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## ANGRY YOUNG POET OF THE THIRTIES

THE COMPLETION OF JOHN LEHMANN'S autobiography with *I Am My Brother* (1960), begun with *The Whispering Gallery* (1955), brings back to mind, among a score of other largely forgotten matters, the fact that there were angry young poets in England long before those of last year—or was it year before last? The most outspoken of the much earlier dissident young verse writers were probably the three who made up the so-called "Oxford group", W. H. Auden, Stephen Spender, and C. Day Lewis. (Properly speaking they were never a group in college, though they knew one another as undergraduates and were interested in one another's work.) Whether taken together or singly, they differed markedly from the young poets who have recently been given the label "angry". What these latter day "angries" are angry about is difficult to determine, unless indeed it is merely for the sake of being angry. Moreover, they seem to have nothing constructive to suggest in cure of whatever it is that disturbs them. In sharp contrast, those whom they have displaced (briefly) were angry about various conditions and situations that they were ready and eager to name specifically. And, as we shall see in a moment, they were prepared to do something about them.

What the angry young poets of Lehmann's generation were angry about was the heritage of the first World War: the economic crisis, industrial collapse, chronic unemployment, and the increasing threat of a second World War. Though of well-to-do middle-class families, they turned against their parents' way of life and their political "philosophy" with its "colony-grabbing" consequences. A partial listing of those consequences occurs in these lines from "Arms and the Man", a poem written by Julian Bell and published in *New Signatures*, a small anthology of verse representing "a reaction against the kind of poetry that had been fashionable hitherto," issued in 1932 from the Hogarth Press where Lehmann was employed as an editor. (Julian Bell was a contemporary of Auden's at Oxford. He was killed in the Spanish Civil War, fighting on the side of the Loyalists.)

Down the black streets, dark with unwanted coal  
 The harassed miners wait the grudging dole; . . .  
 On every hand the stagnant ruin spreads,  
 And closed are shops and fac'tries, mines and sheds.

Compare the relatively controlled, though menacing, tone of that statement with the hammer-and-tongs effect of another written by a poet whom Lehmann calls "the most remarkable of the 'thirties" for a fairly typical sample of the utterance of which the angriest of the early days' angry young protestants was capable when really worked up. It may be found in Auden's *Poems* (1930).

Get there if you can and see the land you once were proud to own  
 Though the roads have almost vanished and the expresses never run:

Smokeless chimneys, damaged bridges, rotting wharves and closed canals,  
 Tramlines buckled, smashed trucks lying on their sides across the rails;

Squeeze into the works through broken windows or through damp-sprung doors;  
 See the rotted shafting, see holes gaping in the upper floors;

Where the Sunday lads come talking motor bicycle and girl,  
 Smoking cigarettes in chains until their heads are in a whirl.

The family and social scene on the level of the allegedly more fortunate is presented in even more devastating detail:

At the theatre, playing tennis, driving motor cars we had,  
 In our continental villas, mixing cocktails for a cad,

When we asked the way to Heaven, these directed us ahead  
 To the padded room, the clinic, and the hangman's little shed.

Intimate as war-time prisoners in an isolation camp,  
 Living month by month together, nervy, famished, lousy, damp.

Or, in friendly fireside circle, sit and listen for the crash,  
 Meaning that the mob has realized something's up, and start to smash.

The outcome:

Engine-drivers with their oil-cans, factory girls in overalls  
 Blowing sky-high monster stores, destroying intellectuals?

What to do—and Auden doesn't exempt himself and his fellows:

Shut up talking, charming in the best suits to be had in town,  
 Lecturing on navigation while the ship is going down,

Drop those priggish ways for ever, stop behaving like a stone:  
Throw the bath-chairs right away, and learn to leave ourselves alone.

If we really want to live, we'd better start at once to try;  
If we don't, it doesn't matter, but we'd better start to die.

