

# MY EDUCATION, PART I\*

ANTHONY M. LUDOVICI

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In the conventional sense of the term, I received no education. Apart from the training my mother gave me in the language and literature of France, my schooldays were unprofitably frittered away in a local private school where the teaching bore no relation to any reputable means of paying one's way as an adult. It was run and owned by an amiable, good-looking and relatively illiterate man, G. F. Carr Vernon, whose highest scholastic attainments entitled him to state on his circulars and on the large board adorning the entrance to his school that he was an Associate of the College of Preceptors and a Fellow of the Educational Institute of Scotland. His greatest claim to distinction was his excellent voice, which he used to great effect when reciting the prayers with which the day's work started.

Fortunately, he employed six assistants, two of whom, owing to their superior erudition, rather redeemed his deficiencies, and were consequently much respected in the school. Incidentally, too, they happened to exert a powerful influence over me and my destiny. They were, first of all, a very fascinating, handsome but unsuccessful aspirant to the medical profession, S. H. Wright,<sup>1</sup> who, owing to drink, had failed three times to obtain his medical degrees, and who, as he informed me later, had had delirium tremens when still under thirty years of age. Apparently, however, shortly before joining Mr. Vernon, he had formed an attachment to a young lady and completely mended his ways, and, except for a rather ugly premature stoop and a slight tremor in both of his hands, nothing about him betrayed his unhappy past. Passionately interested in literature, and with a useful knowledge of Greek and Latin, he was also very much preoccupied with religious problems—as may

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\* Selections from Anthony M. Ludovici, *Confessions of an Anti-Feminist: The Autobiography of Anthony M. Ludovici*, ed. John V. Day (Atlanta: Counter-Currents, 2008), ch. 3, "My Education, Part 1." The section headings were added by TOQ. Unless otherwise indicated, all notes are by Ludovici. John V. Day's notes are marked JVD, and additional notes are marked TOQ.

<sup>1</sup> Sidney Harry Wright—TOQ.

be gathered from his novel, *Chasma*<sup>2</sup>—and he was well-read in natural science and philosophy. He was in any case an excellent teacher, possessed the rare gift of being able to impart knowledge, and knew how to stimulate interest in every subject he taught. It did not take me long to grow very fond of him, and he did much to confirm my literary tastes and my deep interest in biology and natural history. Nevertheless, strange as it may seem, even when I was still in my early teens his influence over me was never strong enough to overcome the instinctive resistance with which I confronted his efforts to inculcate a belief in Christianity upon me. Indeed, it was only when he began his determined assaults on my congenital unbelief that I recognized how superficial and contingent on merely social claims and curiosity had been the brief spell of religiosity which, together with my sister Lily, I had undergone through the friendly agency of Miss Mary Walker.

The other assistant master whose influence on my life was also decisive was a delightful, erudite, and distinguished old German, Dr. Heine, whose military bearing, unmistakable *Schmisse*,<sup>3</sup> and charming manners were all redolent of “Alt Heidelberg” and stamped him at once as a person of breeding and education. Well-known in army circles as a good German coach, he had a lucrative clientele among young officers wishing to acquire the coveted title of Interpreter, which carried with it certain added emoluments. Every inch a gentleman himself, he had little understanding for the crude and vulgar jokes which many of the words in the German language suggest to English boys, and in dignified silence would wait for the gusts of laughter to die down before he attempted, with a pained expression, to continue the lesson.

He loved his national heroes—Goethe, Schiller, Heine, Kant, Lessing, etc.—and could always quote passages from them to illustrate a point of grammar or syntax. His enthusiasm was infectious, and my progress in German was to no small extent attributable to his compelling charm and discriminating taste.

The reverent admiration I had always felt for my deceased German grandfather had in any case predisposed me in favor of everything German, and in view of Dr. Heine’s attractive and aristocratic bearing it is not surprising that I should have been stimulated to make rapid

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<sup>2</sup> Published by Hutchinson in 1903 under the pseudonym of H. W. G. Hyrst.—JVD. Sidney Harry Wright also published a number of books on hunting, fishing, exploration, and adventure under his own name.—TOQ.

