

1920

(MAUBERLEY)

I.



URNED from the "eau-forte
Par Jaquemart"
To the strait head
Of Messalina :

"His true Penelope
Was Flaubert",
And his tool
The engraver's

Firmness,
Not the full smile,
His art, but an art
In profile ;

Colourless
Pier Francesca,
Pisanello lacking the skill
To forge Achaia.

II

“ Qu'est ce qu'ils savent de l'amour, et qu'est ce qu'ils peuvent comprendre ?

S'ils ne comprennent pas la poésie, s'ils ne sentent pas la musique, qu'est ce qu'ils peuvent comprendre de cette passion en comparaison avec laquelle la rose est grossière et le parfum des violettes un tonnerre ? ”

CAID ALI



OR three years, diabolus in the scale,
He drank ambrosia,
All passes, ANANGKE prevails,
Came end, at last, to that Arcadia.

He had moved amid her phantasmagoria,
Amid her galaxies,
NUKTIS "AGALMA

Drifted . . . drifted precipitate,
Asking time to be rid of . . .
Of his bewilderment ; to designate
His new found orchid. . .

To be certain . . . certain . . .
(Amid ærial flowers) . . time for arrangements—
Drifted on
To the final estrangement ;

Unable in the supervening blankness
To sift TO AGATHON from the chaff
Until he found his seive . . .
Ultimately, his seismograph :

—Given, that is, his urge
 To convey the relation
 Of eye-lid and cheek-bone
 By verbal manifestation ;
 To present the series
 Of curious heads in medallion--

He had passed, unconscious, full gaze,
 The wide-banded irises
 And botticellian sprays implied
 In their diastasis ;

Which anæsthesia, noted a year late,
 And weighed, revealed his great affect,
 (Orchid), mandate
 Of Eros, a retrospect.

Mouths biting empty air,
 The still stone dogs,
 Caught in metamorphosis were,
 Left him as epilogues.

"THE AGE DEMANDED"

VIDE POEM II. Page 10



OR this agility chance found
 Him of all men, unfit
 As the red-beaked steeds of
 The Cytheræan for a chain-bit.

The glow of porcelain
 Brought no reforming sense
 To his perception
 Of the social inconsequence.

Thus, if her colour
 Came against his gaze,
 Tempered as if
 It were through a perfect glaze

He made no immediate application
 Of this to relation of the state
 To the individual, the month was more temperate
 Because this beauty had been

.....

The coral isle, the lion-coloured sand
 Burst in upon the porcelain revery :
 Impetuous troubling
 Of his imagery.

.....

Mildness, amid the neo-Neitzschean clatter,
 His sense of graduations,
 Quite out of place amid
 Resistance to current exacerbations

Invitation, mere invitation to perceptivity
 Gradually led him to the isolation
 Which these presents place
 Under a more tolerant, perhaps, examination.

By constant elimination
 The manifest universe
 Yielded an armour
 Against utter consternation,

A Minoan undulation,
 Seen, we admit, amid ambrosial circumstances
 Strengthened him against
 The discouraging doctrine of chances

And his desire for survival,
 Faint in the most strenuous moods,
 Became an Olympian *apathem*
 In the presence of selected perceptions.

A pale gold, in the aforesaid pattern,
 The unexpected palms
 Destroying, certainly, the artist's urge,
 Left him delighted with the imaginary
 Audition of the phantasmal sea-surge,
 Incapable of the least utterance or composition,
 Emendation, conservation of the "better tradition",
 Refinement of medium, elimination of superfluities,
 August attraction or concentration.

Nothing in brief, but maudlin confession
 Irrésponse to human aggression,
 Amid the precipitation, down-float
 Of insubstantial manna
 Lifting the faint susurrus
 Of his subjective hosannah.

Ultimate affronts to human redundancies ;

Non-esteem of self-styled "his betters"
 Leading, as he well knew,
 To his final
 Exclusion from the world of letters.

IV.



CATTERED Moluccas
 Not knowing, day to day,
 The first days end, in the next noon ;
 The placid water
 Unbroken by the Simoon ;

Thick foliage
 Placid beneath warm suns,
 Tawn fore-shores
 Washed in the cobalt of oblivions ;

Or through dawn-mist
 The grey and rose
 Of the juridical
 Flamingoes ;

A consciousness disjunct,
 Being but this overblotted
 Series
 Of intermittences ;

Coracle of Pacific voyages,
 The unforecasted beach :
 Then on an oar
 Read this :

“I was
 And I no more exist ;
 Here drifted
 An hedonist ”

MEDALLION



UINI in porcelain !
 The grand piano
 Utters a profane
 Protest with her clear soprano.

The sleek head emerges
 From the gold-yellow frock
 As Anadyomene in the opening
 Pages of Reinach.

Honey-red, closing the face-oval
 A basket-work of braids which seem as if they were
 Spun in King Minos' hall
 From metal, or intractable amber ;

The face-oval beneath the glaze,
 Bright in its suave bounding-line, as
 Beneath half-watt rays
 The eyes turn topaz.