

as weathercocks, — but because they help to bring up our admirations to the surface of our consciousness and, by challenging and contradicting them, help to strengthen them. They will do us no harm even if in our innocence we accept their authority for a time. Most of us in our youth have admired thoroughly bad work on the authority of the newest kind of æsthete. That does not matter, however. We have to realize how little authority the opinions of most other people have before we venture on definite opinions of our own. Having realized this, we no longer care whether we admire the Right Thing or not. The Right Thing in the arts changes like a fashion in clothes. It is a social hobby, and has no relation to the pleasure we take in a poem or a picture or a symphony.

I do not suggest that there are no authoritative standards by which we can judge a work of art. But the standards are in the artists, not in the critics, as Mr. Priestley points out in the *London Mercury*. The standards by which we can judge poetry are to be found in Homer, Shakespeare, and Wordsworth. These, it may be said, are only authors we are supposed to admire because succeeding generations have accepted them as demigods. Well, it

seems to me that the demigod of succeeding generations should never be overthrown except for grave reasons. If I must bow to authority, I had rather bow to the demigod of three centuries than to the demigod of three seasons.

It is a second-rate pleasure, however, to imitate an opinion, even if it is the right opinion, and we enjoy works of art only on condition that we do not admire them because we are supposed to admire them. Obviously there is a pleasure in being 'in the movement'; otherwise we should not see so many people crowding into the magic circle. There may even be virtue in it; it implies some kind of sociability, and makes for agreeable light conversation. But on the whole, in our enjoyment, whether of a book or of a bridge, we should do well to lay to heart the lines of the old hymn — which was not, I fancy, very good poetry: —

Dare to be a Daniel,
Dare to stand alone.

After all, even if you do admire Hungerford Bridge, or the outside of Milan Cathedral, and say so, the world has survived worse shocks than that. Besides, other things being equal, it is always more amusing to speak the truth.

EPITAPHS IN ADVANCE¹

BY HUMBERT WOLFE

III. GEORGE MOORE

WOMEN he praised and, after women, art.
Good friends he had, and used them all for copy.
Had but his genius matched as great a heart,
Time had not mixed his laurels with the poppy.

¹ From the *Spectator*

TRAIN COMPANIONS IN JAPAN¹

BY PROFESSOR LEOPOLD WINKLER

OUR train leaves Tokyo for the Northwest and eventually the borders of the Japan Sea. I travel second class, for the first class was abolished a few years ago as too undemocratic for this country. There are no compartments. Two green-upholstered seats run down the sides of the long open car. A Japanese hates to be alone — in fact, a favorite expression of courtesy is to wish that you may be spared that calamity.

Outside, the warm Southern sun shines in the bluest of blue winter heavens — so warmly that we are occasionally forced to draw the shades, and early plum-blossoms are blushing on drowsily nodding boughs. It is the end of January and we are in the latitude of Naples. Oh, glorious, caressing beauty of the Southland! Yet now and then a gust of north wind buffets the windows, and nights a light frost falls. Brown hills shoot suddenly up out of the brown earth, accompany us a short distance, and then dive down again back into the brown plain. At the end of long side-valleys, far back from the railway line, glisten snowy mountain-peaks.

On my right at the end of the car I hear deep guttural intonations. A hard-bitten old squire of comfortable girth, his chin adorned with a typical old-fashioned beard, is perched ceremoniously, in strict accordance with Japanese canons of propriety, upon his crossed legs, at the end of the seat. He holds a little yellow book with big

staring print, from which he reads half-aloud a tragic tale of adventure and heroism of the olden times. His well-rounded, sake-matured, manly voice rolls on and on like the motor of a threshing machine. It dwells with droning emphasis on certain words, and at times rattles the windows with its brazen vigor. One can see as well as hear that the reader's opinions are as strong as his voice itself. Were that not so he would hardly be reading an old heroic ballad aloud in a railway train, but like the younger generation would play instead a toreador march on a mouth organ. But when a man wears such a magnificent beard! At moments in his admiration for the better and warlike days of old he rises to ecstasy. Then he gulps and groans and wails until the dark-blue veins stand out on his red neck. When this occurs the stretched-out sleepers — what else can one do on a railway? — pull aside the cloths that cover their faces, and lift their heads. 'A beastly bore,' growls a young elegant with a hole in his sock, apparently from the tight patent-leather shoes that stand under his seat. An old gentleman with gold glasses also glares angrily at the disturber and draws his overcoat higher over his head.

The perspiration has been beading my brow for the past two hours. Why did n't I bring more pocket handkerchiefs? It would not seem proper to take off more than one's coat and vest. From time to time the guard comes in and studies the thermometer. It is one of his prescribed duties, I suppose, to see if it is not hotter than

¹From *Berliner Tageblatt* (Liberal daily), April 12