<sup>3</sup> Dueling scars—JVD.

strides in his native language and literature. Nor is it without significance that this happened despite the fact that my mother, who had suffered greatly during the siege of Paris in 1870–71, had never concealed from Lily and me her loathing of the Germans. My complete emancipation from this point of view is but a further tribute to the powerful influence Dr. Heine must have exercised over me.

The various authors which these two men, Wright and Heine, prompted me to read introduced me to wholly new and hitherto undreamt-of worlds, and I began to follow paths which, though they led me away from my early home atmosphere, yet succeeded in confirming the strong bias in favor of literature which my mother had implanted in me. Thus, I neglected ever more and more my gifts for the graphic arts, and even when, as a youth of nineteen, necessity compelled me to turn these untrained gifts to some profit by applying them to commercial engraving, my principal preoccupation continued to be literature.

Although still ignorant of Dickens, of all Shakespeare's works except those which school had spoiled for me (*Henry V* and *Henry VI*), and of Chaucer, Rabelais, Montaigne, Bunyan, Milton, and the more famous of the later English poets, I was rapidly becoming acquainted with the works of all the outstanding English and German authors recommended to me by my two favorite masters. Among these, the half-dozen which did most towards settling my literary taste and framing my outlook on life at that time were Fielding, Andrew Lang, Emily Brontë, Schopenhauer, Schiller (especially his admirable essays), and Herbert Spencer. The influence of Emily Brontë, Schopenhauer, and Schiller proved permanent.

I was so much uplifted by Fielding's *désinvolture*<sup>4</sup> and freedom from cant and sentimentality that my dread of reaching the end of his works too soon made me curb my greed and limit my reading of them to a certain number of pages a day. I followed the same principle years later when, on a wooded height between Étapes and Paris Plage, I read what I still think is Kipling's greatest book, *Captains Courageous*.

### SCHOPENHAUER, SCHILLER, AND GOETHE

From about my seventeenth year, my reading of science, especially biology, zoology, and astronomy, became regular and assiduous. I read every book by Darwin, Haeckel, Huxley, Romanes, Spencer, and Proc-

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<sup>4</sup> Casualness – JVD.

tor that I could lay my hands on. With great avidity, I also read Huxley's famous controversy with Wace, following the arguments on each side with breathless interest and becoming a convinced agnostic in the process. But the two authors that probably exerted the greatest influence on me in my early twenties were Schopenhauer and Schiller. The former enlightened me enormously on psychology, and I still regard him as the greatest European psychologist who appeared between Montaigne and Freud. Indeed, there is much in his work that anticipates Freud's discoveries, a fact to which I have more than once called attention, and Nietzsche owed him many a profound observation, the source of which, however, is rarely acknowledged.

I can never forget the surprise and excitement with which I started to read the *Parerga und Paralipomena*.<sup>5</sup> I can have hardly been more than nineteen at the time, and on my way home from Fleet Street one day, happening to pass through old Holiwell Street, Strand, a detour I constantly made so as to have a look at the bookshops there, I was lucky enough to pick up a copy of this book. Impatiently, I started reading, and for days thereafter could not put the book down. Only those who know this brilliant series of essays can appreciate what they must have meant to me at this time. For no-one can read them and remain the same person. Nor does it now seem possible that such a work can have been refused by three leading publishers in succession before A. W. Haym of Berlin at last undertook its publication, though without paying the author anything for it. Schopenhauer was then sixty-two years of age, and had already suffered the mortification of seeing the greater part of the first edition of his masterpiece, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*,<sup>6</sup> turned into waste paper.

Every page of the *Parerga und Paralipomena* is packed with ideas and suggestions that have preserved their interest and sometimes their novelty to this day. It is in itself an education, and I felt as Nietzsche declares he did when he first started reading Schopenhauer. "I understood him," he says, "as if he had written for me alone."<sup>7</sup>

Schopenhauer's style is not difficult, and I had, in any case, prepared myself as a reader of German by sedulously working my way through most of the more or less second-rate fiction of France and England in their German translations issued by the Engelhorn Bibliothek—such

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<sup>5</sup> *Additions and Omissions*—JVD.

