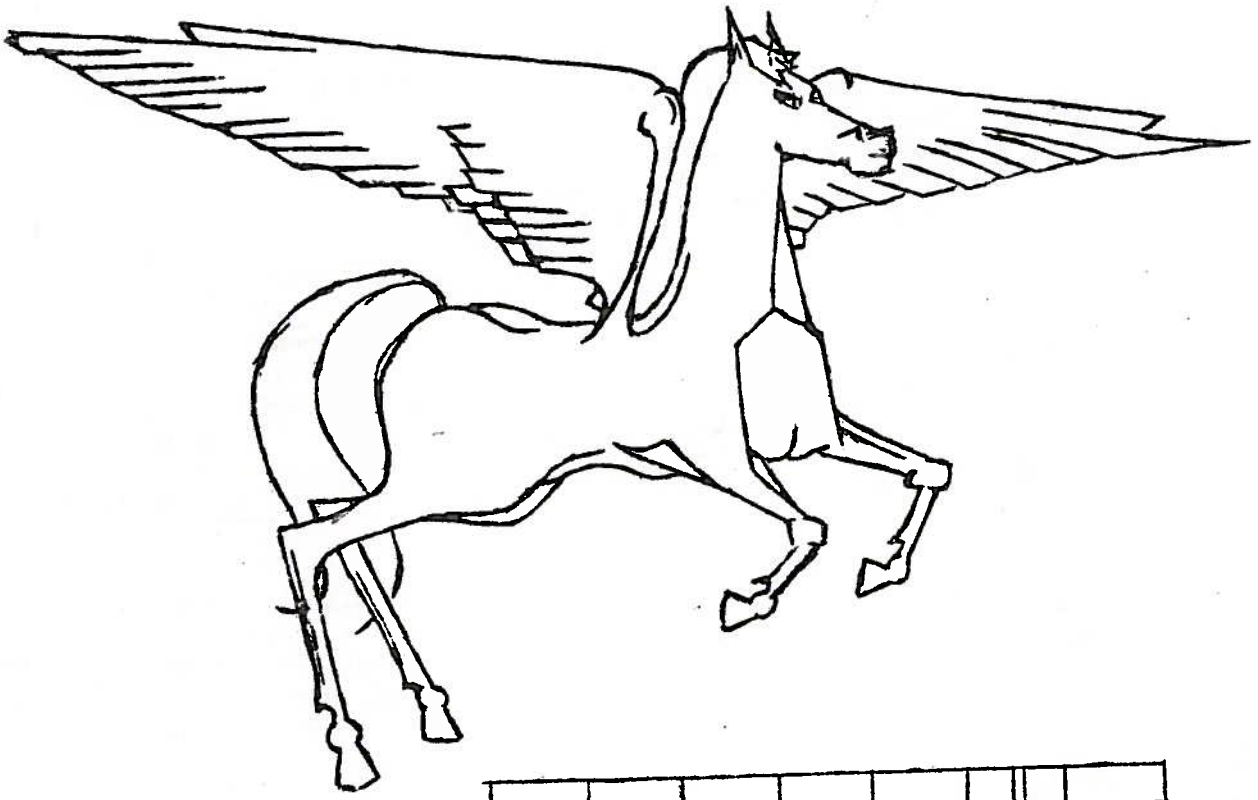

PEGASUS

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No. 19. P E G A S U S March 1976.

University of Exeter Classical Society Magazine

Editor:Clare Gore-Langton

Business Editor:Hamish Robertson.

Perhaps enough news of the Department is included in the President's report, but it seems fitting to point out how appropriate it should be that all the contributions in this particular issue are from past and present student and staff members of this department. It is appropriate because it has been a year that has witnessed an unusual wealth of activity - Professor Clayton has relinquished his responsibilities, trials and tribulations, and now sits complacently next door to his successor, Mr. I.R.D.Mathewson (reputed wit, raconteur and pipe smoker), doubtless enjoying the Cerberean baying and gnashing of teeth which emanate through the walls on a bad morning! The Classical Society, under the auspices of the irrepressible and iron-willed Gill Smith, has been resuscitated so effectively that play-readings and rather jolly hedonistic parties periodically resound through Cornwall House at varying pitch. And to crown all this, we have managed, as we had hoped, to produce an issue of Pegasus more or less to our planned schedule.

Because this is a special issue, I was not going to cajole, beg, bribe (within reason) or scold students into mastering their bashful and retiring natures and stepping forward towards the bright lights and laurels that publication brings to the poor in spirit - so I won't. But.....should anyone feel the Sibylline frenzy of utterance coming upon them, I will gratefully gather up the leaves.

Last, but by no means least, I should like to thank Mrs. Harris for the time and trouble she takes to type Pegasus. It is a mammoth task and without her the magazine could not be.

Clare M. Gore-Langton

Contents

THE CLASSICAL SOCIETY 1975-6.

The present committee of the Classical Society was formed in March of last year.

The first major event came in June with a party, attended by staff and students of the Department, and other friends of Professor Clayton, at which a small presentation was made to mark his retirement as Head of Department. This was an occasion enlivened by the reminiscences of Professors Barlow and Clayton of their youthful experiences and service careers in India.

The aim of the newly-formed committee was for 1975-6 to be a year of action and by the end of last summer term a film had already been booked - a film not particularly classical in plot and later to be described by one member of staff as "slightly indelicate."

It also seemed that a play by Plautus would be performed in the summer of 1976. Several people showed themselves keen to help with stage management, scenery and lighting (in Reed Gardens??). Unfortunately, actors and actresses were not so forthcoming. The project was deferred until October when it became apparent that enthusiasm was still lacking and casting proved impossible - even when more extrovert types who enjoy talking to themselves (remember Seneca, "Size of one's audience immaterial") offered to play as many as three parts each.

In November the Classical Association, together with the Classical Society, organised a trip to Plymouth Planetarium. Lack of enthusiasm within the Department was again evident with no-one very willing to commit themselves until a last-minute campaign was waged by Mr. Mathewson throughout Queen's Building and the Devonshire House extension of the Classics Department, resulting in about 40 people attending a very interesting demonstration and lecture given by Captain William Day.

In December "Midnight Cowboy" proved a popular choice of film and the Society was able to add a considerable amount of money to its account. I would like to record my thanks to Clare Gore-Langton and Paul Dick for giving a lot of time to the selling of tickets and the moving of chairs, and for generally doing everything which no-one else would take on.

Throughout the year a play-reading group has been meeting regularly and I am much indebted to Professor Clayton for lending several copies of his pun-ridden translations of Terence which have proved to be very amusing and enjoyable to read.

Since I became President of the Society little or no excuse has been needed for Departmental Evenings to be held - much to the regret of the long-suffering porters in Cornwall House. The first of these took place in October and there was an action replay at the beginning of this term. Both were enjoyable occasions and quite well attended. I need hardly add that there will be another one - possibly two! - next term, for "vices abjured soon return" or perhaps "You come to like it."

Gillian W. Smith.

CHAIR AND CHAIRPERSON: MEMORIES OF TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS.

My first encounter with our new Professor was unexpected on both sides: but initial surprise rapidly turned into a mildly Sherlockian mutual anagnorisis.

In 1948, the department had been chairless for a decade and a half. The last Professor had faded from the folk-memory of the students even when I first arrived in 1942; his name was seldom mentioned by such of the Staff as remembered him, and, when I first heard it, rather bewildered me because it was, coincidentally, the same as that of another classicist then resident in Devon, whom I had known as Headmaster and still knew as a Governor of the then University College of the South-West of England. It had been commonly believed, botn in the College and outside it, that the head of the Department, as well as its most spectacular member, was Jackson Knight; whereas it was, in fact, Heap - that cheerfully abrasive character was known always by the monosyllabic surname, since he slightly ante-dated the period, slightly later, I think, at Cambridge than at Oxford, at which Christian names were universally used. For two years during which Heap had been working at the Home Office and I had become attached to the College the Department had been run by a capable and erudite veteran of Trinity College, Dublin - a connection which, through the present decade, has been resumed by capable hands.

Heap, in command since 1944, had informed me, by letter, that Armstrong would be retiring to exclusively ecclesiastical functions in a Cathedral City, while "I will become an Administrative Chap", and there would, once again, be a full-time and full-titled, Professor - "but not until about half-way through the Lent Term."

Hence, when I followed the regular practice and walked into the long and narrow attic room in Argyle House, which traditionally housed the Departmental Library together with the private library of whoever held the room (up till that time it had been Armstrong; whom I had last seen harassed by the moral question whether he was ethically entitled to remove for his own purposes the unused sheets from students' examination-papers, if he was no longer to be employed by the College) I was rather startled to see a fairly youthful and completely unknown figure sitting in the wooden arm-chair last occupied by the elderly, emaciated, and patriarchal Dubliner who had just left us.

Realization, however, was immediate. To me, since this was clearly neither squatter nor trespasser, it must be the new Head of Department, arrived unexpectedly at the beginning of the term instead of the middle. To Fred, unless I was an incautious housebreaker, I was clearly a Member of the Department who knew his way round Argyle House; I was neither Heap nor Knight, both of whom he had met, and, equally clearly, I was not Patricia Depree. Nor was I the other newcomer, Henry Chalk, whom he had also met. Eliminate the impossible, my dear Watson, and whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.

I remember the meeting, but not the subsequent dialogue. In fact the first year's programme, already started under Heap's supervision, carried on under its own momentum; but Fred quickly made his mark as a person.

Another mutual anagnorisis occured the next morning at Collections. These were a terminal ritual; the Staff sat at trestle tables round three sides of a rectangle, the Principal, a gaunt Olympian from Aberdeen known to the world as John Murray, in the middle of the short side, while students were called up individually to face him. There followed a brief when-did-you-last-see-your-father interview, in which the Principal read out what

he gathered from the preceding term's reports, and dismissed the trembling student who might be briefly summoned for a whispered conference with any of his tutors as he went out. There was also a general murmur of conversation between Staff at their own tables; and it was in this murmur that I identified my neighbour as our other recruit, Henry Chalk; a tall, gentle Devonian, fresh from a curtailed course of Literae Humaniores at my own College.

From negative evidence in my own diary, it seems that we did not then have many Departmental Meetings; Heap had occasionally murmured "We might as well foregather" - but through Fred's first term there seems to have been little but individual buttonholing on the stairs, sometimes to raise odd queries about Sophocles or Demosthenes, sometimes because Fred seemed rather apprehensive that my timetable might be overloaded; especially on the History side.

This was, in fact, rather a nightmare. We were then taking London exams; London seemed to expect a superficial knowledge of the whole historical background from Romulus to Constantine, but one difficulty was that we could not really be sure what London would consider superficial. Another difficulty was that few of us had both width and depth in the subject. Greek history was fascinating, but Fred admitted to a mental blockage whic h prevented him from remembering the difference between the battles of Ariginussae and of Aegospotami; Henry and I had been taught by an amiable but very senile tutor whose teaching had been such that Hugh Lloyd-Jones had prudently decided that if he was to learn anything that would satisfy the examiners he would have to pay for private extra-mural coaching. Roman history, apart from the elementary bits we had learnt at school and forgotten, consisted of brief periods studied in depth, and the examiners had seldom been interested in anything very much other than the question when Caesar's privincial command had legally terminated, and the careers of equestrians under the early Empire as deducible from their tombstones. (Oxford examiners at this time had a morbid interest in lapidary inscriptions; the only opposing voice came from that brilliant maverick Balsdon, who pointed out that an official inscription was least as likely to be mendacious as a literary historian).

The other difficulty came, of course, from the students. They would, of course, have probably done well enough if they had simply memorized the textbooks, but we felt they really needed more than that, if they were not to have a legitimate grievance. But how on earth could they - especially the Intermediate Latinists, who were the backbone and the mass membership of our first-year classes - be adequately instructed? Given straightforward lectures, whether elementary or advanced, they would be bored; given written work, they would be mildly resentful, and in any case would do little more than transcribe the textbooks; invited to contribute their own opinions in seminars, most of them would be dumb and bewildered, a few would sprout out as wild exhibitionists. Their initial ignorance was usually basic; asked for their knowledge about the elder Cato, one coloured student remembered his hatred of Carthage (the Third World had already begun to appropriate Carthage as a prototype of Ghadaffi and of Idi Amin) and another student murmured "Wasn't he a Conspirator" - further inquiry dredged out a semi-conscious memory of the Cato Street Conspiracy of 1820.

For the moment, I kept the Greek and Roman, while Henry Chalk concentrated on Art and Archaeology; though we all, of course, divided the linguistic and literary work more or less equally - insofar as the concept of equality could be applicable in any department illuminated by the Occidental Star of Jackson Knight.

It was Summer 1948 that really brought Department and College into full bloom.

Universities were expanding wildly (and, if more did not mean worse, part of the reason may have been that worse students than we had had before could scarcely be imagined); vigorous new blood was pouring into the Staff, and Overseas Students, hitherto merely a noticeable ornament ("You'm certainly got a main lot o' furriners", an old lady had once said to me on the train) were now a private empire of their own, energetically swayed by Gorley Putt (and soon to be taken over, and further expanded, by Keith Salter); new Halls opened and students flowed over the gardens of adapted Victorian villas. It was at once of these parties that Riki made her shy and faintly apprehensive debut; a large crowd, an alien culture, and in imperfectly-apprehended language cannot have been easy for a young bride to absorb, even with all the goodwill that human nature, and a brilliant June day, could produce. The shyness was not entirely unilateral; after a few shy conversation-starters, of the Have-you-ever-been-to-Omsk type, we were both delighted when I could effect an introduction to Hilda Swinburne, whose warm kindliness and fluent German gave Riki a welcome which has never faded. After the party we all went to a performance in Reed (then a full-time students Hall) of Chekhov's Proposal: enjoyable, but neither brilliantly acted nor brilliantly translated: I remember Fred mentiioning the strange effect in English of the literally-translated Russian endearments between man and man - immediately modified by memories of Cornish usage, by which elderly men will often address complete strangers as m'dear", "lovey", and "lover". (Why, indeed, did translators from the Russian feel it necessary to use such idioms as "little pigeon", or mere transliterations such as "golubchik", when provincial expressions such as "duck" and "dove" are three a penny, and semantically equivalent?).

