

THE PILGRIMAGE OF HATE : AN ESSAY ON TIMON OF ATHENS.

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IN this paper I attempt to indicate the nature of a tragic movement more precipitous and unimpeded than any in Shakespeare ; one which is conceived on a scale even more tremendous than that of Macbeth and Lear ; and whose universal tragic significance is of all most clearly apparent. My purpose will be to concentrate on whatever is of positive power and significance in the main theme, regarding the imaginative impact as all-important however it may appear to contradict the logic of human life. I would reiterate what I have said elsewhere, that we must be true to our æsthetic appreciation of tragedy : our interpretation must preserve that positive element implicit in our imaginative enjoyment.

Timon is first shown as a noble and generous character, whose guiding star is universal benevolence. He has no pleasure but in giving, it is an obsession. He asks no return—Ventidius offers to repay a loan, but he answers :

O, by no means,
Honest Ventidius ; you mistake my love ;
I gave it freely ever ; and there's none
Can truly say he gives if he receives.

(I, ii. 8.)

Charity is instinctive to him, and knows no limit :

'Tis not enough to help the feeble up,
But to support him after.

(I, i. 107.)

His life appears one festival of entertainment and bounty, surrounded with display—music, masques, gorgeous banquets. His heart radiates goodwill, and looks ever outward, giving : the world of men outside him is as the reality of his own soul. Artists, poets, merchants crush round him, their patron ; his peers join him in feasting, give and receive gifts ; to the senate, as to the world, he is "noble" Timon. Timon uses his heritage of wealth with the bounty of a god ; moving among the riches of art and trade as a being to whom these are inevitable, he appears as the perfected product of civilization might be were civilization to become perfect, a man of taste, culture, and pleasure, using his wealth to establish a harmony of love and happiness around him. His nobility and richness of nature are as an alchemist transmuting things of sensuous enjoyment to the deep gold of real worth. If man ever attains his aspiration of centuries towards universal ease, refinement, altruism, and art, then—but not till then—a Timon can find his home on earth. He is a universal lover. His charity is never cold, self-conscious, or dutiful : it wells up from the erotic richness of his

soul. He withholds nothing of himself. His praise to the painter (I, i. 154) is sincere appreciation ; his jests with the jeweller (I, i. 164) kind and not condescending ; his chance of doing good to his servant whose lack of wealth forbids his desired marriage is one of those God-sent adventures in kindness that make the life of Timon a perpetual romance. His heaven is to see the young man's eyes brimming with joy. He hates the least suggestion of insincerity and scorns ceremony :

Nay, my lords,
 Ceremony was but devised at first
 To set a gloss on faint deeds, hollow welcomes,
 Recanting goodness, sorry 'ere 'tis shown ;
 But where there is true friendship, there needs none.
 Pray, sit ; more welcome are ye to my fortunes
 Than my fortunes to me.

(I, ii. 14.)

He does not doubt that his friends would, if occasion called, reciprocate his generosity, and an excess of emotion at the thought brings tears to his eyes :

. . . Why, I have often wished myself poorer, that I might come nearer to you. We are born to do benefits : and what better or properer can we call our own than the riches of our friends ? O, what a precious comfort 'tis, to have so many, like brothers, commanding one another's fortunes ! O joy, e'en made away ere it can be born ! Mine eyes cannot hold out water, methinks : to forget their faults, I drink to you. (I, ii. 104.)

There is no shame in this confession of tears : he lives in a world of the soul where emotion is the only manliness, and love the only courage.

Now contrasted with the brilliance and gaiety of Timon's feast is the philosopher of cynicism, Apemantus, who sees through the deceit of society to the beast within man's nature. He is from the start a discordant element, dark omen of tragedy. Though labelled " a churlish philosopher " in the dramatis personæ, he is, we must note, in his own way, a sincere one. His sincerity is a bitter poison of cynicism. Timon shows him the picture :

Timon : Wrought he not well that painted it ?

Apemantus : He wrought better that made the painter ; and yet he's but a filthy piece of work. (I, i. 200.)