<sup>6</sup> *The World as Will and Representation*—JVD.

<sup>7</sup> *Schopenhauer as Educator*, 1874, II.

works as Georges Ohnet's *Les dames de croix-mort*<sup>8</sup> and Charles Reade's *It's Never Too Late to Mend*—for I found a German translation of a French or English work easier to follow than a book written originally in German. I used to take these translations out with me on my journeys through London and would often stop at a bookstall and pick up a dictionary to find the meaning of a word or expression I did not understand.

My mother, who was quick to notice the change Schopenhauer had wrought in me, signified her disapproval of many of my views, and particularly of their German source, by constantly referring to my philosophic hero with playful scorn, and with a hint at his gloomy pessimism, as “Chapeau Noir.”<sup>9</sup> But I was not to be moved by banter, even from her, for Schopenhauer was in many respects a finishing school for me. When I agreed with him it was not necessarily because he said things I had long felt to be true, but for which I had so far failed to find the right expression, but because the moment I read them, and looked again on the world, I at once perceived their truth, unfamiliar though they had been a moment previously.

When, in addition, I began to read such profoundly stimulating essays as those by Schiller, for instance—especially the brilliant and little-known *Über naive und sentimentale Dichtung*<sup>10</sup> (1796), in which, for the first time in the history of European literary criticism, the exaltation of Nature and children is traced to a moral and puritanical source—I obtained an insight into the genesis of shallow and unreflecting popular prejudices which was to serve me in great stead in later years. For this essay of Schiller's might be regarded as a criticism written in anticipation of Wordsworth's “Intimations of Immortality,” written ten years later.

The ground I covered thereafter, especially by my reading of science, prepared me with surprising thoroughness for the major enlightenment which was awaiting me in my twenty-fifth year. Meanwhile, I turned to Goethe. I disliked his *Werther* wholeheartedly and found it nauseating, but I greatly enjoyed and admired his *Faust*, his autobiography, *Aus meinem Leben*, and *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*.<sup>11</sup> In the last-named book, I sympathized with his hostility to ephemeral unions between the sexes

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<sup>8</sup> *The Ladies of Dead Cross*—JVD.

<sup>9</sup> *Black Hat*—JVD.

<sup>10</sup> *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*—JVD.

<sup>11</sup> *From My Life and Elective Affinities*—JVD.

and the way he made his hero and heroine prefer to die in a hunger strike against their fate, rather than yield to the temptation of breaking up a happy marriage. It is a great pity that he does not attempt to describe narrowly the physical type of his characters, for this omission might lead many readers to infer that, for marital harmony, all that is needed is an affinity of souls. But I do not believe that this was his intention, especially as in the early part of the story he clearly states that the affinity he has in mind finds its equivalent in chemistry. On the other hand, a passage in one of his letters to Charlotte von Stein certainly indicates that he held the soul alone as important, for he says: "Dauer der Liebe ist immer ein Beweis der seelischen Aehnlichkeit."<sup>12</sup> On the score of the present well-established inseparability of psyche and soma, this is tantamount to admitting that the type and morphology of lovers must be alike if their love is to endure. But, unfortunately, Goethe nowhere says this. His story contains no detailed morphological description of his principal characters, and the matter is thus left rather vague. The only person in the novel whose physical features are narrowly defined is a young architect who, however, plays no decisive role in the plot.

Nevertheless, one important doctrine is plainly enunciated in the story – that a permanent sexual anchorage can be secured by every man and woman if only they mate with their affinity.

