness, of good sense. They become forsooth with the "amateurs de délire," of whom Baudelaire has spoken. As to the revolution which they would effect in verse, it aims at nothing less than material anarchy: "Seriously, monsieur, French verse lives by virtue of equilibrium; it dies if its balance be disturbed;" but Leconte de Lisle knows well that true freedom co-exists with order, and that the balance is not mechanical merely, but vital; not the poison of a weighing-machine, but the poison of a wave or of a bird upon the wing. "We are feeling our way, dear Master," said Henri de Rognier, a young symbolist, who, however, looks on the new school less as an abiding home of art than as a provisional place of refuge for those who are not disposed to follow in a servile way the track of the Parnassians. "Feel your way as much as you please," replied Leconte de Lisle, "you have a right to do so; but at least keep your gropings to yourself; do not grope in print. Every one has had to feel his own way. As for myself, I kept my first collection of verse in my drawer for seven years; I burnt four thousand lines; I reissued most of my pieces several times. The new poets elevate their gropings into the achievements of a school, and would impose
them on the world. 'Tis a little too much,' We cannot but admit that one who has attained supreme mastery in an art which is void and difficult is warranted in some feeling of impatience with 'ces jeunes gens,' who are experimenting, and with such incomplete results. As to the accusation of impossibility brought against those who, enthroned on Parnassus,

" live and let recline"

On the hill, the gods together,

the answer of Leconte de Lisle is admirable and perfectly just; but the outbreak will read better in French than in a translation: "Il aura-t-on bientôt fini avec cette bavure! Poetes impossibles! Abris quand on ne reconnait pas de quelle farce on boutonne son pantalon, et les péripéties de ses amoureuses, on est un poète impossible? C'est stupide." And stupid, indeed, it is. Mr. Oscar Wilde has put forth one of his happy paradoxes in words which I fear my imperfect recollection mars, but somewhat to the effect that all bad poetry proceeds from genuine feeling. It is a way of putting in shorthand the truth that in all high poetry sensibility is the subject and servant of its lord—imagination. "When I suffer, I write and verses," declared Verlaine. No: it is when his imagination has dealt nobly with his pain that he writes well; and it is this maintenance of the supremacy of imagination over sensibility which has subjected the Parnassian poets to the accusation—the unjust accusation—of impossibility.

And yet "ces jeunes gens" are not merely "fumeuses." The Parnassian movement has in great part done its work. Impossibility may degenerate with inferior writers into a trick. Of the verse wrought in noblest bronze it is possible to manufacture cheap imitations; and another kind of verse is legitimate—that woven in subtle design from the threads of the silkworm and threads of gold; say, even from the gossamer dyed in the moonbeam. If M. Leconte de Lisle has himself enriched the poetic vocabulary with words of exotic origin, is it a crime in younger poets to seek to recover some of the buried treasures of the old French speech? We have heard on our side of the Channel a complaint—not without cause—against Wardour-street English; but in truth some pretty bibelots may be obtained in Wardour Street, and even objects of more substantial utility than bibelots; everything depends on the good judgment of the purchaser, and the right choice of a place for the object which he has acquired. Last, it must be admitted on behalf of the symbolist school that their Parnassian predecessors were sometimes apt to forget those vistas in art which open upon the infinite, that play of suggestion which widens the meaning of our life, those echoes and rebounds which our inward ear

"Sometimes catches from afar."
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attaining self-knowledge, and in developing and protecting his true personality. *L'Homme libre* is a treatise on the gymnastic of the ego; showing how, with the methods of Ignatius Loyola and the *Lives of the Saints*, one may gain for the ego an experience of whatever the world contains of emotion. The *Jardin de Bérézéac* is, on the one hand, a study of methods by which to conciliate the needs of the interior life of the soul with the demands of the active life, and, on the other, an act of submission in presence of the Unconscious, which may also be named the Divine." The *roi* of M. Barra is a very charming, a very distinguished *roi*, full of solidity and address, and no wonder that its owner, who is not affected by the material necessities of existence, should be well pleased to possess it.

I have drawn freely on the discourse of many of M. Huret's subjects or victims, but I have not approached the mysterious group of "Mages," who are learned in the Cabalistic, comprehend the secret meaning of the signs of the Zodiac, hold communication with Hermes Trismegistus, repeat the Abecedarian, practise the Hocus-Pocus, and on occasional prefix to their humble Christian names the awful "Sur," a Chaldean title meaning nothing in particular. It is very pleasant to know that young people in France as in England are privileged to speak nonsense with a large utterance; that babies of grace there as well as here may suck their thumbs with a mystic significance in a peculiar fashion of their own. Else were the world a sadder world than it is. And to acknowledge the truth, one hierophant at least, M. Jules Bénis, has spoken so ingeniously and prettily, that I should gladly quote from what he says, but by this time my reader has fatigued his eye at the peep-show of marionettes, Classicists, Romanticists, Naturalists, Psychologists, Paramecians, Desadents, Symbolists, Mages. What next? In a happy variation on the nursery tale M. Charles Vignier calls on Sister Anne to climb the tower and see if there be any one coming. Yes, there are many coming; but the brothers who are to deliver the heroine of the tale from her cruel keeper have not yet appeared, and when they come perhaps we shall mistake them for sellers of olives.

Edward Dowden.

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