But Auden was not content to leave the future to the results of those despairing alternatives, least of all to the second. Disillusioned as he was, he had something positive and even hopeful to propose. It stemmed from the fact that he accepted the Marxist explanation of the social plight everywhere visible about him, and the Marxist prediction of an inevitable class war, though he was far from being fully converted to Communism. Although he was a professed pacifist, he was ready to support a defensive operation against "the enemy," a generic term that he used to name whomever and whatever he found himself opposed to. These were especially the capitalists who had begun to plot a further repression of the dispossessed and discontented, and who, he was persuaded, had indeed already initiated overt action to that end. His first poem in *New Signatures*, "An Ode (To My Pupils)", written while he was still school-mastering, urges military preparation for a counter-attack. (It is re-titled "Which Side Am I Supposed to Be On?" in his *Collected Poetry*, and so, after a lapse of only a decade, seemingly changed from a threat to a query.) "You've a very full programme," he tells his imagined auditors,

. . . , first-aid, gunnery, tactics,  
The technique to master of raids and hand-to-hand fighting:  
Are you in training,  
Are you taking care of yourself, are you sure of passing  
The endurance test?

The first article to be learned in their new code of conduct is, "Death to the squealer!" Emulate the bravery of those who have preceded you in action, even "though our newspapers mention their bravery / In inverted commas." Keep back of our lines; it's unsafe outside them. No more passes will be issued. All leaves are cancelled.

"That rifle-sight you're designing; is it ready yet?  
You're holding us up; the office is getting impatient:  
The square munition works . . .  
Needs stricter watching;  
If you see any loiterers there you may shoot without warning,  
We must stop that leakage."

This call-to-arms motif runs straight through both editions of *Poems* (1930, 1933), and is supplemented in the second by verse excerpts from *The Orators* (1932)

and from various plays of equal date. In the poem "1929" Auden forthrightly declared,

"It is time for the destruction of error . . . .  
 We know it, we know that love  
 Needs more than the admiring excitement of union, . . .  
 Needs death, death of the grain, our death,  
 Death of the old gang; . . ."

A birthday poem (allegedly written before 1930, but not printed until 1936) addressed to Christopher Isherwood, Auden's long-time friend and collaborator in play-writing, urges massive resistance against "the expanding fear, the savaging disaster" caused by the capitalist-made evils; and a poem from "An Airman's Journal" (in *The Orators*) details a revolutionary plan for all-out war on the evil-makers. Tight-lipped secrecy is imposed on all combatants in the ironically named "Shut Your Eyes and Open Your Mouth". "The Secret Agent" points out the dangers and disappointments that even the trained spy enlisted in the cause of right must count on. "Do Be Careful" warns against the danger of venturing beyond "the companionship of a game" in striking up acquaintance with agreeable-seeming strangers. "Let History Be My Judge," looking back on what was demanded of the revolters, recalls that "there could be no question of living / If we did not win."

Alongside the "call-to-arms" theme in his poems of the early 'thirties, Auden develops a second, that of the insistent sense of doom which hangs over modern, and especially over English, "civilization." It was out of his reaction to this prevailing mood that arose the defiant and vehement response announced in the first. "Always in Trouble" (from the charade *Paid on Both Sides*) predicts that "the watcher in the dark", an image of the awakening conscience of Auden's guilty generation, will enable them to "See clear what we were doing, that we were vile." Their "sudden hand / Shall humble great / Pride, break it, and wear down to stumps old systems. . . ." "It's Too Much" reveals, in imagery similar to that employed in the poem quoted above depicting the desolation of the English industrial area during the depression years, that

. . . These gears which ran in oil for week  
 By week, needing no look, now will not work;  
 Those manors mortgaged twice to pay for love  
 Go to another.

A third theme, so closely associated as now and then to coalesce with the first two, is also woven into the texture of Auden's opening of the "thirties" poems. It is menacingly prophetic of the coming needed changes in the feudal world's

social structure. While it carries "the good news to a world in danger," in "Adolescence" its spokesman receives only "odd welcome" from the land he wants to save, and is greeted with cries of "Deceiver." But to those opposing and mistaken "Seekers after happiness" is issued the warning in "Consider": "It is later than you think; . . ." Yet such warning serves only to provoke the enemies' general fear of change in "Such Nice People" into "a scare / At certain names [Auden's, Spender's, Day Lewis's, and their like] . . . / Solemn and not so good." With "Venus Will Now Say a Few Words" that scare is made specific: "Do not imagine you can abdicate; / Before you reach the frontier you are caught." It is made even more explicit in these lines, omitted from the *Collected Poetry* version of "Consider":

Financier, leaving your little room  
 Where the money is made but not spent,  
 You'll need your typist and your boy no more;  
 The game is up for you and for the others,  
 Who, thinking, pace in slippers on the lawns  
 Of College Quads or Cathedral Close, . . .