Meanwhile, with the object of improving my English, which had been so sadly neglected both at home and at school, I thought it would be a good plan to try by means of my own unaided researches to compile a glossary and explanatory notes for an unannotated edition of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* which I happened to possess. This I proceeded to do and found the work most rewarding, though undoubtedly tedious. Indeed, at the end of it, I could not help agreeing with those French critics who think the poem a grossly overrated work. I still fought shy of Chaucer, but read Malory, Shakespeare, Dryden, and most of the Restoration drama. Incidentally, in reading Malory I was struck by his extraordinarily frank picture of women in the days of chivalry, their sadism and their means of gratifying it. The picture left me wondering how these sadistic impulses in the female can find expression now that the days of knight errantry are over – a question which I attempted to answer many years later in the antepenultimate

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<sup>12</sup> "Enduring love is always a sign of spiritual affinity." – JVD.

chapter of my *Choice of a Mate*.<sup>13</sup>

I must have been about twenty-three years of age when, owing to some trouble with my eyes which I believed to be due to the close work I had long been doing as an engraver, I decided to give the work up and turn wholly to literature. I had little success with my early attempts, but hardly had I recovered from my disappointment when inquiries reached us from Paris about my readiness to fill an important secretarial post that had just fallen vacant.

### AUGUSTE RODIN

Apparently, Auguste Rodin had recently quarreled with his private secretary, Rilke, the German poet, and was looking for someone to take his place. A knowledge of English, German, and of course French was required, together with some familiarity with art and artistic questions. My name and qualifications were submitted to him and, without any preliminary interview, I was forthwith engaged.

Apart from the many interesting people I used to see, and whose conversation at table I was in a position to enjoy, the time I spent in 1906 at the Villa des Brillants in Meudon Val Fleury as Rodin's secretary did not contribute much to my education. It certainly widened my knowledge of mankind, confirmed my tendency to realism, and fortified my congenital antipathy to any form of mysticism, because, as Saint-Beuve so correctly points out, the French race is "peu idéale et peu mystique de sa nature"<sup>14</sup>; but otherwise I came away from the experience only moderately enriched, and in my *Personal Reminiscences of Auguste Rodin*<sup>15</sup> have stated the utmost that can be said in its favor. Besides, as Rilke discovered before me, Rodin was neither an easy nor a too pleasant person to get on with. Uneducated, coarse, ill-mannered, and intimately associated in his home life with a woman, "Rose," whom he ultimately married and who, as to intelligence and cultivation, was very much beneath him, his companionship was not always edifying. At all events, I was kept very busy, so that I had little time for private reading and, had it not been for my mother's presence at the

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<sup>13</sup> Anthony M. Ludovici, *The Choice of a Mate* (London: John Lane The Bodley Head, 1935). – TOQ.

<sup>14</sup> *Causeries de lundi*, VIII: La Fontaine. "Not very idealistic and not very mystical by nature." – JVD.

<sup>15</sup> Anthony M. Ludovici, *Personal Reminiscences of Auguste Rodin* (London: John Murray, 1926). – TOQ.

Hôtel de Mairie in the town close by, I should have had no congenial companionship whatsoever.

Reading between the lines of Rilke's own account of his life at Meudon,<sup>16</sup> I can only assume that his days as Rodin's secretary ended very much as mine did—i.e., in a violent quarrel over a trifling misunderstanding in which Rodin was insufferably rude, though I gathered from Bourdelle when I visited him in Paris a few years later that Rodin quarreled with most people in the end. Nevertheless, I readily admit that I was never too well-endowed to be anybody's private servant, for, when my affection is not engaged, I am what is popularly regarded as "too selfish" for such a position.

### *Studies in Germany*

My mother and I returned to London early in 1907, and I immediately decided to employ my savings by spending a year in Germany to perfect myself in the language and to study some of the post-Kantian philosophers.

From the point of view of my education and future, this was certainly the most momentous decision of my life, for it was responsible for determining the whole of my subsequent career. Before explaining how this came about, I must, however, relate one circumstance connected with my departure from England which is too singular to be omitted here.

Among our friends at the time was a rather interesting and well-to-do widow named Mrs. Dufresne, whom I used sometimes to oblige by giving her the morphia injections that had been prescribed for her neuritis. Her doctor approved of my doing this, as it was not always convenient or possible to summon him when she was in most urgent need of relief. Needless to say, this lady cherished a friendly regard for me and when I paid her my farewell visit, after presenting me with a handsome fountain-pen, said she very much wanted to read my hand. I don't believe she was an expert palmist, but I had much evidence of her powers as a clairvoyant.