The next garden-party and the next entertainment were a blazing success.

It was the Department's first party for departing Finalists. The decor was magnificent: so were the provisions. (Food, in 1948, was still rationed, and it was perhaps easier than it is now to empathize with the Bunterish concentration on food and drink that we found in Plautus and Athenaeus). The June sun shone on an emerald lawn which then stood as a clearing in an almost impenetrable forest: over the valley, one could see, as one still can see, the rolling hills along the way to Crediton. I myself had never, apart from a very occasional walk along Argyle Road, which was then barricaded with a notice warning, obsoletely, that one penny would be charged for entry on to what was a private road through the Duryard Estate, really penetrated this rus-in-urbe, and was irresistibly reminded of the valley of the Alpheus at Olympia: I mentioned this to Fred, and he immediately told me, in detail, of a difficult encounter he had once had, like some hero of Greek legend, trying to ford a swollen river in the Peloponnese. The provisions equalled the decor: Riki's childhood training had produced the most delectable cakes and biscuits, and her ready adaptability to Devonian products and life-styles had generated a mixing-bowl full of an ambrosially potent, and coolly refreshing cider-cup. This loosened the tongues of the students; I found myself reminiscing to Riki about salads and puddings remembered from the Rhineland. The students trailed away, with summer-coloured memories to look back upon; Fred, Riki and I went by a short cut (now a concrete road, then an overgrown forest path) to see the Overseas Students in their first Shakespearean performance-A Midsummer Night's Dream.

The forest path was overgrown indeed, and I remember Riki's alarm when a gentle grass-snake slithered across the path, and Riki promptly, with a feminine horror of serpents, described it as an adder. A mild herpetological misunderstanding between Riki and myself ("No, it was NOT a snake, it was an ADDER") was smoothed over by Fred, who explained to Riki the semantic difference between the words Snake and Snail, which she had temporarily confused: and we went on to see Gorley Putt as Theseus, and a vigorous African as Bottom. Another African was Puck; when I murmured to Fred that I myself had taken this part some twenty years earlier, he told me about some of his stage experiences - though it was not until later that he admitted that his star part had been in All's Well that Ends Well, where he had appeared as Beatrice.

Readers need not fear that I will be giving a term-to-term, blow-by-blow account of the next quarter-century, but I should add that winter term 1948, not in other respects very noteworthy, was marked by Fred's Inaugural Lecture. I have already said that this was a period of sudden and rapid expansion, and those readers who were alive and conscious at the time will remember that there was a general feeling of euphoria, at least among the young. But whether it was a dawn or a sunset not everyone was agreed; faiths and empires were gleaming like wrecks of a dissolving dream. Fred's speech had touches of both dawn and sunset about it. Early on came a quotation from Edwyn Bevan, that DURING THE HELLENISTIC AGE any Greek citizen might have to calculate with the possibility of meeting slavery and torture; with the thoughts of most of the audience moving towards a continent on which the gates of hell had just been thrown open and the skeletal victims liberated, Fred drily observed, "That statement was made in the year 1908". He went on to discuss the various explanations given for the fall of the ancient world: neatly showing that the reasons were simply the factors in the scene which had been the particular bêtes noires of individual historians, or the culture which produced them - to Gibbon, religion; to Rostovtseff, proletarian and military revolt; to French writers, the barbarian invasions; to Americans, growing State control. This was the first Inaugural I had attended, and it was probably fifteen years before I attended another; so I cannot say how far it resembled the contemporary average, but the general approach, applying the fruits of specialized knowledge to the treatment of a general theme, is one which I would prefer to the more customary modern practice of simply dealing with one part of a specialized subject in such a way that it may seem intelligible, and if possible interesting, to a non-specialist audience.

So passed 1948. 1949 saw the Department working very happily; gentle Devonian kindliness from Henry Chalk and Patricia Depree (henceforward Henry and Pat), equally encouraging to the brilliant and helpful to the dim-witted; meteoric brilliance from Jackson Knight, College and Departments all rapidly increasing in numbers but the prospect of a Charter still nebulous; the students seldom scored brilliantly in London Finals and a few promising candidates tended to break down with examination nerves, but some surprisingly weak students managed to qualify - Jackson Knight could regularly get a student through Intermediate in one year from scratch, but the responsibility for an occasional Awkward-Squad tended to devolve upon myself; Fred still feeling apprehensively that it might be too much to ask, though in fact I usually found it enjoyable. Our most memorable activity that year was a Departmental excursion to see the Agamemnon at Bradfield: I had seen the same play, in the same theatre, fifteen years earlier, when the Chorus had been led by a brilliant sixth-former billed as I.R.D.Mathewson. This time I was responsible for buying the tickets and reserving the seats - Henry was prevented from doing so, and Fred said, in gloomy warning, "In my experience, when one takes on a thing like that, one always ends up out of pocket." I was not, in fact, much the worse off; the day was sunny, our seats were good, the performance itself was perhaps not quite up to the standards of 1934, but I had the pleasant experience of seeing and introducing Fred to two figures from my earlier past - Sniffy Russell, who was convoying

the Under Sixth from Charterhouse (and who, a year or so later, suddenly died of a heart attack while acting as Judge Jeffreys in the School Masque), and a charismatic but irascible scholarship-coach from my preparatory school, Geoffrey Bolton, with his own scholarship fodder from Fifth Form. When I gently reminded him (perhaps with slightly confused memories) how he had once flogged Nigel Nicolson for putting the solecism "potebat" into a Latin Prose, he indignantly denied it.

The other event of that year was my first visit to Rome - preceded by a visit to Florence and a railway journey through Etruria, accompanied by my companion's running commentary from Horatius, which he had won good-conduct marks for memorizing at his preparatory school, and never forgotten since; though his Etruscophilia stopped considerably short of accompanying me round the Villa Giulia. ("Hugh, Etruscan painting is an ACQUIRED TASTE"). The Etruscan Museum in Florence, however, was closed - rather to his relief - as was the Roman City Museum. I did, however, see many copies of Roman Vergil ("VERGILIO: opera di JACKSON KNIGHT") for sale in bookstalls round the Capitol.

The new decade opened with a faint wind of change. Pat became engaged to a young historian, and it became clear that, in time, a replacement would be needed. Fred, rather overwhelmed by an already perceptible Oxonian preponderance, said he would have really wanted a complete replica - Cambridge, philosophical, and feminine; an attempt, originally inspired by Heap, had failed to secure a reigning belle who had just gained stardom as Antigone in Sheppard's production of Oedipus Coloneus, but she proved inaccessible (and later won distinction as a broadcaster on the Third Programme, and is now Headmistress of a distinguished London school) and inquiries were temporarily adjourned. Before the summer term was out, Pat had invited such of us as would not be in Devon at the time of the wedding to a kind of pre-nuptial party: a very Devonian squirearchical occasion, with the peasantry ringing handbells on the lawn. Henry, too, showed signs of leaving us; after obtaining a grant to spend two months in Greece, he applied for a lecturship in Latin at Glasgow; and just after his departure, a letter arrived with a Glasgow postmark. Fred and I had a brief conflict of conscience. Could we open someone else's letter, if the information urgently concerned the Department? Or did honour compel us to forward it to Athens; where, if it was not lost on the way, it would arrive ten days or so later; eliciting a reply which would return ten days later still: thus postponing till July the task of advertising for applicants, and interviewing them; at a time when most of them would be scattered over Europe; whereas in June they would still be easily accessible?

Hon our, of course, was defeated. We opened the letter. Henry was regretfully told that the job had gone to someone else.

But the end was not yet. I was going to Greece too; and we had tentatively arranged that, after I had found my own way round the Peloponnese, I was to look Henry up in Athens, at the British School.

After sailing via Genoa, Naples and Catania, walking from Athens to Eleusis, hitching lifts to Megara, Corinth and Argos, walking up from Argos to Mantinea, being befriended by a visiting police officer who provided transport to Sparta and back to Corinth, I staggered back into Athens and found Henry just leaving the British School. After the greetings, his first words were,

"I'm afraid I won't be seeing you next term."

"But, Henry - we opened your letter - shamelessly enough...."

"Oh, yes. They didn't offer me the job in Latin, but by the next post they offered me a job in Greek instead. I'm taking it".

Henry was, in fact, eager to return; not only was Greek cooking taking its customary toll (aggravated by his indiscreet choice, that same evening, of mackerel in olive oil, while I prudently stuck to sprats and yoghourt), but, like Odysseus, he was longing to return to see a newborn child. Gladly, though illegally, he took a cheque I gave him and handed over the unexpended portion of his foreign currency allowance; which gave me another full three weeks in Greece. We bade farewell on the North slope of the Acropolis - "If we shall meet again, we'll smile hereafter; if not, why then, this parting was well made."

We have in fact met several times, at Conferences and during Henry's visits to his native Devon; and Fred has on occasion wondered whether to try to lure Henry back with offers of increased salary. But Henry was replaced by Brian Shefton.

It has not been unusual in our Department for the tail to try to wag the dog: that is, for young men, fresh from the invigorating air of any county that is not Devon, to try to enliven departmental practice with new ideas and new approaches - until they too fall victims to the soporific breezes of Lotus Land. Henry had brought in some new ideas about Greek Art; I myself, in 1942, had suggested certain new approaches to Greek History; Jackson Knight, in 1936, had produced such innovatory blue-prints that folk-memory has sometimes suggested that he started the Department from scratch. But none of us, I think, can have been quite such live wires as Brian Shefton. Oriel, where Greek history was taught by Tod, not Christ Church and the somnolently senile Dundas; the with-it techniques of epigraphy, vasepainting, archaeology in general, rather than literary evidence supplemented by an occasional ostracon; fluent familiarity with the wide diaspora of German scholarship rather than a casual reading of an occasional French historian. The Classical Association, hitherto addressed by mild-spoken Devonian clergymen or scholars living in earned retirement, issued invitations to Continental scholars and ardent young excavators, most of whose illustrated talks were barely intelligible to their audiences; students were encouraged to take specialized subjects which demanded little linguistic knowledge or literary sense, but considerable vigour and industry - and, since Brian could see further into a brick wall than many of us, and knew better than we what London examiners were likely to be thinking about, students in his Special Subjects began to score surprisingly high marks.

In 1951, we were joined by the present Head of Department, fresh from teaching the Eighth Form at St. Paul's, and with experience - following on a brilliant degree - of lecturing in the United States. To speak of a colleague who is still active is even more invidious than to give memories of a Professor Emeritus who is still with us, unchaired even if not disembodied. But I do remember mentioning to Robin that the College then was singularly free from the mutual animosities that seemed to mark educational bodies in fiction, and sometimes, perhaps, in fact.

"That will be a change", said Robin, drawing at his pipe, "not to have people sidling up to you in the Common Room and murmuring, "I say, which side are YOU on?"

(With a few exceptions, this unity, peace and concord has largely subsisted. Empire-building and in-fighting have occurred; Fred himself has on occasion intervened in disagreeable situations which have arisen when two Departments have each believed that they have a superior claim to a particular room at a particular time or when a hall booked for a series of evening classes has been inadvertently occupied by a conference of cigar-smoking educationists; and there have, of course, been differences of opinion in the corridors of power. But in over thirty years I can only remember two departments in which there has not been complete harmony between Professor and Staff; and wild horses would not drag their names from me).

1951 also saw a Triennial Conference in Cambridge: miserably cold and damp, no surprise for Fred but (incredible to anyone who has only known Oxford) uncomfortable beyond even what an Oxford winter can create. Henry was there, asking friendly questions about Exeter since his departure but, together with such of his colleagues as were there with him, rather awed by the magisterial presence of Gomme, who would autocratically summon all his subordinates in residence to a departmental conference, just as if they were back at Glasgow. Brian was in his element, fraternising with Continental magnates for whom red carpets were being laid out. Robin tottered in to a morning meeting, pale from a breakfast-table "at which people kept talking about PROTO-CORINTHIAN". Sheppard of King's, Fred's earlier patron, whom I had last seen as a Lion in Winter, majestic but out of his element in an Oxford quadrangle, was on his own ground, and hurried through quadrangles and lecture-halls patting young men on the head and murmuring "Bless you, my boy". Seltman, grey beard waggling, gave a delightful exhibition of numismatics - some years were to pass before his dazzling reconstructions of history and coinage were brought down in flames by an iconoclastic young Dutchman called Kraay.

That year, for me, included a second visit, alone this time, to Rome and to Florence - the Etruscan Museum, this time, was open, and I discovered to my surprise that the Biconical Urns of the Villanovan period were biconical in quite a different sense to what I had always supposed, diamond-shaped rather than X-shaped; also to Naples, and to the Lucrine Lake and the mouth of Avernus - telling Fred on a postcard that the descent was still easy, and that there was still a noisy and repulsive dog guarding the entry. Later on, the Attic Players paid me the compliment of performing my rendering of the Agamemnon at Toynbee Hall. Some students attended, and seemed to appreciate, but the critics were less enthusiastic.

The decade continued: Fred, now a family man, was faintly surprised to find that our ex-Army students, who were still returning to us, were sometimes patresfamiliarum of longer standing than himself, and he found himself comparing notes about juvenile illnesses and juvenile diets with second-year undergraduates ; more visits were paid to Greece and the Balkans, where I myself acquired family responsibilities; John Murray left us, replaced by Sir Thomas Taylor, jovial and publicity-minded but taken away from us tragically soon; Brian Shefton moved to higher things, and was replaced by John Herington, while Pat, after continuing to give occasional assistance, left with her husband for a well-deserved Chair.

Our next Principal lacked the warmth of Sir Thomas Taylor and even the patriarchal accessibility of John Murray; but it was under him that we acquired our Charter, and suddenly found ourselves setting our own examinations. This, to Fred, was not an unmixed blessing; hitherto, if a student was ploughed, the blame could be passed on to the London examiners, much as the sacrificial priest at the Buphonia passed the blame on to the blade of the sacrificial axe, which was then convicted of murder and thrown into the sea; now the odium lay firmly on our shoulders. (Not, of course, on those of the student.) Fred felt deep sympathy and embarrassment at grievances, even if the grievances were unjustified. On more than one occasion, he murmured, "You can't win. If you do anything for them, you are interfering. If you don't, you are neglecting them."