"Song," published in 1933 in *New Verse*, a bi-monthly pamphlet edited by John Lehmann and "planned to reflect the revolutionary ferment of the time," reiterates in a constantly varied refrain-line that the world of the would-be abdicators is "a world that has had its day."

A merciless satire, done in doggerel, with its chief victims named in thin disguise, was included with the rest of the miscellany in *The Orators*:

Beethemeer [Rothermere], Beethemeer, bully of Britain,  
 With your face as fat as a farmer's bum;  
 Though you pose in private as a playful kitten  
 Though the public you poison are pretty well dumb,  
 They shall turn on their betrayer when the time is come  
 The cousins you cheated shall recover their nerve  
 And give you the thrashing you richly deserve.

Heathcliffe [Northcliffe] before you as a newspaper peer:  
 I'm the sea-dog, he said, who shall steer this ship;  
 I advertise idiocy, uplift, and fear,  
 I succor the State, I shoot from the hip;  
 He grasped at God but God gave him the slip.  
 Life gave him one look and he lost his nerve,  
 So you'll get the thrashing you richly deserve.

Possibly Auden's more violent denunciations of "the enemy" has suggested the question, "Just how angry can an angry young poet get?" Auden himself

has supplied the answer and set the standard. In *New Country* (1933), a sequel to *New Signatures* in a poem called "A Communist to Others," he lashed out with,

Let fever sweat them till they tremble,  
Cramp rack their limbs till they resemble  
    Cartoons by Goya:  
Their daughters sterile be in rut,  
May cancer rot their herring gut,  
The circular madness on them shut,  
    Or paranoia.

Luckily for his reputation as a poet, Auden omitted the poem containing that stanza, and others only less outrageous, from the volume of his collected verse although he reprinted it in *On This Island* as number XIV, without a title. That omission may have proved a piece of Auden's good luck in another way also, in that it perhaps saved him from an inquiry, on the part of the Congressional Committee on Un-American Activities, into his eligibility for United States citizenship, when he came to apply for and obtained it, in 1946. But, then, American Congressmen, according to the record, are not much given to reading poetry, in print or out. Why the late Senator McCarthy, with his venomous nuzzling along the trail of possibly subversive evidence, however far back it might lead, failed to turn it up is not so easy to account for.

In the course of the 1933 edition of the *Poems*, and in verse printed in other media of about the same date, Auden occasionally steps up the intensity of his call to action until it seems that armed conflict between the upper and lower classes has actually been joined. On the other hand the sense of doom is now and then diminished—this through the frequent urging of the redemptive power of love. But not of the self- and sex-centered romantic love. That he numbered among the evils of the dominant social order. When transcended, however, into an idealization of its values, he pays to romantic love high tribute. He was too much of an individualist, and too devoted to a belief in individual worth, to do otherwise. Loneliness he shunned, but isolation he sought—and found it, too, even in the crowds with which his redeemed personal love impelled him to mingle. It was needed, he felt, for both contemplation and creation.

Allusions to the doom-dispelling promise of reformed romantic love, and to the ensuing humanistic (socialized) love to which it is bound to lead, are increasingly recurrent, as in "Perhaps", the Prologue to *New Country*:

Yet, O, at this very moment of a hopeless sigh,  
Some possible dream, long coiled in the ammonite's slumber

Is uncurling, prepared to lay on our talk and reflection  
 Its military silence, its surgeon's idea of pain;

[that] Drives through the night and star-concealing dawn  
 For the virgin roadsteads of our hearts unwavering keel.

Who would guess, "Father's Footsteps" asks, that the dreamed of needed love was

. . . by nature suited to  
 The intricate ways of guilt,  
 To hunger, work illegally,  
 And be anonymous?

In "I Shall Be Enchanted" the hero, who fights his way to victory over the usual barriers set up by the stand-pat opposition, unspells the power of "your finite [*i.e.* limited] love" that has held his faithful lady in bondage. "To You Simply," from *New Signatures* (and called there "Poem") confirms the power of spontaneous personal love, "Said at the start / About heart / By heart, for heart", that requires no purification from any disabling qualities. "Paysage Moralisé", from T. S. Eliot's former days' quarterly, *The Criterion*, suggests as a means of escape from the threat of impending doom the rebuilding of "our cities", which Auden condemns for their constricting usages, instead of dreaming about impossible-to-attain Utopian "islands", though he warns, in "It's So Dull Here", if that task is to be undertaken, of the necessity of adjusting "in our gaucheness" to the realization that "The neighbours' strongest wish [will be] to serve and love."