She told me a good many things about my character which were more or less true, and then, as if suddenly struck by some conjunction of signs she had not previously noticed, she said: "D'you know, Tony, in Germany you are going to come under the influence of someone

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<sup>16</sup> Rainer Maria Rilke, *Auguste Rodin* (Berlin: Julius Bard, 1903)—TOQ.

whose name I can't quite make out, but which certainly begins with an N."

At the time I paid little heed to this remark, for, although I firmly believed in the feasibility of character-reading from hands (because no physical feature can be insignificant and unrelated to temperament and mental traits), I doubted very much whether details about the future could be precisely foretold in this way, although I was ready to acknowledge that, to the extent to which character may determine one's future, a forecast on broad lines was perhaps possible. But Mrs. Dufresne's prophecy of an influence coming to me through someone whose name specifically stated as beginning with the letter N was a different matter, and I dismissed it as unworthy of notice.

Yet, if her choice of the letter N was not a mere coincidence, no prophecy could have been more accurate and more punctually fulfilled. For not only did a name beginning with N greatly influence me at that time, but the bearer of it also proved to be the principal cause of most of the subsequent events in my life, from my start in literature to my marriage and ultimate literary output.

Apart from taking a few letters of recommendation to friends of my family, I arrived in Cologne without having booked any accommodation. I therefore put up at the first moderately cheap hotel that my *Droschke*-driver<sup>17</sup> stopped at, but I stayed there only one night, as my bedroom was infested with bugs, and I was hardly able to sleep at all. After moving into a cleaner and equally cheap hotel, I lost no time in getting an advertisement published in the *Kölnische Zeitung*, stating that I should like to hear of some family in the city who would be prepared to give me board and lodging. I received about forty replies and at once started the round of visits which ended in my ultimately finding comfortable quarters.

Strange to say, I made the fateful choice less on account of the appearance of the place and the appointments of the room I was offered than because of the extremely favorable impression the old landlady made upon me. It was evening, I was exhausted, and as I climbed the three storeys at 34 Am Duffesbach I prayed that this might be the end of my long quest. I was not left in doubt very long. Indeed, I had hardly exchanged a couple of words with Frau Nippel before I had made up my mind to become her lodger. She was a very beautiful and dignified

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<sup>17</sup> Cab-driver – JVD.

old lady; her voice was most attractive, and she spoke good *Hochdeutsch* with a faint lisp which, together with the absence of wrinkles on her face, gave her a charming air of youth and ingenuousness. I did not really need to inspect the room she offered me, and within twenty-four hours I settled in as one of her family.

In addition to the comfort and good fare she provided for a monthly charge which now seems risible, she and her daughters enjoyed the society of a wide circle of interesting friends chiefly drawn from the musical and scholastic members of the community, among whom Ferdinand Schmidt, a blind and very gifted musician, was the most distinguished. He and I did not take long to become fast friends, and he was my principal companion throughout my twelvemonth's stay in Germany. I used to take him about with me on my walks, and he showed his gratitude for the healthy exercise I thus enabled him to enjoy by helping me on with my German and even initiating me into some of the mysteries of his art. He had a stepbrother, Otto Schmidt, who was an *Oberlehrer*<sup>18</sup>—a tall handsome man who, to my astonishment, although he had never been outside Germany, spoke English without any trace of a foreign accent, simply as the result of his study of English phonetics. He, too, very kindly gave me some expert tuition for which he refused to accept any payment.

## NIETZSCHE

But what I had chiefly to thank him for was the warm and deep devotion to Nietzsche with which he infected both his stepbrother and me. He lent us many of the Master's books, which at that time were taboo in all public libraries in Germany; helped us to understand some of the more obscure passages, and secured seats for us at lectures on the philosopher. Thus on one occasion we had the opportunity of listening to Horneffer on the subject of Nietzsche's life and works.