Thus swiftly is condemned God, man, and man's aspiration and endeavour. The pregnancy of this answer is amazing in its compactness and the poignance of its sting. As he watches the observances of respect, the greetings and smiles attendant on Alcibiades' entry, he comments :

So, so, there !
 Aches contract and starve your supple joints !
 That there should be small love 'mongst these sweet knaves,
 And all this courtesy ! The strain of man's bred out
 Into baboon and monkey.

(I, i. 257.)

Entertainment is a mockery to him, for his thoughts are centred on

the transience of shows, the brittleness of the armour of manners with which civilized man protects the foulness within from the poisoned dart of truth. Therefore he sits apart during the feast, refusing the food of Timon, gnawing roots, drinking water. Masquers enter and he comments :

Hoy-day, what a sweep of vanity comes this way !
They dance ! They are mad women.
Like madness is the glory of this life,
As this pomp shows to a little oil and root.

(I, ii. 137.)

Apemantus sees into the future. He knows Timon is carelessly expending his wealth, and that his so-called friends are unreliable and insincere. He seems, indeed, to be genuinely anxious to point the truth to Timon. But Timon, though he tries to humour him, and to treat him with his own instinctive courtesy, yet will not listen to his counsel :

Nay, an you begin to rail on society once I am sworn not to give regard to you. Farewell, and come with better music. (I, ii. 250.)

Apemantus, to whom the world of man is unclean and stupid, yet has respected Timon whose kindly heart subdues even the cynic. Early in the play we hear that Timon's wealth, coupled with his "good and gracious nature," brings all kinds of men to his feet—

Yea, from the glass-faced flatterer
To Apemantus, that few things loves better
Than to abhor himself : even he drops down
The knee before him and returns in peace
Most rich in Timon's nod.

(I, i. 58.)

Apemantus' respect for Timon is shown throughout in his desire to warn him. From his view, Timon is a fool : but he yet feels Timon to be too good for such folly. Apemantus, however, appears just as foolish to Timon, insane, a mind deformed, warped, ridiculous, and to be pitied. Yet the sullen philosophy of Apemantus is a pale reflex of the titanic hatred of the future Timon. Apemantus would wish that future Timon to be born not by circumstance, but by reason. He would have Timon converted to his own faith. But, told to "come with better music," he is angered, and swears that, when the day comes for Timon to need the balm of his cynicism, he will not then let him have it :

Apemantus :

So :

Thou wilt not hear me now ; thou shalt not then :
I'll lock thy heaven from thee.
O, that men's ears should be
To counsel deaf, but not to flattery.

(I, ii. 253.)

But he does not keep his resolution. Nor is he correct in thinking that his philosophy will ever be a "heaven" to Timon.

Timon finds that his wealth is exhausted, his debts beyond hope of repayment except through assistance. He sends to some of his

friends, without success. His generous nature is only momentarily disturbed by the first evidences of baseness : he recovers himself and, typically, tries to excuse them :

These old fellows
 Have their ingratitude in them hereditary :
 Their blood is caked, 'tis cold, it seldom flows ;
 'Tis lack of kindly warmth they are not kind ;
 And nature, as it grows again towards earth,
 Is fashioned for the journey, dull and heavy.
 (II, ii. 223.)

But all his friends are alike : each offers a different excuse. Baseness is stripped of its covering. As his creditors grow unruly Timon's soul is wrenched by the agony of his knowledge. Creditors swarm in his own house :

Timon : The place where I have feasted, does it now
 Like all mankind show me an iron heart ?
 (III, iv. 83.)

They press round him, insistent :

Timon : Cut my heart in sums.
Titus : Mine, fifty talents.
Timon : Tell out my blood.
Lucius' Servant : Five thousand crowns, my lord.
Timon : Five thousand drops pays that. What yours ?—
 And yours ?
First Varro's Servant : My lord—
Second Varro's Servant : My lord—
Timon : Tear me, tear me, and the gods fall upon you !
 (III, iv. 93.)