It would appear futile to argue that by 1933 Auden had not become thoroughly emancipated from his earlier dominating sense of doom. Yet there is still some evidence that makes it plausible to maintain that by that date he had progressed but a short distance, if at all, in shaking himself clear of despair. "Year After Year," originally in *Paid on Both Sides*, reiterates the theme of unrelieved defeat with its symbolic figure of the ruined farmer:

His fields are used up where the moles visit,  
 The contours worn flat; if there show  
 Passage for water he will miss it:  
 Give up his breath, his woman, his team.

The prayer-poem, numbered XVII in *The Orators*, begs, "Not, Father, further do prolong / Our necessary defeat". And in poem XXXIII in *Paid On Both Sides* there is not even a plea for mercy—only acceptance of what must be endured, "When we shall choose from ways, / All of them evil, one;"

Not long after their leaving Oxford, Auden followed Christopher Isherwood

on a visit to Berlin. They left England disheartened with its failure to attempt a reform of its regnant social evils, and its indifference to the consequences. In Germany, they had been led to believe, they would find exemplary progress made towards a just settlement of the conflict between social classes. They were disillusioned and disappointed. What progress of the sort they hoped to discover had been made, they learned, at the price of a strict conformity to a state-imposed code of living which suppressed all individual responsibility for either a public or a private morality. Auden, from the time of his first interest in Marxism, had consistently rejected its theory that morals of any sort were the product of environment. Though treated with great cordiality by the host of friends they made in the third Reich, they were conscious always of a threat of terror lurking behind the mask of sociability. It was, of course, the creeping shadow of Hitler's Nazism. Thomas Wolfe, the American novelist, had noted the same thing during a tour of Germany of about the same date. And John Lehmann had observed it too, in Austria, calling it an "emptiness" that, in his words, could be filled by only one thing: "the impulse to destroy."

There is small cause for wonder, then, that Auden's next volume of verse, *On This Island* (1936), and the few of his poems that immediately preceded it (which might fairly enough be presumed to reflect his reactions to his experiences in Germany) show no diminution of his sense of gloom. Indeed it is more prevalent than ever. And the hope of society's discovering the redemptive power of love is almost non-existent. The call to arms theme, perhaps more significantly, has disappeared from all but a single poem. Auden had learned at least one lesson in Germany that tempered his anger: needed civil change can be effected without the bloodshed of civil war. Conditions in England, however, continue as the source of his forebodings. The amenities of upper-class diversions in the arts and outdoor recreation, as sardonically catalogued in "The Cultural Presupposition" (from *The Dog Beneath the Skin*), serve only to conceal "the sigh of the most numerous and the most poor; the thud of their falling bodies . . ." "Casino" reveals the gaming rich in no more admirable light; for here, whatever may be the Monte Carlo the poet has in mind, "The fountain is deserted; the laurel will not grow; . . . And what was godlike in this generation / Was never to be born." In one of the numbered and untitled poems in *On This Island*, Auden speaks of "The common wish for death," which he comes increasingly to record as current among his unhappy countrymen. Even in Iceland, where Auden had gone with his fellow-poet, Louis MacNeice, in the hope of getting away from all that was distressing at home, he

has to admit that, "The blood moves also by crooked and furtive inches, / Asks all our questions: 'Where is the homage? When / Shall justice be done?'"

Back in England "with its byres of poverty", he finds again "its cathedral[s], its engines, . . . And the light alloys and the glass",

Built by the conscience-stricken, the weapon-making,  
By us. Wild rumours woo and terrify the crowd,  
Woo us. Betrayers thunder at, blackmail  
Us. But where now are They

Who without reproaches showed us what our vanity  
has chosen,  
Who . . . had unlearnt  
Our hatred and towards the really better  
world had turned their face?