In this way, Mrs. Dufresne's extraordinary prophecy was fulfilled literally "to the letter," and I had obtained the constant company of two delightful men whose friendship I enjoyed until their death only a few years ago.<sup>19</sup>

Nietzsche has been much maligned in England, especially during the two World Wars, and chiefly by people who knew his views only from hearsay or else from an odd line or two quoted on a calendar or in a

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<sup>18</sup> Secondary school teacher—JVD.

<sup>19</sup> Ludovici wrote these words in 1961 or 1962.—TOQ.

newspaper. He was mistakenly supposed, for instance, to have been the source of most of the less commendable features of National Socialism under Hitler, and many a remark of his regarded as likely to inflame public opinion against him was torn from the context which would have explained it, and was bandied about as if it was typical of his whole system of thought. He was accused, for example, of condemning all pity, when he only wished to point out that today it is too lavishly and exclusively confined to the weeds and rubbish of the human community, instead of being, after the fashion of the farmer's and horticulturist's practice, extended particularly to the nobler and more valuable plants whose survival and welfare were seriously endangered by the spread and multiplication of the psychophysically inferior elements in the population.

Such was the prejudice excited against him that many of his major and more valuable contributions to thought have been completely overlooked or distorted. Nothing to my mind could have been more revelatory and enlightening than his idea that the genesis of all moral codes is the subjective judgment of the kind of man most likely to flourish under them. In other words, his persistent question in respect of every morality was always: The welfare and survival of what type of man was it calculated to secure? Whose interest was best served by it? Who would be likely to flourish under it? For he believed that every morality was but a means of survival and dominion for a particular type of man, and that "good" and "evil" were the weapons with which a group or a community secured victory or predominance for their kind. Yet these very important and illuminating doctrines only earned him the reputation of being hostile to all morality in general.

At all events, when I returned to London I made it my principal concern to bring this particular feature of his teaching clearly to the notice of English readers, and although I was obliged in my account of his works to explain his superman ideal, his theory of eternal recurrence, and his aesthetic and anti-Wagner doctrines, I did not, like Bernard Shaw and others, exalt the more sensational aspects of his teaching above the less popular but pregnant ideas concerning epistemology and morals.

Had his detractors but thought dispassionately for one moment, they would have seen for themselves how the process of creating new moral precepts still operates in their world, and always to the advantage of those who produced them. The child of yesterday, taught to regard empire-builders as good, learns as an adult, at the bidding of powerful

nations jealous of existing empires, to call empire-builders bad. That same child, who in pre-feminist days was taught to regard women as not "good" as politicians, police officers, magistrates, etc., learns, after women's fight for what they conceived to be their advantage, that members of his mother's sex are "good" (or alleged to be so) for all these callings. But the most conspicuous example of the sort that has occurred under the very noses of the people who dispute Nietzsche's generalization is the recent volte-face that has marked the popular attitude to alien races, even in the matter of wedlock.

Promoted in the interest of a small and powerful minority<sup>20</sup> in the population who wished to secure their own unquestioned acceptance by the British people, the propaganda against every form of xenophobia was actively prosecuted, and in order to conceal its main object (which was to safeguard the right of permanent *séjour*<sup>21</sup> for the powerful minority in question) was deliberately extended to include ever more and more exotic types until, if you please, the slogan "No color bar," loudly broadcast throughout Great Britain, led the gullible and easily-governed English masses (indifferent to any change that does not seem to present a direct threat to their incomes) not only to regard as "good" the dilution of their ranks by colored and black people of all climes, but also to call "good" even their own connubium with such people. And whose interest did this moral metamorphosis serve? Obviously that of the powerful minority in the land who, sheltered behind this far-reaching tolerance, thus established their own right to be accepted as the legitimate and unmolested compatriots of the people among whom they settled. All of the very small handful of Englishmen who protested against this dangerous hoax were instantly denounced, with the wholehearted approval of the thoughtless British mob high and low, either as certifiable lunatics or else as "fascists" and "Nazis."