We were, however, free from what is generally known as serious student unrest. There were, of course, grumbles; some students were unsatisfactory. Pat, once confronted with a request for a testimonial from a notoriously idle and disagreeable student, struggled between natural kindliness and the demands of honesty; and, for once, honesty won. "My dear Miss X. I am afraid no testimonial that I could give you would be of very much assistance. Yours sincerely, P.M.Depree!" But this was rare; I think, unique. Often, indeed, the least satisfactory students were the most affectionate at their valedictions, and the readiest to visit us later; one ,who shall be nameless, first appeared in 1944, disappeared into the Air Force in 1946, returned in 1948 and, after repeated failures in Intermediate and later in Finals, began to earn his living in 1952; pushed by Jackson Knight, he landed, ultimately, a very satisfactory job in the world of the intelligentsia (further indications would be invidious), and there were more like him.....One well-meaning, but distressingly nervous and dependent student, once bent over the cradle of one of the infant Claytons to express affectionate interest - and the infant punched his nose. Great was the joy in the Department; there were few members of the Staff who had not suppressed a longing to do precisely the same.

In 1958 came the move up to the Queen's Building. (Her Majesty had laid the foundations some two years earlier; just as, in the happy year of 1949, she had laid the foundation stone of the new Princesshay, as may be seen from a piece of epigraphic evidence supplemented by Departmental memory). Fred suddenly had a horrified apprehension that there might be a solecism on the foundation-stone which might last for centuries as mute evidence that the Department of Classics in the 1950s had unknowingly let pass a grammatical howler; but the apparent lapse was only a faint crack in the stone. The new syllabus was working with reasonable success; some of our students were getting Firsts, some were staying on for Doctorates, or taking them in absentia. Of the latter, several are now holding Chairs or the equivalent, mainly overseas.

Decade passed into decade. The 1960s, once a darkly foreboded future, imagined by Wells or by Orwell as an era of conflict and pestilence, produced little worse than an occasional crop of chips on student shoulders; John Herington left us, Jim Fitton and Anne Ridgwell came; Jackson Knight left us, full of years and lustre, to be replaced by David Harvey but to remain as a presiding genius at the bottom of Streatham Hill; the Classical Society flourished, once lampooning us all in performances of our own. Jackson Knight's early death, in 1964, was a traumatic blow, though the tradition of hospitality and interest has been kept on by his brother; his funeral at Bristol Crematorium was attended by a token presence from the Staff - Riki, Jim Fitton and myself; it was Fred's triste ministerium to speak at the Memorial Service in the University Chapel - the first Memorial Speech that has been made, and a very moving one, well deserving its inclusion in the University Gazette and in Wilson Knight's biography of his brother; there were several moist eyes on Streatham Hill that December afternoon.

Another growth the following spring supplies; they fall successive, and successive rise. John came to join us in 1963; in 1969 Fred took a belated Sabbatical Leave - hardly, indeed, a Leave, since he was regularly returning for meetings of Senate and Council, but Robin had a foretaste of departmental management. That year brought its sorrows, of which I will mention only the sudden death of Jim Fitton. If there is laughter in Paradise, in that Paradise in which Jim himself stoutly refused to believe, it must have burst out when Jim's indomitable spirit saw us frantical y trying to correct some papers, and indeed to understand some questions, which he had set on Greek Music.

Forward, then, as the old title had it, into the Seventies. What a decade to go forward into - and indeed to be half-way through (but in the thirties, also, the really nasty things all happened in the second half).

Like Nicias at Syracuse, I feel, after speaking, that there is much that I should have said better. Fred's anxiety not to overwork his colleagues has been mentioned; I have not mentioned his frantic apprehension once when I had casually remarked that most schemes intended to lighten the load tended in fact to increase it, much as every bearer of good tidings in the Oedipus Rex actually increases the burden of calamity; whereupon he burrowed through a vast log-jam of records to find out whether in fact I had ever got the raw end of a reorganization - and was vastly relieved when, in reply to a six-page note of explanation, I replied that I had not the faintest shadow of a grievance but was just expressing a common paradox. His reminiscences of University figures; his autobiographical collection of Liverpudliana, his memories of Cambridge, of Edinburgh, of the Third Reich, of Barrackpore; his familiarity with Tolstoy and Flaubert, his readiness to disentangle the most unintelligible anfractuosities of a German encyclopaedia; his part in counsel and debate.....Of the latter, I have no first-hand memories, but I remember clearly how a colleague, now deceased, told me how, with a proliferation of apologetic reservations, explanatory subordinate clauses, and appeals to sympathy, he had been asking for a financial hand-out to help some deserving student for some particularly deserving cause; and how, when a momentary pause gave opportunity for the question,

"And just HOW MUCH money would you require for this purpose, Professor Clayton?"

Fred replied,

"Well, after calculating ALL the expenses required....I THINK.... mind you, I MAY have miscalculated....but I THINK it would come to, let me see, THREE POUNDS, THIRTEEN SHILLINGS and SIX PENCE".....

Perhaps, at a risk of seeming over-effusive in appreciation of more than a quarter century labouring together in the Lord's vineyard, I had better finish with a conversation in an Oxford boarding-house in 1948.

A fellow-scholar said, in polite inquiry,

"I understand, Hugh, that your new Professor is a Cambridge man?"

I seemed to detect a faint touch of surprise. My reply was defensive.

"Yes. But (half apologetically, half defiantly) HE'S A VERY NICE CHAP."

Solvuntur risu tabulae. I have never seen cause to reverse that opinion.

H.W.STUBBS

TRANSLATIONS FROM MEDIEVAL LATIN POETRY

All burnt up internally with this seething passion,
I'm going to speak my mind in my inimitable fashion:
easy come and easy go, life is one long gay fling,
light as leaf on linden tree I'm just the breezes' plaything.

The wise man builds his bungalow on the solid granite
with a proper building firm and architect to plan it;
feckless me, I'm said to be like a flowing river,
ever gliding on, to one place constant never;

like a drifting ship at sea when no course is given,
like a wandering albatross beneath the face of heaven;
bolts and bars can't hold me back from chasing after evil:
birds of a feather flock together - my best friend's the devil.

Propriety and prudence I find easy to resist,
but from pleasure's potent honey I'm unwilling to desist;
I'm an eager volunteer when Captain Venus gives the order
(for a frisky little frigate will repel a coward boarder).

I tread the primrose pathway which youth has always taken;
enmesh myself in vice - the straight and narrow is forsaken.
Greedier for pleasure than hungry for salvation,
caring for my flesh I leave my soul in deprivation.

Please forgive me, Bishop, you're the fairest man I know.
Perhaps I'm dying spiritually, but what a way to go!
Luscious bodies are to me an open invitation
and those I can't lay hands on I can lay by cerebration.

What a weary job it is to try and conquer nature
When you see a pretty face not to act the lecher.
My young and healthy blood goes on the rampage when I spot 'em:
-tight thighs, big breasts, and best of all a plump and dimpled bottom.

(THE ARCH-POET'S CONFESSION)

Aestuans intrinsecus ira vehementi
in amaritudine loquor meae menti:
factus de materia levis elementi
folio sum similis de quo ludunt venti.

Cum sit enim proprium viro sapienti
supra petram ponere sedem fundamenti,
stultus ego comparor fluvio labenti
sub eodem aëre nunquam permanenti.

Feror ego veluti sine nauta navis,
ut per vias aëris vaga fertur avis.
non me tenent vincula, non me tenet clavis,
quaero mei similes et adiungor pravis.

Mihi cordis gravitas res videtur gravis,
iocus est amabilis dulciorque favis.
quidquid Venus imperat, labor est suavis,
quae nunquam in cordibus habitat ignavis.

Via lata gradior more iuventutis,
implico me vitiis, immemor virtutis,
voluptatis avidus magis quam salutis,
mortuus in anima curam gero cutis.

Praesul discretissime, veniam te precor:
morte bona morior, dulci nece necor,
meum pectus sauciat puellarum decor,
et quas tactu nequeo, saltem corde moechor.

Res est arduissima vincere naturam,
in aspectu virginis mentem esse puram;
iuvenes non possumus legem sequi duram
leviumque corporum non habere curam.

Can anyone who plays with fire and flame not come to harm?
Can anyone restrain himself upon the Reeperbahn?
Man-hunting Venus twines young lads around her little finger
-where lips ensnare, and eyes, and hair, it isn't safe to linger.

If you placed Hippolytus in this swinging city
he wouldn't be Hippolytus tomorrow. What a pity.
Everybody's bedded down, young, middle-aged and old,
everyone save chastity, and she lies a-cold.

Not only sex but gambling is the second accusation;
but strip poker leaves me naked - that's all my compensation.
Yet with creative heat I sweat, although my outside's frozen,
and then I'll turn out epics, lyrics, sonnets by the dozen.

The third charge is a trifling one: I'm partial to a flagon.
I've never been, and never will (I hope) be on the wagon;
not until I see those holy angels coming for us
singing variations on the hallelujah chorus.

I'll take my last bow in a pub I'm absolutely certain,
so there'll be some liquor handy at the final curtain;
the heavenly host will chant a cheerful requiem whose theme is
"Have Mercy, Lord, upon this alchoholic in extremis"

Bottles, jugs and pint-sized mugs set my heart on fire;
the flowing bowl my well oiled soul to great heights doth inspire.
A pint of bitter at the bar to my mind far outpasses
the butler's vintage Beaujolais served up in crystal glasses.

Of my own depravity I stand my own accuser:
I'm everything they say I am - lecher, gambler, boozer.
(But all those upright citizens with disapproving faces
Wont admit they're dying to kick over their own traces.)

Quis in igne positus igne non uratur?
quis Papiae demorans castus habeatur,
ubi Venus digito iuvenes venatur,
oculis illaqueat, facie praedatur?

Si ponas Hippolytum hodie Papiae,
non erit Hippolytus in sequenti die:
Veneris in thalamos ducunt omnes viae,
non est in tot turribus turris Ariciae.

Secundo redarguor etiam de ludo,
sed cum ludus corpore me dimittat nudo,
frigidus exterius, mentis aestu sudo,
tunc versus et carmina meliora cudo.

Tertio capitulo memoro tabernam,
illam nullo tempore sprevi neque spernam,
donec sanctos angelos venientes cernam,
cantantes pro mortuis 'requiem aeternam'.

Meum est propositum in taberna mori,
ut sint vina proxima morientis ori.
tunc cantabunt laetius angelorum chori:
'sit Deus propitius huic potatori!'

Poculis accenditur animi lucerna,
cor imbutum nectare volat ad superna.
mihi sapit dulcius vinum de taberna,
quam uod aqua miscuit praesulis pincerna.

Ecce meae proditor pravitatis fui,
de qua me redarguunt servientes tui.
sed eorum nullus est accusator sui,
quamvis velint ludere saeculoque frui.

Now within the presence of my spiritual advisor
devout, obedient, meed I stand, a sadder man and wiser.
Spare not the poet, Pharisees, let him first cast a stone
whose conscience is quite clear of guilty thoughts and him alone.

There: I've told you everything about me, bad and vicious;
spat out all the poisoned sweets I once found so delicious.
Old ways displease, new ways I'll seize: a total reformation.
(Men just see my face but God has inside information.)

Cultivating virtue I'll treat vices as they merit;
renewed in mind, refreshed in soul, and reborn in the spirit;
like a little new-born lamb I gambol in green pastures,
my heart no longer fertile ground for spiritual disasters.

Arch Chancellor, look kindly on such deep and true repentance,
pity me who begs for grace, and moderate my sentence.
Make it the less since I confess my guilt and ask forbearance,
I'll do my penance happily, I give you my assurance.

The lordly lion, the king of beasts, will sometimes spare his dinner,
letting little lambs go free; so should you spare a sinner,
Lords spiritual and temporal, and follow his example:
let mercy temper justice - and give me the first free sample!

Iam nunc in praesentia praesulis beati
secundum dominici regulam mandati
mittat in me lapidem, neque parcat vati,
cuius non est animus conscius peccati.

Sum locutus contra me, quicquid de me novi,
et virus evomui, quod tam diu fovi.
vita vetus displicet, mores placent novi;
homo videt faciem, sed cor patet Iovi.

Iam virtutes diligo, vitiis irascor,
renovatus animo spiritu renascor,
quasimodo genitus novo lacte pascor,
ne sit meum amplius vanitatis vas cor.

Electe Coloniae, parce poentitenti,
fac misericordiam veniam petenti
et da poenitentiam culpam confitenti!
feram quicquid iusseris animo libenti.

Parcit enim subditis leo rex ferarum
et est erga subditos immemor irarum;
et vos idem facite, principes terrarum!
quod caret dulcedine nimis est amarum.

CUR SUSPECTUM ME TENET DOMINA?

Cur suspectum me tenet domina?
cur tam torva sunt in me lumina?
tort a vers mei ma dama.

Testor celum celique numina,
que veretur non novi crimina.
tort a vers mei ma dama.

Celum prius candebit messibus,
feret aer ulmos cum vitibus,
tort a vers mei ma dama.

Dabit mare feras venantibus,
quam Sodome me iungam civibus.
tort a vers mei ma dama.

Licet multa tyrannus spondeat,
et me gravis paupertas urgeat,
tort a vers mei ma dama.

Non sum tamen, cui plus placeat
id quod prosit quam quod conveniat.
tort a vers mei ma dama.

Naturali contentus Venere
non didici pati sed agere.
tort a vers mei ma dama.

Malo mundus et pauper vivere
quam pollutus dives existere.
tort a vers mei ma dama.

Pura semper ab hac infamia
nostra fuit Briciavvia.
tort a vers mei ma dama.

Ha peream, quam per me patria
sordis huius sumat inicia!
tort a vers mei ma dama.