Who "They" were the *Collected Poetry* does not tell us, but the original version, in *On This Island*, does: Nansen (the explorer), Dr. Schweitzer, Freud, Groddeck (the psychotherapist), D. H. Lawrence, Kafka, and Proust. An unnamed personal poem, first printed in *The Ascent of F6*, but revised for inclusion in a later published volume of verse under the title "Funeral Blues", seems to furnish the appropriate line for concluding this inescapably depressing survey of Auden's earliest post-Germany gloom: "For nothing now can ever come to any good."

Auden's recurrent concern with love in *On This Island* is only slightly less gloomy than his use of the equally recurrent threat, now become certainty, of the doom theme. The gloom is almost as deep because this love is the engrossed-in-self variety that he deplored as among the underlying causes of his homeland's social and economic plight. The autumn mood of the prevalent state in England is thus expressed, perhaps not too cryptically:

Whispering neighbours, left and right,  
Pluck us from the real delight;  
And the active hands must freeze  
Lonely on the separate knees.

Auden's cynicism over the prospect that confronts him everywhere is strikingly conveyed in a piece of his "cabaret verse" included in *Letters From Iceland*, of a date just one year later than that of *On This Island*, repeating "Death's soft answer" to complaining farmers and fishermen:

The earth is an oyster with nothing inside it,  
Not to be born is best for man;

and to sobered dreamers and drunkards:

The desires of the heart are as crooked as corkscrews.  
 Not to be born is the best for man;  
 The second best is a formal order,  
 The dance's pattern: Dance while you can.

During 1937 Auden served as a stretcher-bearer in the Spanish Civil War on the side of the Loyalists. In 1938, in company with Christopher Isherwood, he visited China and saw the effects of fighting there against the invading Japanese fascists. He returned home across the Pacific and the United States. What he saw of the Americans must have impressed him favourably, for in 1939 he established residence among them, giving as one of his reasons the hope, based on their freedom from the dead hand of tradition, that they might some day effect the social reforms he despaired of ever seeing made in England. One of the changes in his beliefs resulting from his migration overseas westward is of supreme importance in the ensuing message of his poetry: the change from his belief in the redemptive power of humanistic love to belief in that of Christian love. This, according to those who should know, was owing to his reading in the works of Kierkegaard and listening to the teachings of Reinhold Niebuhr. It may seem surprising, then, to find that the call to arms, almost completely dropped from *On This Island*, is revived in his next volume of poems, *Another Time*. But though *Another Time* was published in 1940, most of its contents were written well before that date, and so are more consistently a record of the consequences of his experiences in Germany than of those in America. In "Our Bias" we are told that Auden's conventional-minded contemporaries had dodged their responsibilities, preferring "some going round to / To going straight to where we are", and were dreaming of the past when they could have pointed with equanimity to "Mine and His or Ours and Theirs." But now, so he drives home the hard truth he had come by in his war-time service, set down in one of his most admirable poems, "Spain 1937", the word is "today the struggle."

We are left alone with our day, and the time is short and  
 History to the defeated  
 May say Alas but cannot help or pardon.

The certainty, rather than the threat, of doom that began to emerge as a conviction in *On This Island* is repeatedly reaffirmed in *Another Time*. Note, for instance, the enemy agent of "Gare du Midi", who "Clutching a little case / . . . walks out briskly to infect a city"; and the downrightness of this statement in the memorial poem to Yeats:

In the nightmare of the dark  
 All the dogs of Europe bark  
 And the shining nations wait  
 Each sequestered in its hate;

The fate in store for us implied by such passages is not much mitigated by the concession, in "Hongkong 1938", that "For what we are, we have ourselves to blame." But the certainty of doom reaches its most moving utterance in two poems which obviously stem from what Auden observed in Germany of the operations there of Hitler's secret police. Number XXIV of the "Songs and Musical Pieces" section of the *Collected Poetry* appeared as early as 1934 in *New Writing*, and is not included in *Another Time*. But by virtue of its subject-matter it belongs with the other gloomy end-of-the-thirties poems. Its question and answer structure, conveying an alternately progressive threat and diminishing comfort, reaches its culmination with the hunted one's collapse and final cry of terror:

O it's broken the lock and splintered the door,  
 O it's the gate where they're turning, turning;  
 Their boots are heavy on the floor  
 And their eyes are burning.