In view of such radical changes in the concepts "good" and "evil" applied to phenomena and behavior, and effected at the instance of particular groups or bodies for their own advantage, how can anyone continue to doubt Nietzsche's claim that the worth and ultimate effect of every moral code is to be sought in the quality and value to the world of the men in whose interest it was created?

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<sup>20</sup> See Ludovici's book *Jews, and the Jews in England* (London: Boswell Publishing, 1938), published under the pen name Cobbett. — TOQ.

<sup>21</sup> Residence — JVD.

### OSCAR LEVY

Soon after my return to England I was fortunate enough to make the acquaintance of Dr. Oscar Levy just at the very time when he happened to be contemplating the production of a complete edition of Nietzsche's works in English, and he not only solicited my help in this venture but was also chiefly responsible for arranging the two courses of lectures on Nietzsche which I delivered at University College London in the late autumn of 1908 and December 1910.

Dr. Oscar Levy was a Jewish medical man of exceptional intelligence and charm whose superior gifts really unfitted him for the routine drudgery of medical practice. By this I mean no disparagement of the general medical practitioner. I merely wish to call attention to the fact that even those callings which demand high mental qualities and exceptional skill may, owing to the extreme specialization of the faculties they call into play and the narrow limitations of the interests they offer, prove unsatisfying to men of versatile gifts. This has always been so, and from Rabelais to Smollett, Conan Doyle, and Somerset Maugham has led to the same result—the pursuit of letters by a man who found medicine tedious.

At all events, Levy always frankly admitted that his patients bored him, and, although his great gentleness, extreme urbanity, and considerable gifts of sympathy and perspicacity might easily have secured him a large and lucrative practice, he preferred the less busy life of a police doctor and the ample leisure this left him to indulge his principal tastes, which lay in the direction of literature, social intercourse, and philosophic meditation. In my first novel, *Mansel Fellowes*,<sup>22</sup> I tried to depict him for posterity, and the fact that he was delighted with the book, and, I believe, presented copies of it to numerous friends and acquaintances, seems to indicate that my portrait of him was at least no caricature.

He used to spend a good deal of his time in the reading-room of the British Museum, and it was there that, after having had his attention drawn to me by the large number of books on Nietzsche which I daily appropriated, he ultimately made my acquaintance.

He gave me several of Nietzsche's works to translate, including the first *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtung*, *Götzendämmerung*, *Der Antichrist*, *Der Wille zur Macht* and *Ecce Homo*, and these I did in the order stated.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Anthony M. Ludovici, *Mansel Fellowes* (London: Grant Richards, 1918).—TOQ.

<sup>23</sup> *Thoughts out of Season*, *The Twilight of the Idols*, *The Anti-Christ*, *The Will to Power*,

There has been much severe criticism of this translation, but I think that when the immense difficulties of the work are taken into consideration and due allowance has been made for the relatively small number of discrepancies, many of which are obviously the result of careless proof-reading or even of original typescript-reading, it will be granted that those who, like Dr. Levy himself, Friedrich Sternthal (the brilliant Berlin critic), and others, including Dr. G. T. Wrench, have only praise for the translation, were not only more discerning but, above all, more fair than its detractors. This does not mean that I fail to deplore the fact that my versions should contain flaws, or that I do not regret the excessive haste and carelessness with which my translations were prepared for the press. But I think it is only right to point out that there has been gross exaggeration, if not actual malice (the source of which I believe I know), in describing the translation as “scandalously inaccurate.”

What were the circumstances under which, for instance, Volume 16<sup>24</sup> of the authorized English translation came into being? When these have been examined, the reader will be in a position to measure the justice of its wholesale condemnation.

To begin with, we translators, working as a team, were expected to read and check each other’s work before it went to press, so as to ensure accuracy by eliminating typing and printing errors, repairing omissions and oversights, and correcting actual mistranslations. It may be difficult to explain how and why, but this provision against error was certainly seldom conscientiously put into practice. We were all over-anxious to get our work through quickly and inclined to look on this extra unpaid duty (which really amounted to performing one’s own translation of another man’s book) as rather a tiresome *corvée*.<sup>25</sup> The consequence was that, whilst the arrangement inspired a certain amount of confidence and appeared to guarantee some security against inaccuracy, both of these aims were in fact defeated owing to the enormous labors such revision entailed and the perfunctoriness with which

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and *Ecce Homo* (Behold the Man)—JVD. Ludovici also translated *The Case of Wagner, Nietzsche Contra Wagner*, and *Selected Aphorisms for The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, Vol. 8 (Edinburgh: T. N. Foulis, 1911; New York: Macmillan, 1924).—TOQ.