This is all we see of the transition : when next Timon appears the iron of enduring hate has entered his soul. True, he has one more banquet ; invites his friends to it ; withholds his rage till he has made one speech of withering scorn—then volleys the titanic fury of his kingly nature in hate sovran as tremendous as his sovran love. There is no tragic movement so swift, so clean-cut, so daring and so terrible in all Shakespeare as this of Timon. We pity Lear, we dread for Macbeth : but the awfulness of Timon, dwarfing pity and out-topping sympathy, is as the grandeur and menace of the naked rock of a sky-lifted mountain, whither we look and tremble. Deserting Athens, he steps from time into eternity. The world of humanity tilts over, and is reversed. We see now, not with the vision of man, but henceforth with that of the aspiring Spirit of Love that has scorned mankind for ever. The inhumanity of Timon is the inhumanity of the aspiring soul of man : the splendour of a god takes form before our eyes.

Outside the walls of Athens Timon voices his utterance of hate. His curses issue like the hot fury of a volcano. They are directed against the whole social harmony and idealism of mankind : purity, manners, kindness, health—all are banned. Timon prays for hideous ruin upon earth, for chaos to level humanity with foulness and disease and death. May man continue to infect man and society thus die

of its own poison. He tears off those symbols of civilized humanity, his clothes :

Nothing I'll bear from thee
But nakedness, thou detestable town !
Take thou that too with multiplying bans !
Timon will to the woods ; where he shall find
The unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.

(IV, i. 32.)

The inrush of the exposed uncleanness of man has left Timon still pure. He is risen above them, and his naked fury is the exact measure of his spiritual stature. The world is now inadequate ; he, whose generous soul is of another kind, has turned his back on it and sets his face to the future. Henceforth he is to walk in a super-human loneliness, to converse alone with nature, with the spaces of the night, the sun, the stars : and when they too prove false, to commune alone with his own soul in death. Timon does not stay among mankind, creating confusion and disharmony like Hamlet, like Apemantus. He will tolerate no disorder, within and without his mind, like Lear, torn betwixt love and loathing, division which is madness. The chaos which his imprecations call on man are as a concord within the soul of him whose love is reversed, and who is no longer of this world. Thus Timon preserves the grander harmony of loneliness and universal hate, and fronts his destiny, emperor still in mind and soul, wearing the imperial nakedness of Hate.

Timon is in the deserts of rock and wood, embittered, alone. His companions are the " blessed breeding sun," the wide earth, the air. He feeds now, like Apemantus, on roots. But, digging for food, he finds gold :

What is here ?
Gold ? Yellow, glittering, precious gold ? No, gods,
I am no idle votarist : roots, you clear heavens !

(IV, iii. 25.)

The continued nobility and richness of his nature is magnificently reflected in this finding of new wealth where he least expects it : but the spirit of lavish enjoyment ungrafted on love is as nothing to him—he has no use for gold now. Whoever visits him receives only curses and gold, now synonymous with damnation. Alcibiades is told to

Be as a planetary plague, when Jove
Will o'er some high-vised city hang his poison
In the sick air . . .

(IV, iii. 108.)

Timon urges Alcibiades, who is leading an army against Athens, to use ruthlessness, brutality, and slaughter ; and urges Phrynia and Timandra, who accompany him and whom Timon curses as " whores," to infect mankind in their trade of prostitution as he would have Alcibiades infect them in his trade of war. He hurls gold at them :

There's more gold :
Do you damn others, and let this damn you,
And ditches grave you all !

(IV, iii. 164.)

After they leave him there follows one of those grand undertones of harmony that characterize the tremendous orchestration of this play :

Timon : That nature, being sick of man's unkindness,
Should yet be hungry ! Common Mother, thou,
Whose womb unmeasurable, and infinite breast,
Teems and feeds all ; whose selfsame mettle,
Whereof thy proud child, arrogant man, is puff'd,
Engenders the black toad and adder blue,
The gilded newt and eyeless venom'd worm,
With all the abhorred births below crisp heaven
Whereon Hyperion's quickening fire doth shine ;
Yield him, who all thy human sons doth hate,
From forth thy plenteous bosom, one poor root.

(IV, iii. 176.)