(tort a vers mei ma dama)
sweetheart honey why do you cry
why have you got that look in your eye

I swear by all that I hold most dear
I've not committed the sin you fear

before that happened pigs would fly
trees and tomatoes grow in the sky

the sea dry up the moon turn green
honey sodomy's not my scene
. . . . .
those in high places promise a lot
poverty spurs the incipient rot

advantageous though profit would be
it can't undermine morality

heterosexual sex is fun
I far prefer to do than be done

I'd rather live pure in penury
than rich in a sty of depravity

We English just don't behave like that
(stiff upper lip under bowler hat)

I'd rather perish than let it be said
the bulldog breed are buggers in bed
(tort a vers mei ma dama)

STETIT PUELLA

Stetit puella rufa tunica;
siquis eam tetigit,
tunica crepuit.
eia.

stetit puella, tamquam rosula
facie splenduit,
et os eius floruit.
eia.

FRAGMENT

....stood there in a red silk dress
and when I touched her
the dress rustled

oh honey

stood there and her face
caught the light like a petal
and her lips flowered

oh honey

Ugly stories are going the rounds
unpleasant talk
your behaviour is common knowledge
from here to new york
and every word is a blow to me
every syllable salt in a wound not healed

scandal's got her claws into you baby
maybe
you could do your loving more.....discreetly?
so that All's not Revealed?

Observe some privacy avoid
the camera's shutter
nights in hotel rooms come higher glances a joke shared
damage you nothing is spared

When we were lovers
your name wasn't used and abused with words from the gutter
raising whistles and winks
but our love died of cold and all of a sudden
your name is a dirty word.
Baby it stinks.

The columnists had a field day
"Model weds! Divorced! Takes another
Lover!" watch this space
mine own true love
is become everybody's stopping off joint
lilies of the valley
fade and grow grubby with handling in the market place.

I mourn those lost those star bright flowers of youth
my dove my heart's delight
now shows her serpent tooth. We grow older.
Someone who asks you to love him gets no favours
just the cold shoulder
for a guaranteed warm welcome fellers bring a few fivers
and my true love won't care if you're a load of one eyed cripples.

I thought you were honeysuckle found you
belladonna.

VICKY STEVENS.

(Mrs. Stevens was a Combined Honours student in Latin/English at the University of Exeter from 1969-72.)

THE FAITHLESS WOMAN

Rumor letalis
me crebro vulnerat
meisque malis
dolores aggerat;

me male multat
vox tui criminis,
quae iam resultat
in mundi terminis.

Invida fama
tibi novercatur;
cautius ama
ne comperiatur.

Quod agis, age tenebris;
procul a famae palpebris.
laetatur amor latebris
et dulcibus illecebris
et murmure iocoso.

Nulla notavit
te turpis fabula
dum nos ligavit
amoris copula;
sed frigescente
nostro cupidine
sordes repente
funebri crimine

Fama laetata
novis hymenaeis,
irrevocata
ruit in plateis.

Patet lupanar omnium
pudoris, en, palatium;
nam virginale lilium
marcet a tactu vilium
commercio probroso.

Nunc plango florem
aetatis tenere,
nitidiorem
Veneris sidere-
tunc columbinam
mentis dulcedinem,
nunc serpentinam
amaritudinem.

Verbo rogantes
removes hostili;
munera dantes
foves in cubili.

Illos abire praecipis
a quibus nihil accipis;
caecos claudosque recipis;
viros illustres decipis
cum melle venenoso.

'ONE OF THOSE THINGS'

In our kitchen, we have a solid fuel boiler. It is one of those rather primitive contraptions which do not always 'obey you'. It often goes out for no apparent reason and periodically - thank God, not too often - explodes and fills the place with soot. The other day, it did just that. We called the builder to repair it. It was a short and easy affair, and, surprisingly, cost very little. At the end, I asked the builder what were the causes of such explosions. His answer was : "Oh, just one of those things."

The Classical philologist is trained to be especially alive to the significance of words and phrases used - or misused - in various languages and to the shades of meaning and undertones behind apparently innocent everyday expressions. One of the earliest- and most brilliant - examples of an analysis of the misuse of language by a group of people in special circumstances has been provided by Thucydides (III,82,4 ff.) and the grammatical and lexicographical literature of late antiquity is full of works περὶ ὀρθότητος ὀνομάτων (whether bearing this or similar titles), which often deal exactly with problems of this sort.

There is, of course, a difference between misuse of language consisting merely of a deviation from normal usage and practised by a particular group of people, and a misuse of language which is common or very widespread among speakers of many of the major European languages. Let me give some illustrations of the first type of misuse before I proceed to the second, which will be of greater and more direct relevance to our problem.

When a contemporary socialist or trade-unionist designates as 'comrades' people he has never met in his life, and whose only relation to himself is that they share the same political convictions, he is guilty of the misuse of ordinary language in favour of a 'group idiom'. For the majority of people, 'comrade' means - or used to mean until it became too much the property of socialist and trade-unionist jargon - a 'mate or fellow in work or play or fighting, equal with whom one is on familiar terms' (the first definition in the Concise Oxford Dictionary). The same applied to a Roman in the late Republic who used a similar term, amicitia for a merely political alliance. For the ordinary Roman, amicitia meant 'friendship' in the ordinary sense, a special personal relation between two or more people who like each other as human beings and enjoy each other's company simply 'parce que c'était lui, parce que c'était moi'. It was only the political structure of the late Republic, with its close network of family and personal relationships all exploited in the service of political advancement and interests, which gave amicitia this particular twist. One can be sure that in this connotation, it was used mainly by the minority of Roman citizens who had the means and the right - more often than not the birthright - to take active part in politics. Cicero, a 'new man' in Roman politics, and a man of very warm personal feelings which were never quite thwarted by political necessity, is not unaware of the incongruity of the political misuse of such a term; a term which, in his relations with such apolitical friends as Atticus, meant something much more personal to him than mere political 'clubbing together.' It is no accident that his De Amicitia is dedicated to Atticus, not to any of his political friends.

His discussion of amicitia in that work is far from a justification of impersonal, political 'friendships', and his definition of the term (20) is omnium diuinarum humanarumque rerum cum benevolentia et caritate summa consensio. This leaves room for the sharing of political - and not merely political - opinions, but includes an element which is much more personal than that. Cicero is fully aware of the debasement of the terms amicitia and amare elsewhere. In one of his most delightfully sarcastic letters (Att. II,19,2), he speaks with much irony of Pompeius nostri amores, and in another (ib. VI,1,3), of Brutus, quem etiam amare coeperam. One of the most human documents preserved in the Ciceronian Corpus is Matius' letter to Cicero, written not long after Caesar's assassination. Matius was one of the most apolitical persons we know of in that period of intense political feelings and animosities. He was virtually persecuted by Brutus and other 'honourable men' for refusing to rejoice in Caesar's death and for mourning it as the death of a personal friend. In his letter to Cicero, he attempts to justify this attitude: neque enim Caesarem in dissensione ciuili sum secutus, sed amicum (Fam. XI,28,2). One is reminded - at least I am - of the hero, or anti hero, of a recent Greek novel, Antoni Samaraki's To Lathos. In an imaginary totalitarian regime some time in the future (the book was published before the Colonels took over), a man is arrested by the secret police. He maintains that he is a peaceful citizen, and that his meeting in a cafe with another man who was known to be a member of a subversive group had nothing to do with politics. His investigator is not impressed with such 'irrelevant' expressions as 'a peaceful citizen'. For him, a man is 'either for the establishment or against it'. Matius' political critics were equally blinded by their narrow 'group-concept' of amicitia. If a man declared himself to be Caesar's friend, that must imply that he shared Caesar's political outlook. For Matius - and, one suspects, for thousands of ordinary Romans whose voice has not reached us - amicitia never lost its ἀξίωσιν ἀξίωσιν. Nor has it done so in most modern languages. We talk of 'political alliances', or, in the best (or worst) case, of 'political friendships' - but we do specify. The good sense of ordinary men and women revolts against the debasement of personal terms in the interests of political jargon. And not only political. In New Testament and early Christian terminology, agapo and agape are employed for a kind of love which is 'above' that of a man for a woman; a super-personal love, like God's love for the world, the Disciples' love for Jesus, Jesus' own love for his followers, or the love that exists among members of the early Christian communities. But the healthy good sense of ordinary speakers of Greek soon revolted against such an exalted idea of love, and in present-day Greek the words are used for ordinary, personal love, and especially for the love between a man and a woman. The same applies to a number of other 'group expressions' of this sort. The word 'comrade' is now hardly used by the man in the street in its original sense, probably because it has been debased and 'depersonalized' by the jargon of trade-unionism. The man in the street would now use 'mate' or even 'friend' in preference, precisely because the word 'comrade' has become more of a political slogan than he feels is right. But what is he to do about 'brothers', Lord George-Brown's favourite word? The only thing he can do here is take it as a joke - and this is precisely what most people do. Trade-unionists may go on talking of 'brothers' until they are blue (or rather red) in the face. For ordinary people, a brother is still a natural brother, and he feels, quite rightly, that the emotions he experiences towards a natural brother, with whom he has grown up, cannot be transferred

to friends, 'comrades' or members of the same political group. A similar fate is likely to overtake the new concepts of 'sisters' and 'sisterhood' introduced by the Women's Liberation Movement. Ordinary men and women will continue, I suspect, to consider their natural sisters as something far more real and more emotionally compelling than the 'sisters' of the Women's Liberation Movement. The same has, in fact, happened to the 'Fathers, Mothers, Brothers and Sisters' of the Catholic Church. They have become titles, written with capital letters, since ordinary people sense that there is no substitute for their natural parents, brothers or sisters.

But these examples, two of which have been discussed in some detail, illustrate the misuse of words by a specific political or religious group. In such cases, ordinary people are quick to realize that natural language - and their natural reactions and emotions - have been violated, and to revert to the more natural usage, leaving the fictitious fatherhoods and brotherhoods to those groups for whom political or religious feelings may be equally - or more - potent than natural feelings. It is a different affair when a whole group of concepts is misused by the large majority of mankind, and subconsciously misused. Such cases call for an explanation, and may well indicate a subconscious attitude which could prove, on reflection, to be rather alarming.

The builder's remark that the explosion in the kitchen was 'just one of those things' set me thinking. The last thing one could say about that event (and you see how insidious the 'thing-terminology' is? I have just used the word 'thing' incorrectly for a statement), is that it was a thing. It was clearly not a thing, an it, grasped by our senses like a chair, a table, a house. It was an occurrence, which had its causes, even if Mr. X was unable or unwilling to go into them. Of course, had I pressed the issue any further, Mr. X would admit that it was an event, not a thing. By 'reifying' what was really an event, he had no profound philosophical intentions. He did not mean to turn a process into a 'primary substance' in Aristotle's terminology, into a 'thing' that simply 'meets the eye' and needs no explanation. Yet by talking of a process as if it were a thing, he did use a mental image which puts it on the same level with a 'primary substance', and therefore exempts him from the need to explain. This, the psychologist might say, was the hidden motive behind his statement, and any other statements describing an event as 'one of those things'. A stone, say, is a thing, and we do not usually ask 'why has this stone happened?' (although, of course, this is a perfectly legitimate question for the scientist. Even 'things' happen, and have their causes - on this anon). In the same way, we do not ask 'why has the boiler exploded?' or 'why have I got a headache just before a party I was going to enjoy?' We dismiss these events as 'things' when we do not want to be bothered with causes and explanations. The man with a bad headache just before a party may even attempt to 'go into its causes' and 'find none'. He has been healthy and happy recently; his wife and children have all been well and happy; his work has been successful; he has recently enjoyed a nice holiday in the Caribbean; he has been looking forward to this party for some time - and yet, 'the thing came'. It came - another significant expression - 'out of the blue'. As if a headache was just an object, like a hailstone descending on you from a clear sky. What does our man do next? He takes some aspirins, feels somewhat relieved, and goes to his party. By the mere act of taking aspirins he acknowledges, of course, that his headache was not just a 'thing'.

One does not give aspirins to a stone or a chair in order to do away with it. The psychoanalyst would probably be in the position (that is, if he knew enough about our man's background and inhibitions) to tell him why 'the thing happened'.

But such examples of 'reification' of events stemming from a sub-conscious - or semi-conscious (as in the case of the builder) - psychological need could only occur if our everyday language allowed us, in a far wider range of cases, and not only for hidden psychological motives, to use 'reifying' expressions for events, occurrences, feelings, emotions, ideas, and other 'things' which are not really things. And our modern languages are full of such expressions. 'A funny thing happened to me on the way to the Forum', as the title of a popular comedy of the sixties has it. Surely not a thing, but an event, or a series of events. 'The thing is that the Government has committed a serious mistake by intervening in this dispute', writes an economic correspondent. Again, hardly a thing. What is described as such is really the speaker's critical assessment of the Government's action in a particular case. He should have said; 'the truth is.....(if he is dogmatic), 'my opinion is' (if he is less dogmatic), or simply 'I think' or 'I believe'.

This is not to imply that the word 'thing' has only one meaning in the English language - that of a concrete object observed by our senses. Expressions like those we have quoted would justify a lexicographer in extending the meaning of 'thing' to include 'events'. sensations and thoughts, in contexts where one wishes to indicate them in a more general and "objective" manner'. But the lexicographer's duty is to report the senses in which words are used in a simple, pragmatic manner. We can note that in English - and not only in English - 'thing' refers first and foremost to objects. A stone is a thing or an object - no ordinary speaker of English would describe it as an event, a happening. It is significant that, in the expressions we have examined, it is the word 'thing' which has been extended to refer to events, happenings, or even views. One does not say, for example, 'the event is', or 'the occurrence is, that....', and one does not often say 'just one of those events' or 'a funny event happened to me'.