Number XXVIII in the same group of poems (but included in *Another Time*) is fearlessly explicit in naming the Jews as the intended victims of Der Fuehrer's ruthless vindictiveness: "... I heard a thunder rumbling in the sky / It was Hitler over Europe saying 'They must die.'" In the sonnet sequence of "In Time of War", number XII, first printed in *New Verse* in 1936, and called there "The Economic Man", asserts that the worshippers of the golden calf, though defeated, still

... without remorse  
 Struck down the sons who strayed into their course,  
 And ravished the daughters, and drove the fathers mad.

Number XIV, "Air Raid", published first in *The New Republic* in 1938, sweeps into "The private massacres [that] are taking place / All Women, Jews, the Rich, the Human Race." With "Danse Macabre", (untitled in *Another Time*) coming to much the same conclusion, Auden makes an amusing switch in his choice of a hero for one of his poems. This time that honour goes to, of all persons, the Devil, since it is he whom "The Happy-Go-Lucky" spokesman for the capitalistic rich portrays as the very embodiment of the troublesome masses' desires. So, he says,

The star in the West shoots its warning cry:  
 "Mankind is alive, but Mankind must die."

Of those who escape, if any, sonnet XXI of "In Time of War", called "Exiles" when printed in *The New Republic* in 1938, reports only that "Loss is their shadow-wife, Anxiety / receives them like a grand hotel."

Though conceding that the prospect for reform is thus anything but hopeful, Auden is not discouraged. Even from the carnage of the war in the Orient, he brought back this word in "Chinese Soldier", the original title of number XVIII of "In Time of War":

Abandoned by his general and his lice,  
Under a padded quilt he closed his eyes  
And vanished. . . .  
He neither knew nor chose the Good, but taught us,  
And added meaning like a comma, when  
He turned to dust in China that our daughters  
Be fit to love the earth, and not again  
Disgraced before the dogs; that, where are waters,  
Mountains and houses, may be also men;

He asks in a poem called "Schoolchildren" if "The storm of tears shed in a corner" by the martyrs of classroom tyranny are not "The seeds of the new life?" In *Another Time* an impressive number of poems goes far towards breaking the impact of an apparent surrender to the powers of evil. The way out of the impasse for Auden was, of course, the prospect of Christian love replacing the humanistic love to which he had been intermittently pinning his faith before leaving England to live in the United States. The change in his outlook as at least something to be wished for is clearly evident in "September 1939", a piece of his earliest written American verse appearing in *The New Republic*. "Uncertain and afraid", he admits that he, like those all about him, is "Lost in a haunted wood" craving not for "universal love / But to be loved alone." Yet even so this is his prayer:

May I, composed like them  
Of Eros and of dust,  
Beleaguered by the same  
Negation and despair,  
Show an affirming flame.

In the opening poem of "Songs and Other Musical Pieces", originally in *Another Time*, he urges his reader,

O stand, stand at the window  
As the tears scald and start;  
You shall love your crooked neighbour  
With your crooked heart.

Even as early as 1938, and before he had left England, he wrote in "Oxford" that though "Here too the knowledge of death / Is a consuming love",

. . . the natural heart refuses  
The low unflattering voice  
That rests not till it find a hearing.

In "The Prophets", contributed to *The Southern Review* in 1939, and addressed to the spirit of redemptive love (or to a person who embodies it), he confesses that even amid the abandoned factories and mines of the early *Poems* he had found in "The calm with which they took complete desertion" a "proof that you existed."

[And] now I have the answer from the face  
[That] asks for all my life, and is the Place  
Where all I touch is moved to an embrace,  
And there is no such thing as a vain look.

This virtual acceptance of a changed way of life is confirmed and made specific in the Epilogue to "New Year Letter", published separately in *The Nation* as "Autumn 1940", by the declaration that,

In a darkness of tribulation and death,  
While blizzards havoc the gardens, and the old  
Folly becomes unsafe, the mill-wheels  
Rust and the weirs fall slowly to pieces,

and when "But few have seen Jesus and so many / Judas the Abyss",

Let the lips do formal contrition  
For whatever is going to happen;  
And the shabby structure of indolent flesh  
Give a resonant echo to the Word which was  
From the beginning, and the shining  
Light be comprehended by the darkness.

Whatever of wrath is left in the Auden of the end of the 1930's, and there is plenty of it, belongs under the heading of "righteous indignation." The angry young poet of the various editions of *Poems*, and of his early plays, has come a long way towards the chastened mood of a thoroughly humble one.