Timon's thoughts are already set beyond the world of man, in the silence of Eternity : yet he is not beyond the world of nature, he is, incongruously, hungry. As in this speech, Timon's utterance when he is alone is often addressed with a deep recognition, and intimacy—not toward man, but toward the vast forces, the stillness, the immensity, of nature, clear springs which the intellect of man has muddied. These are innocent, they wake responses in his soul. But then again he rises beyond this to awareness that, if one attributes personality to nature, his curses must be levelled not alone against man, but also against the earth itself : then his indictment stretches to the whole cosmic mechanism :

I'll example you with thievery :
The sun's a thief, and with his great attraction
Robs the vast sea : the moon's an arrant thief,
And her pale fire she snatches from the sun :
The sea's a thief, whose liquid surge resolves
The moon into salt tears : the earth's a thief,
That feeds and breeds by a composture stolen
From general excrement . . .

(IV, iii. 438.)

This sweep of the fanciful imagination is profound : it involves the knowledge that the meanest of man's vices are yet due to his ascension to a moral responsibility. Thus the mind of Timon ranges the interstellar spaces of night and finds no home. Nowhere but within the spaceless silence of the deeper night of Death will he be at peace. So they all come to Timon, captain and prostitute, servant, and philosopher, bandits, poet, painter, and senators : the reasons of their coming may be various, but all come to the naked form of the apostle of Hate, as to a prophet, or a king, humbling themselves. The richness of Timon's heart still holds its old sovereignty over lesser men. Two of these visits must receive separate attention.

Apemantus comes to Timon, the philosopher of hate to the

prophet of hate. The incident points the difference between them, and is important. Apemantus first advises Timon to return to mankind, to turn flatterer himself. He points out that this life of hardship serves no purpose of revenge, and that nature will be no less cruel than men :

What, think'st
That the bleak air, thy boisterous chamberlain,
Will put thy shirt on warm ? will these moss'd trees,
That have outlived the eagle, page thy heels,
And skip where thou point'st out ?

(IV, iii. 221.)

Will the creatures, he continues, hardened in nature's battle with a cruel heaven, come at your bidding, and flatter ? Timon, however, angrily bids him depart. Apemantus shows signs of desiring friendship :

Apemantus : I love thee better now than e'er I did.

Timon : I hate thee worse.

Apemantus : Why ?

Timon :

Thou flatter'st misery.

(IV, iii. 233.)

Which turns a shaft of light inward on Apemantus' meanness. Timon reveals him to himself as a flatterer like the rest : a man to whom loathing is an enjoyment, not a terrible destiny—who comes to receive the bounty of Timon's hate as others to receive of his wealth ; who was now hoping to join Timon in a dilettante festival of cynicism. Hence Apemantus is lashed into anger and spite—then, recovering himself, he defends his philosophy as compared with Timon's passion. He points out that to adopt the hard life which Timon has embraced from a considered philosophy would be well enough—but that Timon does it “enforcedly.” His own, however, is a “willing misery,” which “outlives incertain pomp,” and is thus the highest good, since contented poverty is richer than the wealthiest discontent. If Timon's misery is unwilling, there is nothing for him but death. Thus Apemantus states the case with admirable logic. Timon answers that Apemantus' philosophy is born of the marriage of poverty and a mean spirit. Had he been favourably placed by fortune, he would have lived luxuriously and in vice—have “melted down” his youth with lust : but, having been “bred a dog,” he has evolved a philosophy out of envy. Apemantus has no cause to hate, since he has not been flattered and deceived : whereas Timon, once the centre of man's supposed love, is now left

bare
For every storm that blows.

(IV, iii. 265.)

If Apemantus had not been born “the worst of men,” he too would have been knave and flatterer. Timon, too, speaks truth. Apemantus and Timon hate with a difference : one, because he is less than mankind—the other because he is greater. Hence Timon is

particularly disgusted with Apemantus, who apes, and enjoys, the bitter passion of his own enduring soul.