The man in the street is far from being the only offender. Few passages in modern philosophical texts are better known than the opening sentence of Descartes' Discours de la méthode: 'Le bon sens est la chose du monde la mieux partagée' - or, in John Veitch's translation, easily available in the Everyman edition, 'Good sense is, of all things among men, the most equally distributed'. (The word 'quality' which appears in this particular translation later in the same sentence is not in the French, which merely has en). Now, 'good sense' is obviously not a thing. It is more like a quality - as the English translator half-consciously admits - or an innate ability of the human mind, as Descartes would consider it. It is true that the great Arabic Aristotelian Ibn Rushd (Averroes) believed that the quantity of 'active reason' (the Aristotelian νοῦς ποιητικός) is a constant in each generation; that each generation of mankind has the same amount of it as any other. It is also most likely that Descartes was familiar with this Averroistic view, since the philosophy of Averrose exerted a very wide influence on scholastic and post-scholastic philosophy in Western Europe from the twelfth century onwards. But this is virtually irrelevant to our issue. What is significant is that - whether or not under the influence of Averroes - one of the most original philosophers and scientists of modern times, a man who, in terms of his own clear distinction between 'thought' and 'extension' and his own starting point, cogito ergo sum, must have realized that 'good sense' is not 'just a thing',

nevertheless employs such an expression at the very opening of one of the most influential of his philosophical works. It is most unlikely that he did it on purpose. His terminology must, then, suggest that he was 'a prisoner of his own language', as the linguistic philosopher would put it. The imagery suggests something (note again: 'some thing') even more startling. 'Good sense' is described as a 'thing' which is evenly divided among people - almost like a piece of cheese which is evenly divided among people participating in a wine-and-cheese party. Imagery can be even more telling than linguistic usage. We, even our philosophers, can visualize a quality like 'good sense' as an extended body which can be divided.

Kant, for that matter, is no less of a culprit. Having explained that space and time are categories imposed by human perception on the raw materials of our sensations, he proceeds to call the ultimate source of these sensations 'das Ding an sich' - 'the thing in itself'. Yet it is clear that such an ultimate source of our sensations cannot possibly be described as a thing. A thing is already a concrete object, which can be observed as such in space and for a considerable duration of time. The 'thing in itself' is precisely that source of our sense-perception which exists independently of the categories of space and time imposed on it by our perception. Strictly speaking, it would be not only erroneous to call it a thing, but quite contrary to Kant's basic intentions. I am sure that Kant, when he coined the concept, had no conscious intention of depicting the 'ultimate source of our perceptions' as a thing. But he succumbed to linguistic usage just as you and I and the builder would.

Let us return now to our modern languages. The tendency to 'reify' things which are not really things is much more prevalent in our linguistic habits than one would suspect. An exhaustive list of such usages would be outside the scope of a short essay. I shall concentrate on a number of examples, grouped under the headings of It, Have, Make and Fact.

In Indo-European languages (and many other families of languages), a sentence must have a subject. The subject is the 'thing' about which the sentence is an assertion. But some languages do not always require that the subject should be a 'thing' or even a noun. In Greek and Latin, a whole clause can be the subject of a sentence : difficile est satiram non scribere, where the subject of the sentence is satiram non scribere, or errare humanum est, where the subject is errare. Try English, and you will have 'It is difficult not to write a satire'; 'It is human to make mistakes' (Pope's 'to err is human' is, of course, a poetic Latinism, not 'normal' English). English just cannot allow an abstract expression to be the subject of the sentence. When this occurs, the abstract expression has to be 'adopted' by an imaginary object 'it', which is, of course, pure linguistic fiction. The same would apply to many other modern European languages: 'Est ist schwer'.....'; C'est difficile.....' (although Italian - much nearer in many respects to the genius of the ancient languages - can allow a straight 'E difficile'). We can sometimes approach the ancient construction when we say, for example: 'To tell the truth is often difficult'. But such expressions are too literary, Classical and forced in English. Much better and more normal: 'To tell the truth is often a difficult thing' - or 'a difficult task' (where we admit, at least, that the abstract process of telling the truth is a task, a human activity, and not a thing or object). But the majority of ordinary speakers of English would prefer 'It is often difficult to tell the truth'. One feels more comfortable in the presence of things or its.

Another species of the same genus is the impersonal verbs, or the lack of them. Greek and Latin have a considerable number of verbs which are used in the third person singular and require no subject, for the simple reason that the action described in such verbs is the subject of the sentence - that which the sentence is about. Ὕει, says the Greek; pluit, says the Roman, and they see nothing wrong with having no 'thing' to do the raining. Not so modern man: he needs a thing even when, in his heart of hearts, he quite understand that this thing is a piece of linguistic fiction. So we have 'it rains', 'es regnet', when we know on reflection, that there is no such it to do the job. (Italian, with its piove and similar impersonal verbs, is again closer to the ancient languages. In modern Hebrew, 'the rain falls down'. In my short experience of teaching English as a foreign language in an Israeli school, the fictitious it was one of the most difficult phenomena to explain to my pupils. Together with the s in 'he/she/it works ' and the lack of an s in the plural forms of the same expression, it went a long way to convincing them that speakers of English must be very peculiar people). The same applies to impersonal verbs going with a clause-subject. Χρὴ ἡμᾶς την πόλιν τειχίζειν says the Greek, not worrying about the lack of a 'thin g-subject'. Similarly in Latin: Frumentum in Sicilia coemere oportet. But in English? 'It is necessary for us to fortify the city'; 'It is necessary to purchase corn in Sicily'. Unless we translate it as 'We ought to.....' But in that case, we have acquired a 'thing-subject' in the pronoun 'we' - for are not human beings things?

Which brings me to my next category, Have. Whether or not the English verb is derived from the same Indo-European root as Latin capio, 'to grasp, hold' (a thing, of course), it is clear that the basic meaning of this verb is 'to be in (physical) possession of a (physical) object'. 'To have and to hold', as the English expression has it ('has it'!) - and in this expression, one feels that to have is virtually synonymous with to hold.

But hold! Where have we encountered this expression? It sounds rather familiar. Oh yes, in the traditional Church of England Marriage Service. In their marriage vows, both bride and groom promised 'to have and to hold' each other. To be sure, they also promised other, more abstract and human, things : to love, cherish, obey. But the first of their promises were to take, to have and to hold - just as one takes, has and holds an object or a piece of property.

Human beings are not the only victims of this possessive verb. Slowly but surely, it has been playing havoc with many of our most intimate feelings and emotions. In the ancient world, one usually dreamt a dream. In our modern world, despite the discoveries of Freud and others, one usually speaks of having a dream - as though a dream were merely an object, a thing, coming 'out of the blue': καὶ γάρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν (but this is precisely the 'primitive' ancient view which, in our more conscious moments, we pride ourselves on having outgrown). In the same manner, we say: 'I have a feeling that....'- just as if one could enter the nearest supermarket and get an impression or two, 15p. each). We have' experiences, exciting, interesting, beautiful, horrifying, boring - a whole wide range of them, all very neatly classified and tucked away into pigeonholes in the recesses of our mind - yes, our mind, too, is a 'thing' which can have its 'recesses - like so many precious possessions. We also 'have' fun, a good time, a miserable time, a good day, a nice holiday,

a happy Christmas or New Year. Even religious feelings are not exempt from our possessive imagery. One 'has' a deep religious experience. A mystic 'has' a mystical experience. A prophet 'has' a revelation from God. (The ancient prophets were more careful. In Jeremaiah 2,1, most English translations have 'the word of the Lord came to me.' The original Hebrew is 'the word of the Lord was unto me'. The Septuagint has egeneto. Only the Vulgate has 'et factum est verbum Dei' - for theological reasons?).

From religion to the most intimate personal relations. It is true - and rather strange - that we do not talk of 'having' so-and-so's friendship (though, to be sure, we have friends), but of 'enjoying' it, or a similar verb. In the same way, one speaks of 'falling in love' or 'courting', not of 'having' love or a courtship. But wait until you have taken the slightest responsibility (and, of course, one has or takes responsibility), and you start 'having' an affair, a long or a short engagement, a happy or an unhappy marriage, a stable or an unstable family life. Not happy with this, we carry this attitude of ours into the most intimate of human relationships, the experience of physical love. One does not, of course, speak of experiencing love, but of making love - on this later. But an even more widespread expression in this era of the sexual revolution and after is 'to have sex'. 'Sex'itself is, of course, a fairly recent word, much more neutral and 'objective' and non-commital than 'love'. When two people 'have sex', it is, one assumes, merely 'a thing' that 'happens' to them. The sex organs of a male and a female come together. No deep personal emotion, no experience of love which involves two human personalities, is necessary. 'It' all comes 'out of the blue'. The man ' has an erection ', the couple 'have an orgasm', and the 'thing' is soon over - except for the social or psychological statistician, who will now proceed to count up and tabulate the number of times a week/a month in which the average American couple 'have' sex, 'have' an orgasm and so on. 'Sex', like joy, happiness, religion, loneliness, despair and so many other deep human feelings and experiences, has been relegated, in our modern, 'with-it' ('with-it') way of looking at....yes, things, into another of 'those things'. It is there, to 'take, to have and to hold' in larger and smaller quantities - and, of course, to be sold as a consumer good literally (an ancient tradition) or by proxy ('sex' magazines and pornography). Once, it was only prostitutes who were expected to treat 'sex' as an object. Ordinary men and women were supposed to consider it as part of a deep personal involvement. Some still do. And some people still experience a religious or mystical vision. But our linguistic habits would make them talk of 'having' a religious or mystical vision.

But enough of Have. A few brief observations on Make. The original - and still the basic - meaning of the verb is 'to create material objects'. It is still natural to speak of making chairs, tables, television sets, rather than of making music. Yet we do talk of 'making' music, love, war, peace, or noise, where the older, more imaginative and more correct expressions were 'playing music', 'loving', 'fighting' or 'waging war', 'concluding peace' and the like. Subconsciously, we have come to treat music, love, war, peace and many other activities and states of this sort as 'things' which we make - and once we have 'made' them, we go on 'having' them - or some of them. And if we 'have peace' but do not 'have love', this is because when we 'make love' we already 'have sex'. I shall be accused of inconsistency: what about 'making noise' - a good, old-fashioned expression with no substitute? Fair enough. Let us define 'to make' as in 'make noise' as 'bring into being what has not existed before'. This would cover war and peace: will it cover love? I would still insist that the primary meaning of 'make' is material, and that 'make noise' is a legitimate metaphor, but a metaphor none the less. And what about 'making a success of it' or its

American equivalent 'making it' - where we have the combination of 'make' and our old friend 'it'? 'Making good' is a more complex expression, and I do not want to enter into it here ('to enter into' an expression!). But it does mean 'to succeed', and we do use the verb 'make'.

These are all, of course, linguistic 'facts' - and the tyranny of the word 'fact' in our modern idioms is one of the most startling of all linguistic 'facts'. A student writes : 'The fact that Socrates mocked the Athenians to their faces was responsible for the fact that they condemned him to death'. You wish to correct his English, but on reflection, you become aware of the 'fact' that most of the books and media which have formed his style are full of such 'factual' expressions. One favourite of mine is the sentence beginning 'It is a fact that....' Try to render it into Greek or Latin, and you will get stuck. At the end, you will have to settle for τῷ ὄντι, ὡς ἀληθῶς, τῇ ἀληθείᾳ re uera, or similar expressions. The word 'fact' in its objective, almost magical sense in which we employ it did not quite exist in the ancient world or for most of the Middle Ages. The Latin factum, its etymological ancestor, does not, in Classical, Mediaeval, or early Humanist Latin, mean 'fact' in our modern sense: it signifies a human action. The same applies to Greek ἔργον . Modern Greek has felt the lack of such a word, in such a sense, in the ancient language. When the time came for 'fact' in its modern, Western sense to be translated into Greek, the Greeks had no precise ancient or Mediaeval equivalent for it, and they adopted an obscure perfect participle to convey this sense. The Modern Greek word for 'fact' is γεγονός - 'something that has happened', or, more literally, 'a subject in the neuter gender which has happened'.

On the cult of the fact in modern thought, philosophical, scientific and 'lay', there is hardly any need to speak. Facts have a magical power over us, they are the gods of modern thought. They can prove or disprove, support or destroy a theory. They 'speak for themselves' (having, of course, been carefully chosen beforehand by the presenter so as to speak for the thesis he is anxious to prove). They indicate various avenues for research. They are 'the real thing', which we, as 'objective, scientifically-minded' people, should be after - in preference to 'barren speculation'. Despite Popper's revolutionary analysis of the nature of scientific (and not only scientific) investigation, the man in the street - and the scientist and scholar for much of his time, when he is in a less rigorous and scientific mood - still assumes that you only have to 'hit' or 'stumble upon the facts' (sometimes as a member of an august body called a 'fact-finding mission '), and the facts will 'do the rest of the job for you'. Facts, of course, are merely convenient, man-made constants in the flowing stream of our thoughts and experiences. But having created them, man has first turned them into 'things'. Not content with this, he has now endowed them with super-'real' qualities, almost with a personality and an 'animistic' soul of their own.

The Marxist critic will jump on all these specimens of 'reification' - especially on those grouped under the categories Have and Make - claiming that such expressions, and the attitudes they represent, are the direct consequences of man's 'alienation' from the results of his labour in a mass-producing, capitalist society, where everything is a product which some people make by selling their labour, while others (including the makers themselves in their capacity as consumers) take (for a small consideration, of course), have and hold. It is not impossible that some of the modern English expressions I have considered, and many similar ones, have proliferated in the modern industrial world thanks to this capitalistic outlook. But the whole phenomenon of regarding 'non-things' as 'things' is much older than capitalism. As far as linguistic usage can be trusted, this attitude goes back to the ancient world itself.

