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THE ATHENÆUM
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9/3/48

Dear Robin,

Here is a short note on

JMK, which you may think worth
having on to Harrod.

Yours

Bernard Southwick

Although M. was loyal to Eton, and was genuinely gratified when he was made a fellow of the College, I don't think Eton can claim to have sown in him the seeds of those interests which gave him such a full life. The range of the curriculum was very narrow, and it was not greatly widened by what we learnt for ourselves, by reading, or from each other. "Nature Study" did not exist for anyone but boys who joined an ad hoc society; the ordinary College attended a few lessons in very elementary chemistry, where he was shown experiments such as please school-children, and that was all the Natural Science he got. Speaking for myself, I literally was never told the meaning of the words Physics, Biology, or Geology; to this day, I don't know where to look for the moon. Somebody told us that Adam Smith had drawn attention to the Division of Labour, and the harm done by restraints in trade, and that was all the Political Economy we knew. We heard of the Crusades vaguely, because some English princes took the Cross, and we knew the names of two or three Popes who gave trouble to England, and that was all we knew of European History from 100 A.D. to 1453 A.D. of the history of Asia and America, outside the British Empire, we learnt nothing. of Architecture we learnt literally nothing; of how to look at pictures, or listen to music, only a few, who had a natural bent, learnt anything at all. Our classical reading may have been intensive, certainly it was not extensive (I remember taking three halves over one play of Sophocles) and it was almost wholly unillustrated from archaeological sources. There was a feeling that it was a good thing to read "English Literature" in one's spare time; here, duty only occasionally merged into pleasure.

I record all this to show that M. did not get from Eton his medievalism (Bernart of Clermont, Abelard etc.), his bibliophilia, his interest in genealogy (he traced the ~~de~~ Calhaigne family back to Charlemagne) — still less his interest in painting, music, & ballet.

In College, emotion and desire were directed almost exclusively towards the male sex — I knew hardly anyone who ever thought of women. This does not mean that there was a great deal

of "vice"; indeed, it was looked on with disapproval, not untinged with envy, by the many who repressed their desires through shyness or virtue. M. shared the general feeling: I do not know that he was reputed to indulge it. At Cambridge, he was deeply moved by Plato's pictures of passion spiritualized. He told me the history of his love for a fellow-undergraduate, who liked and admired him, but refused physical relations.

I stayed with him at Cambridge in those days more than once, and he with me at Oxford. I remember his taking me to a Society which had a new name at each meeting: on that occasion, it was called "The Confessional". The regular Society house was "The Birds, the Holy Ghost." I think Lytton Strachey, L. S. Woolf, and H. Lamb were there.

Byrne taking me to the "Birds" of Aristophanes, he told me of his delight in a brilliant lecture by A. W. Verrall on the play, making it out to be an anticipatory sketch of Christianity; I think the actors played up to this by pronouncing the Greek word for a messenger in the manner of the English word Angel.

He showed me a solid volume by his grandfather, the Congregationalist Minister, dispraising the Apostolical Succession.

When I was in England — probably in 1923 — he told me that eminent Americans were continually coming to him to be told what they should think about this question or that; he said they seemed to have no intuitions. He was attracted by the theory that the human race could not thrive in N. America (when it was "discovered", the population was extraordinarily small) and that it would gradually die out.

Not H. Lamb
I think!

Framework of Agenda.

Preamble.

Each party to such conversations as their most needs have particular interests, which their representatives are instructed to safeguard or promote. The overriding interest of the United Kingdom is to reach mutual understanding with the United States and an agreed basis for action. We ~~hope that~~ ^{believe} this ^{to be} a ~~common~~ ^{to be common} interest. It follows that it is ^{as} expedient, as it certainly is proper, for us to ^{refer to the} ~~settle~~ ^{settle} at the outset ^{to} such self-regarding interests as may not ~~be common~~ affect ~~equally~~ the two parties equally. We shall then call ~~know~~ ^{where} with the other strands. We ~~hope that~~ ^{believe} ~~to~~ removing (the greatest barrier to mutual understanding) ~~the~~ ^{all} suspicion of undisclosed motives, we may destroy ~~it~~.

The self-regarding interests of the United Kingdom are for the most part connected with one anxiety about our future "balance of payments."

Some calculations estimates have been made which give grounds for uneasiness. These make assumptions about an incalculable future and are therefore unreliable. In particular they cannot take full account of the advantages which may flow from Anglo-American co-operation.

Yet certain broad tendencies cannot be gainsaid. In last war reduced our foreign balance; and in the thirties it was precarious. The present war must make further inroads. We have lost income-earning assets; and the ~~settlement~~ ^{difficulties} of overseas trading ^{are} compelling many countries to fend for themselves where before they relied on British exports.

Now, although this matter of the United Kingdom balance must be a more vital interest for the United Kingdom than for the United States, since it concerns her very means of life and industry, it is yet it is ~~also~~ an interest for the United States. We calculate that we require to export, in round numbers, about 1000 million worth of produce each year, at present values. If our exports ~~fall~~ ^{fall} below this level, ~~there will be no means of~~ ^{we would} ~~escape it~~ ^{would} be necessary to impose severe restrictions upon our import trade. ~~This is a predicament from which there is no~~ ^{escape} ~~escape. And because so large a proportion of our imports are quite indispensable,~~ ^{would} ~~our measures for excluding all that can be spared~~ ^{would} ~~would~~ ^{have to be} correspondingly savage.

Such measures might be a bad precedent and example. Can we expect all nations to enter upon a more liberal policy of international exchange, sometimes against conviction, when such an important trading nation and a signatory of the Atlantic Charter is steering an opposite course?

Furthermore, failing an adequate export vent, it will be difficult to avoid deflation and industrial depression ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ this country. But this would handicap us in ^{encouraging} ~~promoting~~ ~~world~~ ^{world} ~~will~~ ^{will} measures of "expansion".

1. I do not know whether it is intended to show our estimates to the Americans. The wording of the text should be devised to accord with our intention.