This dialogue is most important for our understanding of the essential meaning of the play. The two hates are juxtaposed. Apemantus upholds the worth of his as a thing of judgment, systematized into a way of life. To Timon that is abhorrent, and witnesses a gross nature. Now Apemantus is right when he tells Timon that death is the only hope left for him. Apemantus has scorned humanity, but lives on with them, feeding his scorn: he continues "vexing" men, which is, says Timon, "a villain's office or a fool's" (IV, iii. 237); and he enjoys doing it, which proves him "a knave" (IV, iii. 238). Apemantus has hated life, yet loves to live. But for Timon, who has uncompromisingly broken from mankind, and whose sweeping condemnation includes not alone humanity and the beasts of nature (IV, iii. 330-49) but even the sun and moon: for Timon there is only death. Apemantus confesses that the universal destruction he would like to see he would yet postpone till after he himself was dead (IV, iii. 394); and Timon's final curse on Apemantus is that he may live and love his misery (IV, iii. 396); that is, continue to be himself—than which there is no bitterer imprecation. From these considerations the difficulties of this dialogue will be made clear.¹ Timon's especial loathing, and Apemantus' vulgar rage, are both inevitable: Apemantus' soul is here stripped naked as Timon's body. He sees himself in his meanness, as a creature less than those he has loved to despise. But Timon is weary of curses. He turns from Apemantus and speaks to himself:

I am sick of this false world, and will love nought
But even the mere necessities upon't.
Then, Timon, presently prepare thy grave;
Lie where the light foam of the sea may beat
Thy gravestone daily.

(IV, iii. 376.)

In the other visit to be noticed, Timon's hate is pitted against something of a very different kind. Flavius, Timon's steward,

¹ Mr. A. K. Chesterton considers the treatment of Apemantus here to prove the hand of another author: ". . . our cynical philosopher, our self-sufficient and highly-courageous lasher of parasites, our worthy Apemantus, is revealed as a mongrel cur, with bared teeth, snarling back at Timon with an abandonment to fury that brings our previous estimate of his character hurtling to the ground. The man is no longer sane, or reasonable, or cased in the armour of his philosophy: he—is—well, simply meaningless." (*The Shakespeare Review*, June, 1928.) It is strange to find such admirable criticism (to which I acknowledge a debt) thus misapplied. The whole point has been missed. Once again Shakespeare is right, the critic wrong. I do not blame Mr. Chesterton—for whose comments on Shakespeare I have a deep respect—for not seeing the solution in this instance: Shakespeare is often obscure. But I would emphasize, in the light of this example, that the dismissal by a sensitive criticism of a speech or scene on any other grounds than *style* to an hypothetical collaborator is nearly always the sign of the presence of some especially significant point, often crucial—as it is here—to the play's meaning.

comes to remind us of the reality of faithfulness and love. Yet even here Timon loses no jot of grandeur. At first he refuses to see, then to recognize, his faithful servant. Finally, he is forced to realize that in simple love his steward is again offering his service to the ruin of his old master :

Timon : Had I a steward
 So true, so just, and now so comfortable ?
 It almost turns my dangerous nature mild.
 Let me behold thy face. Surely, this man
 Was born of woman.
 Forgive my general and exceptless rashness,
 You perpetual sober gods ! I do proclaim
 One honest man—mistake me not—but one ;
 No more, I pray,—and he's a steward.
 How fain would I have hated all mankind !
 And thou redeem'st thyself : but all, save thee,
 I fell with curses.

(IV, iii. 497.)

The beauty of this incident is the beauty of a blade of grass within the architrave of a cathedral. The finite virtue of simple humanity is asserting its right to stand within the vaulted silences of the eternal which scorns all limit, all failure. Timon stays for a moment his onward passionate adventure, pauses to proclaim one honest man : though the edifice of his creed of hate be a mighty thing, the blade of grass, rooted in the strength of a mightier, splits one stone of the foundation. But Timon, with an afterthought, suspects Flavius of mean motives. Reassured, he gives him gold, but with the terrible injunction :

. . . Go, live rich and happy ;
 But thus condition'd : thou shalt build from men ;
 Hate all, curse all, show charity to none,
 But let the famished flesh slide from the bone,
 Ere thou relieve the beggar . . .

(IV, iii. 532.)