We have already noted that, if we wish to translate expressions like 'it is a fact that....' 'in fact', or 'as a matter of fact' to the ancient languages, we are reduced to paraphrasing them. In Greek we do this by using expressions referring to truth or being. In Latin, the commonest idiom would be re uera - 'as the thing truly is.' This is not the only case where Latin employs res for an abstract 'non-thing'. Res is, after all, one of the commonest nouns in Latin, and it has, perhaps, more meanings (if we count its various combinations and idioms) than any other. Where the Greek talks of ἡ μετρικὴ Latin (although this is admittedly a late expression, but no less true to the Latin genius) has res metrica. For Greek τὰ στρατηγικὰ Latin has res militaris. The family property is, of course, res familiaris: fair enough, one could say, for most of the property consists of tangible objects - yet it is not one tangible object. What can be more abstract than πολιτεία - a concept conveying the whole essence of a state considered from the point of view of its political organization. Latin? Res publica - 'the public thing'. When a Roman writer wants to indicate that the very context of his discussion seems to suggest an observation he is about to make, he says res ipsa hortari uidetur - 'the thing itself seems to propose' (e.g. Sallust, Catiline 5,9), endowing res, just as we moderns endow 'fact', with a soul and an initiative of its own. 'The present state of affairs' is translated into Latin as ita res se habet or 'habent' - 'this is how the thing has itself' or 'the things have themselves'. It is hardly surprising that, what Greek expresses through concepts of truth and being, Latin expresses through re uera; and that the Greek pair of concepts λόγῳ - ἔργῳ is often rendered in Latin as specie and re (ipsa). Specie is, of course, a sound philosophical concept - τὰ φαινόμενα always tend to deceive us, and we have to go beyond them. The Greek goes beyond the appearances to find something more stable, like an ἀρχή , or the Ideas, or some general concepts and categories which, although not themselves existing in the world of phenomena, can explain its chaos and reduce it into some order. The Roman goes beyond the world of phenomena only to discover behind it 'the real thing'. It is not improbable that Kant, whose education was old-fashioned and Classical, and who wrote some of his early works in Latin, was subconsciously influenced by Latin modes of thought when he discovered, beyond the world of phenomena.....a 'thing in itself.'

It also seems more than likely that the Latin way of 'looking at things' has been the primary force behind our modern concept of 'realism'. 'Realism' itself is, of course, a complex philosophical term with a long history. In the Middle Ages, it was contrasted with 'nominalism'. Today, it is usually contrasted with 'idealism'. A proper discussion of these two pairs of philosophical contrasts is far outside the scope of this modest essay. But in our ordinary everyday language, a realist is someone who 'knows his facts' and treats them with respect. He is often described as a 'hard-headed realist' or a 'tough minded man'. Such expressions show that it is not only the facts which have solidified, in our modern outlook, into concrete things, 'hard facts'. The realist himself, the 'man of facts' (or, more literally, the 'man of things'), has also suffered his head - or, what is worse, that typical non-thing, his mind - to solidify in the process into something tough, hard and concrete.

If the realist, in this sense, is a fairly recent arrival on the scene, this is far from true for our adverb 'really'. What we mean by it is, of course, 'truly', 'corresponding to the true state of affairs'.

But our word is 'really', the literal translation of which would be 'thingly', or paraphrased as 'corresponding to the true state of things'. It is re uera all over again.

Latin, however, is not the sole culprit. As the language of a more 'practical' and 'down-to-earth' people, it sometimes tends to emphasize through linguistic expressions a tendency in thought and outlook which nobody in European civilization - no, not even our philosophical Greeks - has succeeded in eschewing.

For where the Roman has his res ipsa hortari uidetur or res ipsa monet, Aristotle himself can say of some of his Pre-Socratic predecessors that αὐτὸ τὸ πρᾶγμα ὡδοποίησεν αὐτοῖς καὶ συνηνάγκαζε ζητεῖν (Metaph. 984a 18-19). Πρᾶγμα , of course is not quite as opaque as res. It is the end-product of human action. Very often - indeed, most often - it is used for an abstract affair, such as πράγματα ἔχειν καὶ παρέχειν . Yet its very connection with the verb ἔχω already suggests that it is taken, consciously or subconsciously, for a thing of some sort - abstract, perhaps, but not as abstract as the action-noun πρᾶξις , which would be inconceivable in the Aristotelian context - or with ἔχω , for that matter.

But this is not the whole story. Behind such linguistic 'slips', the 'thing-imagery' in all its glory looms alarmingly large. Aristotle himself was, in our modern idiom, something of a realist. For him, the 'primary substances' (πρώτη οὐσία) is 'a this' (τόδε τι), as 'this man' or 'this horse'. This, at least, is the view expressed in Categories 2all ff. Other discussions (e.g. Metaph Δ, 8) show that 'things' are far more complex even for Aristotle the 'realist'. But what about Plato? One would expect him, at least, to be less of a realist in our modern sense; to be free, or at least relatively free, of 'the spell of the thing.' It is true, of course, that, following Heraclitus, Plato denies that any of the objects of our sense-perception are fully concrete and abiding. The world of phenomena is in a constant state of flow, and our senses only deceive us when they give us the impression that these are 'things' which exist in a fixed and constant state. But what about the Ideas? There, in 'the World of Ideas', we do have fixed 'things'. They are abstract entities, to be sure - yet they are entities all the same, existing 'separately' from material things which 'partake' of them. One of Aristotle's most penetrating criticisms of Plato's Ideas is precisely on this score - that they are really only idealized objects, duplicating the number of entities in this world rather than explaining them (Metaph. 1040b27 ff.). Such criticism implies - rightly, I think - that in producing his 'Theory of Ideas', Plato could not rid himself of the 'thing imagery' so insidiously persistent in our thought patterns, and that he ended up turning the Ideas themselves, after a fashion, into abstract, exalted, but still recognizable 'things'.

Why such a persistent tendency in our European way of thinking, defying our most courageous conscious attempts to overcome 'the tyranny of the concrete?' This may, perhaps, be more of an anthropological problem than a problem for the philosopher or the philologist. It is, of course, true that our sense-perception is more vivid, immediate and ubiquitous than any other mode of thinking or awareness, and therefore has a much firmer grip on our whole way of observing the world. 'You see what I mean?' as we say - as though an abstract meaning can be seen with one's eyes. Even when dealing with abstract terms, we tend to 'visualize' them in some way. 'Where is justice?' we ask, assuming that justice, like a loaf of bread, must be somewhere. Indeed, we tend to use the spatial 'there is' for concepts which can hardly be conceived as spatial objects. 'There is a God'; 'There is much truth in what he

says' - and the like. 'His generosity got the better of him', we say, as though generosity were not only a thing, but an active force - even, one suspects, an active living being. But such examples provide us with no final answer. Indeed, the second of them may well point back to the primitive view of the world which the anthropologist calls 'animism'. Primitive man could not grasp the possibility of movement and change in inanimate nature without the assumption that a conscious soul, like that of men and animals, is effecting such movement and change. He endowed all natural objects with souls. If the earth brings forth vegetation, the rain descends on us, clouds move in the wind, stones roll and fountains flow, they must have souls in order to be able to do so. What is significant about this way of looking at nature is that it is so radically different from the prevalent modern tendency we have been discussing. We tend to turn events, forces, and even human actions and emotions, into 'things', almost like inanimate objects. Primitive man, it appears, tended to turn 'things' and natural phenomena into human and psychological entities and forces. Primitive man 'created nature in his own image'. We tend to regard much of ourselves, our thoughts and feelings and human events, in the light of inanimate nature in its most solid, concrete and inert state. If this is the case, it would appear that neither of these tendencies, the 'animistic' and the 'reistic', is likely to be 'natural' to man. Perhaps each is a product of a particular way of living and of coming to grips with nature. Primitive man tried one way. By imposing his own image on nature, he tried to control the 'human' and 'animate' forces of what we conceive as inanimate nature by human means like magic and prayer. He was soon to discover that this method did not always produce the desired results. One had to accept the laws of nature as distinct from the laws of man - as the 'other, which had to be studied on its own terms before it could be manipulated properly. Modern man - and in this context modern man begins with the ancient Greeks - has learnt the logic of inanimate nature, in which things have to be treated as such rather than as mere projections of our minds. By learning this, he has come to control much of nature. But in the process, he has forgotten that 'things' are merely useful methodical constructs for the control of nature on the more practical level. He has tended to dehumanize himself, 'de-processize' processes, 'de-generalize' general terms and concepts, and turn everything ('every <u>thing</u>'!) into objects and facts. We have gained immensely in our control over nature since the early days of Greek science. But our obsession with nature as 'the other' has alienated us, to a large extent, from ourselves as human beings, living not only in space, but in time and - on the more general level of our thought - perhaps not merely in time. We have gained the whole world and lost our own soul, and our language and imagery are a living witness to this process of alienation.

There was, however, one Greek philosopher who saw this process at its early stages and registered a protest against it. I refer, of course, to Heraclitus of Ephesus. The more we learn about Heraclitus, the more difficult it is for anyone to say anything about him with impunity. But I think it would not be too erroneous to say that one of the main insights of Heraclitus' philosophy of nature is that 'there is no such thing as a thing'. Everything is always in a constant state of process and change, being itself and its opposite at one and the same time. Even the basic material substance of the universe - and like all Ionian philosophers, Heraclitus could not conceive of the universe a s based on something entirely immaterial - is the most changing and changeable of all elements, fire, a substance you cannot, literally, grasp or 'pin down'. Whether the <u>logos</u>, the only constant in this process of continual change, is identical with this universal fire or not, it is still the <u>logos of the change</u>. Even human institutions are in

a continuous process of change and movement. True, 'a people should fight for its laws as it fights for its walls' (Fr.B44). But just as walls are not really 'objects', neither are laws. And Heraclitus does not say that a people has abiding laws just as it has abiding walls. They should fight for their laws, for, after all 'war is the father of all things.' 'All human laws are nourished by the one divine law' (Fr.B 114) - but what are the divine laws if not the logos of continuous change?

I am not claiming - nobody can do that - that Heraclitus' system is absolutely consistent and free of contradictions. It cannot be, since one of its main insights is that nothing is consistent or free of contradictions. Nor am I laying the slightest claim to comprehensive-next in summing up 'what Heraclitus said' in fewer lines than most basic textbooks. What I have tried to do is merely to place one of the fundamental insights of Heraclitus' philosophy within the context of our present discussion. This fundamental insight, that 'there is no such thing as a thing', goes beyond the 'reist' tendency of our European way of looking at the world (although Heraclitus' 'living fire' may well be something of a concession to animism). It may have come as near as any philosophical insight expressed so far to 'looking nature in the face'. Modern science, it appears, is now catching up with Heraclitus. After the discovery of relativity and the quantum theory, the scientist now knows that time and space are not 'real' categories; that matter itself may well be a function of something that is far less concrete and firm; that solid, concrete bodies belong in our everyday conception of the world rather than in the laboratory. There are, scientifically speaking, no things, even in the world of inanimate nature. Heraclitus would have understood in principle - on a far less sophisticated level, of course.

But while our modern scientist is getting farther and farther from the false security of the concrete, the layman continues to use the language, imagery and 'way of looking at things' as if nothing has happened. If anything, the process of 'reification' seems to have intensified in recent - and not so recent - years, and to have invaded more and more of the 'inner recesses' of our minds and emotions. The language and imagery people use are no mere accidents. They express, consciously or subconsciously, the way in which the user looks at himself and his environment. To employ an easy and obvious example, there is a vast difference between talking of a plane hijacked by 'terrorists', 'guerillas' or 'freedom fighters'. The phrase used in such a context tells us much about the speaker's attitude to the hijackers - in this particular case, a conscious political and moral attitude. But words and images are hardly ever free of conscious or unconscious attitudes. If the languages and imagery used by so many generations of Europeans betray such a constant and persistent tendency to 'reify' events, processes, feelings, emotions, thoughts, ideas, and even human beings as a whole (for do we not speak of 'everybody' and 'nobody', turning a complex human being into a mere 'body' in space?), this should give us 'food' (!) for thought.

PENITENTIAL POSTCRIPT

This essay has been written in some haste, in a brief interval from work which I consider more technical and more 'in my line'. I have therefore not even attempted to endow it with all the paraphernalia of 'proper' research - exact references, tables, footnotes and all the rest. I am sure that much of what I have said in it has been said before. Hegel's attack on our persistent tendency to think in 'Vorstellungen' even while engaged in our most abstract speculations is one example. Another is Collingwood's The Idea of Nature, a book I have not touched for many years, but a book

which says much more clearly many of the things included in this essay. If there is anything even slightly new here, it may consist in the attempt to show that attitudes long noticed and criticized by my 'elders and betters' make their appearance not only in conscious and methodical thought, but even in thought-patterns subconsciously inherent in our 'innocent' use of language and imagery in everyday life. Even here, many of the linguistic 'facts' I have discussed must have been noticed before. My choice has been to present 'a cluster of ideas' which have been 'revolving in my mind' for some time now in this, rather superficial, manner - or not to present them at all for lack of time to 'go to work' on them properly. Here, then, is my essay, imperfect as I know it only too well to be. In the language I have been discussing and criticising, 'take it or leave it.'

J. GLUCKER.

My memories of school are very vivid;
Ovy we read and sometimes Livid.

ANON.

LECTURE NOTES : THUCYDIDES - GREAT HISTORIAN OR ADDLE-HEADED PRATTLER?

An interesting question, this one: apparently an (a) or (b) answer. Was he or was he not a moron with verbal diarrhoea? Personally, under present circumstances, I am very much inclined to say that Thucydides was indeed a moron with verbal diarrhoea. At any rate, he manages to bore the backsides off the majority of people who have his inconsequential outpourings rammed down their gullets. (Shades of fattening the Capitoline geese ready for slaughter and subsequent transformation into pâté de foie gras, roast and stuffed fowl, bonemeal, petfood and so on.)

The popular academic hypothesis that the reading of "the Great Thucydides' Histories", by a gaggle of uncertain students of plagiarism and regurgitation, is still - in the latter half of the twentieth century - an earth-shaking, epoch-making, bowel-moving experience, is frankly painful. It must be admitted, however, that in one respect being force-fed on food of over two-thousand years' vintage is, if nothing else, most certainly bowel-moving, and thus, by association, earth-shaking. It gives me the pip to see a potentially useful entity - many examples spring to mind, but no names, please - so entirely buried in academic, stagnant, dry, dusty, traditional and desperate classicism, becoming no more than a brain with a leg at each corner, but a brain so closed to everything outside its own little world that it is not even prepared to accept the existence, far less the validity, of anything removed from the intellectual spiral.