We are indeed given no chance to sentimentalize Timon's hate. Its nobility derives solely from its utter reversal of love. It is thus not a spiritual atrophy, a negation, a cold vacuum of the soul, like the pain of Hamlet, but a dynamic and positive thing, possessing purpose and direction. Therefore, though impelled to its inevitable death-climax, the tragic movement of this play leaves us with no sense of the termination of the essential Timon : its impact on the imagination is rather that of a continuation, circling within and beyond the mysterious nothing of dissolution, in a new dimension congruous with the power and the passion which have forced him toward death. The especial reality of Timon is this of powerful, torrential movement to freedom : which freedom from all that we call " life " is so necessary and excellent a consummation to the power and the direction of Timon's passion, that it can in no sense be imaged as a barrier or stoppage. It is rather as though the rushing torrent, so long chafed by the limits of its channel, breaks out into the wide smoothness of the living sea. The death-theme in

Timon is thus of the greatest importance, the crowning majesty of the play's movement. Timon speaks to the Senators :

Why, I was writing of mine epitaph.
It will be seen to-morrow : my long sickness
Of health and living now begins to mend,
And nothing brings me all things.

(V, ii. 188.)

The nothingness of death becomes "all things" to Timon who passionately desires that "nothing." No conceivable symbol of desire will now serve that love, therefore in desiring death it desires nothing but its own unsatiable love : there it will, as it were, turn back within its own richness. Timon, embracing this ineffable darkness with joy, is already outside himself, viewing his own tragedy, as we do, with objective delight. He thus looks toward death, and imagines his end, and sees it, as we do, to be good—to hold the gift of "all things." Consciousness that thus derives joy from the death of consciousness is already, as we who watch, outside the dying and the death. It is but another aspect of the living force of Timon, the vivid, dynamic, swift thing of passion which is in him : the heat of it unsatiated by the mode called "life" has been excruciating, an expanding, explosive essence prisoned, and in death it will burn the enhampering body to fling upward its invisible brilliance in the illumination of "all things." "Health and living" have been to Timon as "a long sickness." In so far as we have been aware of this reversal of significance during the action, we shall know that we have long walked with Timon in death. Life and death have interchanged their meaning for him, and he now voices that paradox which is at the heart of all tragedy. Therefore the grand death speeches at the close come not as a super-added adornment, a palliative, but rather as a necessary and expected continuation, consummation, satisfaction. Timon, in these speeches, is pure essence of significance, beyond the temporal, in touch with a conquering knowledge of his furthest destiny : for, as blindness heightens the sense of touch, so it will be found that annihilation of the secondary and personal consciousness in "death" will tend to enrich the primary and impersonal mode with which Timon identifies himself in desiring his own extinction. So, too, we, from the same angle of objectivity, find, as Timon's sense of life's significance narrows to the point of death, that his grandeur yet increases to the end, and after. Nothing will be proved the largess of all things. Therefore, he speaks :

Come not to me again : but say to Athens,
Timon hath made his everlasting mansion
Upon the beached verge of the salt flood ;
Who once a day with his embossed froth
The turbulent surge shall cover : thither come,
And let my gravestone be your oracle.
Lips, let sour words go by, and language end :
What is amiss plague and infection mend !
Graves only be men's works and death their gain !
Sun hide thy beams ! Timon hath done his reign.

(V, ii. 217.)

Again is emphasized the completeness with which Timon's love is reversed. It is not alone a turning away from mankind ; rather a turning inward from the very idea of actuality and manifestation, from the cosmic scheme. He would wish the race die out, the sun blackened, the glass of time exhausted. Only the rhythm of the tireless beat of waves, the crash and the whispering retraction, these alone signify some fore-echoing of the thing which is to receive Timon. This is only the last step, into the dark adventure of death, of the movement we have been watching all along. It is truly spoken that

Timon is dead who hath outstretch'd his span.
(V, iii. 3.)

His hate of man was ever but one aspect, or expression, of the turning inward of his soul toward death, and since he flung back titanic curse on Athens, his being has been centred not in time but throughout the otherness of eternity.

I ought to reply, before closing, to two objections which may be raised to my analysis. First, that I have unwarrantably set my sympathies throughout with Timon, and ignored, to choose a typical example, the moral of warning that careless expenditure of wealth may lead to spiritual disintegration and death ; second, that I have concentrated on a few lines of poetic commonplace at the end of the play to serve as a basis for a mystical rhapsody not already implicit in the text. Both are unsound. First, we are not always at liberty to take any side we wish in interpretation of Shakespeare's characters. His tragic technique in maturity clearly points us by a variety of means towards certain points of view to the exclusion of others, and we should be guided solely by this technique instead of the customary vague hazards as to the author's "intention." Where the play, as it stands, does not justify a partial judgment, even though the poet's "intention" may seem to demand one, I am careful to point the fact.¹ This, however, will be the matter of another essay on Timon.² And, second, I analyse the death-speeches not as solitary units of philosophic utterance, but as living thought precipitated by the momentum of the tragic theme as a whole, gaining their impact from the force that has driven Timon from ease and luxury to nakedness among the naked beasts and trees and planets of the night, and beyond these to the unbodied "immortal nakedness"³ of death. We have watched a swift unwrapping of fold on fold of life's significances—civilized man, beasts, the earth, the objective universe itself, till we reach the core of pure and naked Significance, undistorted by any symbol, in the nothingness of Death. Yet at every step in what many commentators would call Timon's "downfall," we have been aware, not of a lessening, but of an increase of his grandeur ; that is, at every stripping of the soul of Timon we have known that what was

¹ See my essay, "The Technique of Hamlet." *To be published later.*

² "The Poetry of Hate : an essay on the Technique of Timon of Athens."

³ The phrase is Browning's : it occurs in *The Ring and The Book.*

taken is but another rag, what remains, the essence, the reality ; which feeling of tragic grandeur survives his death. Thus have I attempted an exposition of the meaning of this tragedy. The " criticism " of tragic poetry which concentrates only on what may be conveniently abstracted to its own rational plane is a mockery and were better left unwritten. The logic of tragedy varies inversely as its grandeur ; so that the totality of a story such as Timon's is as a gathering force, accelerating toward the climax, working up to and including both death and the reverberations which it awakes. The commentators who refuse to risk a full interpretation of the whole mystic grandeur,¹ as well as the incidental facts, of the story, may indeed write volumes on a single play, but their work beside the thunder of the original signifies no more than the seaman's whistle in the tempest of Pericles, which

is as a whisper in the ears of death
Unheard.

¹ I have shown how the mystic element of tragedy accounts for the plots of Shakespeare's Final Plays in my essay " Myth and Miracle," Burrow & Co. 2s.

After the holidays parochial activities will be starting again and we would draw attention to one or two useful little publications of the Church Book Room designed to help the clergy and other churchworkers : *Short Liturgies for Women's Services*, compiled by the Rev. W. E. Daniels, Vicar of St. George's, Deal, 2d., or 12s. per 100 ; *Young People's Services : Three Forms with Prayers for Special Occasions*, by the Rev. R. Bren, Vicar of Leyton, 2d., or 12s. per 100 ; *A Form of Service for Use in Sunday Schools, Children's Churches, Mission Services, etc.*, compiled by L. C. Head from the Book of Common Prayer, with Children's Hymns, 2d., or 14s. per 100 ; *Prayers for Children at Church Services in Sunday Schools and in their Homes*, compiled by the Rev. Henry Edwards, Vicar of Watford, 3d. ; *Communicants' Union Service*, arranged by Canon A. E. Barnes-Lawrence, 1d., or 5s. per 100 ; *A Manual for Communicants' Unions*, compiled and adapted by Archdeacon C. W. Wilson, Vicar of Bradford, 1d., or 7s. per 100 ; *My Weekly Message*, by Deaconess Oakley and Deaconess Ethel Luke, designed for distribution to young children, 2d., or 12s. per 100 ; *About the Feet of God*, by Canon E. R. Price Devereux, a manual containing morning and evening prayers for a week, 2d. ; *Family Prayers*, by the Rev. A. F. Thornhill, 2d., or 12s. per 100 ; *A Girl's Week of Prayer*, by E. M. Knox, late Principal of Havergal College, Toronto, 2d. A sample copy of each booklet will be sent on receipt of 1s.