It comes down to the simple question: is academic learning, for its own sake, justified by its effects? Well, what effects? Certainly, someone who wishes to lose himself in the ever-decreasing circles of intellectualism is welcome to do so, but let him not expect all those with whom he comes in contact to genuflect to his introversion, to be impressed by his great powers of imitation and reiteration, or to attempt to model themselves on him. "Beware the jabberwock, my son.....and the frumious bandersnatch."

In fact, after a total of twelve years of reading classics, I find the only justification of the subject is that it is an extreme form of mental P.T. - and no more than that, in its relevance to what is commonly called life. Cynical, perhaps, but realistic. No one can possibly rebuke anyone else who wishes to lose sight of everything but philology and syntax; all I can plead is that they should not try to convert every infidel whose path they cross.

Point made?

ALBERT VOLESTRANGLER.

NERO AND THE FIRE OF ROME - FACT AND FICTION

When considering what is probably the most famous event of Nero's reign, the historian is able to follow the main sequence of events without undue difficulty. On the night of July 18th, A.D.64, fire broke out in the crowded shops and stalls at the foot of the Palatine, near the east end of the Circus Maximus, and quickly spread, fanned by a strong wind. It raged for nine days, completely devastating three of the city's fourteen areas and causing varying degrees of damage in seven others. A large number of private houses and public buildings were destroyed, and the loss of life and materials was clearly heavy..

But what of Nero in all this? Some of his alleged activities have passed into proverb, and seem to have firmly established themselves in the popular imagination. This is not surprising, as two of the three main sources make him responsible for the fire and picture him singing to the lyre as he watched the spectacle; I refer to the accounts of Suetonius and Dio Cassius, in so far as the latter has survived in two mediaeval epitomes. Only Tacitus leaves the matter open to question :-

"Sequitur clades, forte an dolo principiis incertum (nam utrumque auctores prodidere) sed omnibus quae huic urbi per violentiam ignium acciderunt gravior atque atrocior. Initium in ea parte circi ortum quae Palatio Caelioque montibus contigua est, ubi per tavernas, quibus id mercimonium inerat quo flamma alitur. simul coeptus ignis et statim validus ac vento citus longitudinem circi corripuit. Neque enim domus munimentis saeptae vd templa muris cincta aut quid aliud moras interiacebat. Impetu pervagatum incendium plana primum, deinde in edita adsurgens et rursus inferiora populando, antiit remedia velocitate mali et obnoxia urbe artis itineribus hucque et illuc flexis atque enormibus vicis, qualis vetus Roma fuit. ad hoc lamenta parentium feminarum, fessa aetate aut rudis pueritiae (aetas), quique sibi quique aliis consulebant, dum trahunt invalidos aut opperiuntur, pars mora, pars festinans, cuncta impediebant. et saepe dum in tergum respectant lateribus aut fronte circumveniebantur, vel si in proxima evaserant, illis quoque igni correptis, etiam quae longinqua crediderant in eodem casu reperiebant. postremo, quid vitarent quid peterent ambigui, complere vias, sterni per agros; quidam amissis omnibus fortunis, diurni quoque victus, alii caritate suorum, quos eripere requiverant, quamvis patente effugio interiere. nec quisquam defendere audebat, crebris multorum minis restinguere prohibentium, et quia alii palam faces iaciebant atque esse sibi auctorem vociferabantur, sine ut raptus licentius exercerent seu iussu.

Eo in tempore Nero Autii agens non ante in urbem regressus est quam domui eius, qua Palatium et Maecenatis hortos continuaverat, ignis propinquaret, neque tamen sisti potuit quin et Palatium et domus et cuncta circum haurirentur. sed solacium populo exturbato ac profugo campum Martis ac monumenta Agrippae, hortos quin etiam suos patefecit et subitaria aedificia extruxit quae multitudinem inopem acciperent; subvectaque utensilia ab Ostia et propinquis municipiis pretiumque frumenti minutum usque ad ternos nummos. quae quamquam popularia in invitum cadebant, quia pervaserat rumor ipso tempore flagrantis urbis inisse eum domesticam scaenam et cecinisse Troianum excidium, praesentia mala vetustis cladibus adsimulantem.

Sexto die apud imas Esquilias finis incendio factus, provutis per immensum aedificiis ut continuae violentiae campus et velut vacuum caelum occurreret. necdum positus metus aut redierat plebi spes: rursum grassatus ignis patulis magis urbis locis; eoque strages hominum minor, delubra deum et porticus amoenitati dicatae latius procidere. plusque infamiae id incendium habuit quia praediis Tigellini Aemilianis proruperat videbaturque Nero condendae urbis novae et cognomento suo appellandae gloriam quaerere. quippe in regiones quattuordecim Roma dividitur, quarum quattuor integrae manebant, tres solo tenus deiectae: septem reliquis pauca tectorum vestigia superarant, lacera et semusta.

Domum et insularum et templorum quae amissa sunt numerum inire haud promptum fuerit: sed vetustissima religione, quod Servius Tullius lunae et magna ara fanumque quae praesenti Herculi Arcas Evander sacraverat, aedesque Statoris Iovis vota Romuli Numaeque regia et delubrum Vestae cum Penatibus populi Romani exusta; iam opes tot victoriis quaesitae et Graecarum artium decora, exim monumenta ingeniorum antiqua et incorrupta, [ut] quamvis in tanta resurgentis urbis pulchritudine multa seniores meminerint quae reparari requibant. fuere qui adnotarent XIII Kal. Sextilis principium incendii huius ortum, et quo Senones captam urbem inflammaverint. alii eo usque cura progressi sunt ut totidem annos mensisque et dies inter utraque incendia numerent." (Annals XV, 38-41)

If we now turn to the accounts of Suetonius and Dio, we will find a very different picture. Neither of them has any doubt whatsoever about Nero's guilt.

"Sed nec populo aut moenibus patria pepercit. dicente quodam in sermone communi :-

ἐμοῦ θανόντος γαῖα μειχθήτω πυρί,

immo, inquit, ἐμοῦ ζῶντος , planeque ita fecit. nam quasi offensus deformitate veterum aedificiorum et angustiis flexurisque vicorum, incendit urbem tam palam, ut plerique consulares cubicularios eius cum stuppa taedaque in praediis suis deprehensos no attigerint, et quaedam horrea circa domum uream, quorum spatium maxime desiderabat, ut bellicis machinis labefacta atque inflammata sint, quod saxeo muro constructa erant. per sex dies septemque noctes ea clade saevitum est ad monumentorum bustorumque deversoria plebe compulsa. tunc praeter immensum numerum insularum domus priscorum ducum arserunt hostilibus adhuc spoliis adornatae deorumque aedes ab regibus acdeinde Punicis et Gallicis bellis votae dedicataeque, et quidquid visendum atque memorabile ex antiquitate duraverat. hoc incendium e turre Maecenatiana prospectans laetusque flammae, ut aiebat, pulchritudine Halosin Ilii in illo suo scaenico habitu decantavit. ac ne non hinc quoque quantum posset praedae et manubiarum invaderet, pollicitus cadaverum et ruderum gratuitam egestionem nemini ad reliquias rerum suarum adire permisit; conlationibusque non receptis modo rerum et efflagitatis provincias privatorumque census prope exhausit." (Vita Neronis, cap.38)

Passing to Dio, we meet with a very elaborated and imaginative version.

Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ἐπεθύμησεν ὅπερ που ἀεὶ ηὔχετο, τήν τε πόλιν ὅλην καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν ζῶν ἀναλῶσαι. τὸν γοῦν Πρίαμον καὶ αὐτὸς θαυμαστῶς ἐμακάριζεν ὅτι καὶ τὴν πατρίδα ἅμα καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀπολομένας εἶδεν. λάθρᾳ γάρ τινας ὡς καὶ μεθύοντας ἢ καὶ κακουργοῦντάς τι ἄλλως διαπέμπων, τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἕν που καὶ δύο καὶ πλείονα ἄλλα ἄλλοθι ὑπεπίμπρα, ὥστε τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐν παντὶ ἀπορίας γενέσθαι, μήτ' ἀρχὴν τοῦ κακοῦ ἐξευρεῖν μήτε τέλος ἐπαγαγεῖν δυναμένους ἀλλὰ πολλὰ μὲν ὁρῶντας πολλὰ δὲ ἀκούοντας ἄτοπα. οὔτε γὰρ θεάσασθαι ἄλλο τι ἦν ἢ πυρὰ πολλὰ ὥσπερ ἐν στρατοπέδῳ, οὔτε ἀκοῦσαι λεγόντων τινῶν ἢ ὅτι "τὸ καὶ τὸ καίεται." "ποῦ;" "πῶς;" "ὑπὸ τίνος;" "βοηθεῖτε." θόρυβός τε οὖν ἐξαίσιος παντοχοῦ πάντας κατελάμβανε, καὶ διέτρεχον οἱ μὲν τῇ οἱ δὲ τῇ ὥσπερ ἔμπληκτοι. καὶ ἄλλοις τινὲς ἐπαμύνοντες ἐπυνθάνοντο τὰ οἰκοι καιόμενα. καὶ ἕτεροι πρὶν καὶ ἀκοῦσαι ὅτι τῶν σφετέρων τι ἐμπέπρησται, ἐμάνθανον ὅτι ἀπόλωλεν. οἵ τε ἐκ τῶν οἰκιῶν ἐς τοὺς στενωποὺς ἐξέτρεχον ὡς καὶ ἔξωθεν αὐταῖς βοηθήσοντες, καὶ οἱ ἐκ τῶν ὁδῶν ἔισω ἐσέθεον ὡς καὶ ἔνδον τι ἀνύσοντες. καὶ ἦν ἥ τε κραυγὴ καὶ ὀλολυγὴ παίδων ὁμοῦ γυναικῶν ἀνδρῶν γερόντων ἄπλετος, ὥστε μήτε συνιδεῖν μήτε συνεῖναι τι ὑπὸ τοῦ καπνοῦ καὶ τῆς κραυγῆς δύνασθαι. καὶ διὰ ταῦθ' ὁρᾶν ἦν τινας ἀφώνους ἑστῶτας ὥσπερ ἐνεοὺς ὄντας. κἀν τούτῳ πολλοὶ μὲν καὶ τὰ σφέτερα ἐκκομιζόμενοι, πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ τὰ ἀλλότρια ἁρπάζοντες ἀλλήλοις τε ἐνεπλάζοντο καὶ περὶ τοῖς σκεύεσιν ἐσφάλλοντο, καὶ οὔτε προϊέναι ποι οὔθ' ἑστάναι εἶχον, ἀλλ' ὤθουν ὠθοῦντο, ἀνέτρεπον ἀνετρεποντο. καὶ συχνοὶ μὲν ἀπεπνίγοντο συχνοὶ δὲ συνετρίβοντο, ὥστε σφίσι μηδὲν ὅ τι τῶν δυναμένων ἀνθρώποις ἐν τῷ τοιούτῳ πάθει κακῶν συμβῆναι μὴ συνενεχθῆναι. οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδ' ἀποφυγεῖν που ῥᾳδίως ἐδύναντο. κἂν ἐκ τοῦ παρόντος τις περιεσώθη, ἐς ἕτερον ἐμπεσὼν ἐφθείρετο.

καὶ ταῦτα οὐκ ἐν μιᾷ μόνον ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πλείους καὶ ἡμέρας καὶ νύκτας ὁμοίως ἐγίνετο. καὶ πολλοὶ μὲν οἶκοι ἔρημοι τοῦ βοηθήσοντός σφισιν ἀπώλοντο, πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ ὑπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἐπικουρούντων προσκατεπρήσθησαν. οἱ γὰρ στρατιῶται, οἵ τε ἄλλοι καὶ οἱ νυκτοφύλακες, πρὸς τὰς ἁρπαγὰς ἀφορῶντες οὐχ ὅσον οὐ κατεσβέννυσάν τινα ἀλλὰ καὶ προσεξέκαιον. τοιούτων δὲ δὴ ἄλλων ἄλλοθι συμβαινόντων, ὑπέλαβέ ποτε τὸ πῦρ ἄνεμος καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ λοιπὰ ὁμοῦ πάντα ἤγαγεν, ὥστε σκευῶν μὲν πέρι ἢ οἰκιῶν μηδένα μηδὲν ἔτι φροντίσαι, πάντας δὲ τοὺς λοιποὺς ἑστῶτάς που ἐν ἀσφαλεῖ τινι ὁρᾶν ὥσπερ νήσους τινὰς καὶ πόλεις ἅμα πολλὰς φλεγομένας, καὶ ἐπὶ μὲν τοῖς σφετέροις μηδὲν ἔτι λυπεῖσθαι, τὸ δὲ δημόσιον ὀδυρομένους ἀναμιμνήσκεσθαι ὅτι καὶ πρότερόν ποτε οὕτως ὑπὸ τῶν Γαλατῶν τὸ πλεῖον τῆς πόλεως διεφθάρη. πάντων δὲ δὴ τῶν ἄλλων οὕτω διακειμένων, καὶ πολλῶν καὶ ἐς αὐτὸ τὸ πῦρ ὑπὸ τοῦ πάθους ἐμπηδώντων, ὁ Νέρων ἔς τε τὸ ἄκρον τοῦ παλατίου, ὅθεν μάλιστα σύνοπτα τὰ πολλὰ τῶν καιομένων ἦν, ἀνῆλθε, καὶ τὴν σκευὴν τὴν κιθαρῳδικὴν λαβὼν ᾖσεν ἄλωσιν, ὡς μὲν αὐτὸς ἔλεγεν, Ἰλίου, ὡς δὲ ἐωρᾶτο, Ῥώμης.

Τοιούτῳ μὲν δὴ πάθει τότε ἡ πόλις ἐχρήσατο οἵῳ οὔτε πρότερόν ποτε οὔθ' ὕστερον, πλὴν τοῦ Γαλατικοῦ. τό τε γὰρ Παλάτιον τὸ ὄρος σύμπαν καὶ τὸ θέατρον τοῦ Ταύρου τῆς τε λοιπῆς πόλεως τὰ δύο που μέρη ἐκαύθη, καὶ ἄνθρωποι ἀναρίθμητοι διεφθάρησαν.

ὁ μέντοι δῆμος οὐκ ἔστιν ὅ τι οὐ κατὰ τοῦ Νέρωνος ἠρᾶτο, τὸ μὲν ὄνομα αὐτοῦ μὴ ὑπολέγων, ἄλλως δὲ δὴ τοῖς τῆν πόλιν ἐμπρήσασι καταρώμενοι, καὶ μάλισθ' ὅτι αὐτοὺς ἡ μνήμη τοῦ λογίου τοῦ κατὰ τὸν Τιβέριόν ποτε ἀσθέντος ἐθορύβει. ἦν δὲ τοῦτο

"Τρὶς δὲ τριηκοσίων περι τελλομένων ἐνιαυτῶν Ῥωμαίους ἔμφυλος ὀλεῖ στάσις."

ἐπειδή τε ὁ Νέρων παραμυθούμενος αὐτοὺς οὐδαμοῦ ταῦτα τὰ ἔπη εὑρέσθαι ἔλεγε, μεταβαλόντες ἕτερον λόνιον φὸς καὶ Σιβύλλειον ὄντως ὂν ᾠδον ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο

"ἔσχατος Αἰνεαδῶν μητροκτόνος ἡγεμονεύσει."

Και ἔσχεν οὕτως, εἴτε καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς θεομαντείᾳ τινι προλεχθέν, εἴτε καὶ τότε ὑπὸ τοῦ ὁμίλου πρὸς τὰ παρόντα θεισασθέν. τελευταῖος γὰρ τῶν Ἰουλίων τῶν ἀπὸ Αἰνείου γενομένων ἐμονάρχησε. σρήματα δὲ ὁ Νέρων παμπληθῆ καὶ παρὰ τῶν ἰδιωτῶν καὶ παρὰ τῶν δήμων, τὰ μὲν βίᾳ ἐπὶ τῇ προφάσει τοῦ ἐμπρησμοῦ, τὰ δὲ καὶ παρ' ἑκόντων δῆθεν ἠργυρολόγησεν, καὶ τῶν Ῥωμαίων αὐτῶν τὸ σιτηρέσιον παρεσπάσατο."

Epitome of John Xiphilinus, 166. 17-169,10.

"After this Nero set his heart on accomplishing what had doubtless always been his desire, namely to make an end of the whole city and realm during his lifetime. At all events, he, like others before him, (the text is almost certainly corrupt at this point) used to call Priam wonderfully fortunate in that he had seen his country and his throne destroyed together. Accordingly he secretly sent out men who pretended to be drunk or engaged in other kinds of mischief, and caused them at first to set fire to one or two or even several buildings in different parts of the city, so that the people were at their wits' end, not being able to find any beginning of the trouble nor to put an end ot it, though they constantly were aware of amny strange sights and sounds. For there was naught to be seen but many fires, as in a camp, and naught to be heard from the talk of the people except such exclamations as "This or that is afire," "Where?" "How did it happen?" "Who kindled it?" "Help!" Extraordinary excitement laid hold on all the citizens in all parts of the city, and they ran about, some in one direction and some in another, as if distracted. Here men while assisting their neighbours would learn that their own premises were afire; there others, before word reached them that their own houses had caught fire, would be told that they were destroyed. Those who were inside their houses would run out into the narrow streets thinking that they could save them from the outside, while people in the streets would rush into the dwellings in the hope of accomplishing something inside. There was shouting and wailing without end, of children, women, men and the aged all together so that no one could see anything or understand what was said by reason of the smoke and the shouting; and for this reason some might be seen standing speechless, as if they were dumb. Meanwhile many who were carrying out their goods and many, too, who were stealing the property of others, kept running into one another and falling over their burdens. It was not possible to go forward nor yet to stand still, but people pushed and were pushed in turn, upset others and were themselves upset. Many were suffocated, many were trampled underfoot; in a word, no evil that can possibly happen to people in such a crisis failed to befall them. They could not even escape anywhere easily; and if anybody did save himself from the immediate danger, he would fall into another and perish.

Now this did not all take place on a single day, but it lasted for several days and nights alike. Many houses were destroyed for want of anyone to help save them, and many others were set on fire by the very men who came to lend assistance; for the soldiers, including the night watch, having an eye to plunder, instead of putting out fires, kindled new ones. While such scenes were occurring at various points, a wind caught up the flames and carried them indiscriminately against all the buildings that were left. Consequently no one concerned himself any longer about goods or houses, but all the survivors, standing where they thought they were safe, gazed upon what appeared to be a number of scattered islands on fire or many cities all burning at the same time. There was no longer any grieving over personal losses, but they lamented the public calamity, recalling how once before most of the city had been thus laid waste by the Gauls. While the whole population was in this state of mind and many, crazed by the disaster, were leaping into the very flames, Nero ascended to the roof of the palace, from which there was the best general view of the greater part of the conflagration, and assuming the lyre-player's garb, he sang the "Capture of Troy", as he styled the song himself, though to the eyes of the spectators it was the Capture of Rome.

The calamity which the city then experienced has no parallel before or since, except in the Gallic invasion. The whole Palatine hill, the theatre of Taurus, and nearly two-thirds of the remainder of the city were burnt, and countless persons perished. There was no curse that the populace did not invoke upon Nero, though they did not mention his name, but simply cursed in general terms those who had set the city on fire. And they were disturbed above all by recalling the oracle which once in the time of Tiberius had been on everybody's lips. It ran thus:

"Thrice three hundred years having run their course of fulfilment,
Rome by the strife of her people shall perish."

And when Nero, by way of encouraging them, reported that these verses could not be found anywhere, they dropped them and proceeded to repeat another oracle, which they averred to be a genuine Sibylline prophecy, namely:

"Last of the sons of Aeneas, a mother-slayer shall govern."

And so it proved, whether this verse was actually spoken beforehand by some divine prophecy, or the populace was now for the first time inspired, in view of the present situation, ot utter it. For Nero was indeed the last emperor of the Julian line, the line descended from Aeneas. He now began to collect vast sums from private citizens as well as from whole communities sometimes using compulsion, taking the conflagration as his pretext, and sometimes obtaining it by voluntary contributions, as they were made to appear. As for the Romans themselves, he deprived them of the free dole of grain."

Let us first examine the alleged motives of Nero for setting fire to the city. Tacitus reports "videbaturque....condendae urbis novae et cognomento suo appellandae gloriam quaerere." But this is surely anticipating his behaviour after the fire, his exactions and the building of the Domus Aurea; it does not say in explicit terms that the emperor fired Rome with the intention of rebuilding and renaming it Neronopolis? No, for it seems that his most vicious acts were against people whom he considered to constitute

a threat, real or potential. He was also careful to keep the favour of the Roman crowd by providing lavish entertainments and large donativa; why then commit an enormity that could not go undetected, and which would infuriate the whole city? On a purely personal level, Nero had much to lose, since a new extension to the complex of imperial residences on the Palatine, the Domus Transitoria, had just been completed at great expense and embellished with works of art, pillaged mainly from the cities of Greece. Tacitus himself tells us that the emperor came post-haste from Antium (which is thirty five miles away) upon learning that fire was threatening it. His exertions to save it were of no avail, so, naturally enough, he built himself an even bigger and better one by way of consolation, thereby exciting much hostility and bitter comment among those ruined by the fire; it was doubtless this which caused him to be accused of wishing to recreate Rome as he would have it. The anonymous witticism preserved in the next section of Suetonius' Vita may be taken as representative:-

'Roma domus fiet: Veios migrate, Quirites,
Si non et Veios occupat ista domus.'

Turning to Suetonius' account, we are offered two reasons for his alleged crime. We are told that the ostensible reason was his disgust with the tortuous streets and squalid aspect of the old city. Why, we ask, should he suddenly take an interest in the sleazier part of the city and have his aesthetic sensibilities outraged by their appearance, when previously he had been interested only in extending and adorning his own residences? This sounds rather like a distorted version of the "destroy and rebuild" accusation, arising perhaps from the care taken to improve the quality of the houses rebuilt after the fire. What was the result of the fire may have been mistaken for its cause. The real reason, we are also told, is that Nero wished to destroy the world along with himself. This idea has also found its way, in an altered and amplified form, into Dio's account. What would make him desire such a thing? We are not offered any real explanation, and it is difficult to formulate one. At that stage he was undisputed master of the empire, enjoying success abroad and reasonable security at home, happy in his domestic life with Poppaea and sure of the gratification of his caprices. Why should such a thorough-going hedonist as Nero wish to end it all at the moment when his will was unobstructed? Even if he had such a wish, why was he apparently so easily discouraged that, instead of persisting in his attempt to burn the world, he plunged into a lavish reconstruction programme? Historians inclined to believe that he was somehow implicated have maintained that he was a maniac from whom anything might be expected. Certainly, he had a hopelessly inflated idea of his own virtues and talents, but he also appears to have been reluctant to take too many unnecessary risks. That at some time he should have had an extravagant death-wish is perhaps not in itself unlikely, but that he should have had the city fired while keeping out of the way at Antium seems to me a very unusual way of fulfilling it.

And what of his legendary singing of the burning of Troy? It would appear that an element of truth has become exaggerated and mixed with fictitious embellishments. We know that Nero was summoned urgently from Antium as the palace was menaced; Antium is thirty five miles from Rome, and some five or six hours must have elapsed between the departure of the messengers and the emperor's arrival, as even Caesar could travel only as fast as a horse could gallop. The Palatine would have been well ablaze by then, so the emperor would only have about him what he had brought from Antium. Can we really imagine him stopping to pack his lyre, costume and other props? Even so, where was he said to have given his performance? In his domestica scaena, suggests Tacitus; from the roof of the palace says Dio; from the turris Maecenatiana, says Suetonius. His private theatre was presumably part of the Domus Transitoria, and that was a blazing mass.

The Tower of Maecenas was situated in the gardens of Maecenas, which were linked to the buildings on the Palatine by the Domus Transitoria (hence its name) and was consequently right in the path of the fire, which was fanned by a veering westerly wind. The three places named thus seem to be ruled out. The most likely explanation suggested is that Nero, with his artistic aspirations, may well have been moved by the scene to recite either those lines of Homer which describe the burning of Troy, or some of the poem which he is said to have composed on the subject, and was heard by bystanders, and the versions we have were elaborated from their report.

Yet Nero's most recent biographer, B.H.Warmington, seems rather reluctant to discard the story entirely. Whilst agreeing with scholarly opinion in completely disbelieving the arson charge, and conceding that there are difficulties in the accounts, the notion of the emperor singing of the Sack of Troy evidently appeals to him. He says, Despite these inconsistencies and the tendentious accounts of the fire as a whole, the image of a ruler 'fiddling while Rome burned' is far too potent, and useful, ever to be discarded from popular imagination" (p.124). The fact that the account is so picturesque and convenient "to point a moral and adorn a tale", as Johnson says, imitating Juvenal, X.167, would surely make it somewhat suspect at least.

How great a disaster was the fire? The fairest estimate is that to be drawn from Tacitus' account. Suetonius is brief, vague and does not give exact details; after all, he is writing a biography of the Caesars, not an expanded history of the period. Dio would have us believe that approximately two-thirds of the city was destroyed. This is surely far too much. Tacitus tells us that three regions were devastated, seven damaged to some degree and the remaining four untouched. The three destroyed regions are known to have been: Isis et Serapis, Palatium and Circus Maximus. Certainly many old and well-known public buildings were destroyed, along with a large number of insulae and private houses. Even though the ruined areas were rebuilt with a view to safety, enough remained of the crowded old city, especially the slums of the Suburra, for fire to be a constant threat, as Juvenal complains, and serious fires occurred in A.D.80, during the reign of Antoninus Pius and in A.D.191. All our sources agree that the human casualties were heavy, and they are probably right, in view of the narrow, twisting streets, the weak and highly inflammable buildings, and the total panic that seems to have taken hold of the refugees. The picture does not assume a brighter aspect when the doings of those in authority are considered, for the soldiers and vigiles are reported to have taken the opportunity, along with other opprobrious characters, to do some looting amidst the uproar. Presumably those who spread the fire were the criminal element out for gain, or revenge. What is remarkable is that, as far as we know, the city administration did not make a concerted effort to bring the situation under control and establish some kind of order. Strangely enough, the only person who seems to have done much either to fight the fire or alleviate its effects was Nero. We may be inclined to suspect his motives, but he acted nonetheless. Certainly those parts of the city which were rebuilt under his supervision were a definite improvement upon the previous state of affairs.

This essay does not claim great originality; most of the arguments will doubtless be found to have been anticipated elsewhere. However, I have tried to make a few points which did not seem to be sufficiently emphasised.

I would like to thank Mr. J. Glucker for reading through the article and making some helpful suggestions and corrections.

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SONG OF MICIO AND HIS BACHELOR FRIENDS

(A flight of fancy based on the first scene in Terence's Adelphi)

Oh, it's fine to be late if you've met with the fate
Your fond wife fancies rather
Than whatever instead is dreamed with dread
By a doting mother or father.

A wife'll start thinking you're wenching or drinking
And having your fill of fun then,
But father and mother will worry each other,
'What fate has befallen our son, then?'

'What's happened to him? Has he broken a limb?
Is he floating face-down in the river?
Have robbers waylaid him? Oh, what has delayed him?
A fit, or a fall, or a fever?'

So may the gods spare you what the mothers who bare you
Go in such mortal scare of;
But what wives fear for husbands dear
May you have your full share of!

** * ***

AN "OMAR KHAYAM" STANZA AS GREEK EPIGRAM

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument
About it and about; but evermore
Came out by the same door as in I went.

αὐτὸς ἐγὼ νέος ὢν σπουδῇ πρὸς πάντας ἐφοίτων
ἰερεῖς ἠδὲ σοφοὺς πολλὰ μαθησόμενος·
οἱ δὲ καλῶς περί τ' ἀμφί τε πάντ' ἔλεγον· τὸ τέλος δὲ
ὥσπερ ἐσῆλθον ἁπλῶς ὧδε θύραζ' ἀπέβην.

F.W.CLAYTON.