<sup>24</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Twilight of the Idols: Or, How to Philosophise with the Hammer; The Antichrist; Notes to Zarathustra, and Eternal Recurrence*, *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, Vol. 16 (Edinburgh: T. N. Foulis, 1911).—TOQ.

<sup>25</sup> Unpaid labor—JVD.

they were usually performed. This is not to suggest that the neglect of which we were all to some extent guilty was deliberately practiced to reduce the credit of our colleagues as translators, but I do know that I for one, in revising other men's translations, often worked at a speed incompatible with perfect vigilance.

Secondly, Levy himself was inclined to be much too trustful and lenient. He was too much of a gentleman and too little of a martinet to take his editorial duties as strictly and as seriously as a less amiable and more industrious man would have done. He was, moreover, often too diffident and considerate about compelling the adoption of improvements suggested. I, for instance, had to revise Common's *Zarathustra*, and as an example of the procedure I see from my notes that I found altogether twenty errors in Part I alone, although few of these were ultimately accepted. Moreover, in Section XX of Part I<sup>26</sup> I strongly recommended a modification which, although warmly approved by Dr. Levy, he declined, out of regard for old Common, to force upon him. It related to the seventh verse of the section. Nietzsche's words are: "Nicht nur fort sollst du dich pflanzen, sondern hinauf!"

Common's version of this read: "Not only onward shall thou propagate thyself, but upward!" I maintained that no English Nietzsche would ever have used such terms to express the idea in question and suggested that a better translation, more in keeping with Nietzsche's epigrammatic style, would have been: "Let your descendants be your ascent." As I say, however, Levy was too loath to risk hurting Common's feelings to insist on the necessary alteration. This was by no means an exceptional occurrence, and it was hardly encouraging.

Dr. Levy's handsome acknowledgement of my services in his preface to the third edition of *The Will to Power* may, in view of the way in which my translation has been vilified, sound strange and undeserved, but at least it shows that opinion regarding the quality of my work is divided.

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to relate all I owe to Dr. Oscar Levy and to express the gratitude I feel for the substantial advantages I enjoyed through my close association with him during the six years preceding the First World War. Only through him and the remunerative employment he gave me early in my literary career was I able to obtain the leisure and opportunity for that extended study and in-

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<sup>26</sup> "Child and Marriage" – JVD.

creased knowledge of the world which I so much needed to repair the worst defects in my education. It was also entirely to him and the influence he wielded in certain literary and academic circles in both London and the provinces that my first lecture courses were arranged and received public attention. He was, moreover, responsible for finding me my first publishers, Foulis and Constable, and for introducing me to the *New Age* circle, whose leader, A. R. Orage, soon appointed me art critic of his famous weekly.

Nor does this list of benefits which I owed to Levy, formidable though it may seem, exhaust the counts of my indebtedness to him, for, thanks to what some of my more bitter critics may regard as his "inexplicable" fondness for my company, he began very early in our acquaintance to invite me to join him on holidays at various coastal resorts and often to give me the means of taking such periods of rest alone. Thus, we would go off to Bournemouth, Westgate, Folkestone, or Eastbourne together, and sometimes even take a little work with us.

#### THE GRAND TOUR

What I owed to him above all, however, was the grand tour which I made as his traveling companion in 1910, when we stayed at, among other places, Dresden (Hotel zum Prinzen?), Munich (Hotel Leinfelder), Venice (Hotel Victoria), Florence (Hotel Bonciani), Athens (Hotel Minerva), Smyrna (Grand Hotel Huck), Jerusalem (Hotel Fast), Jaffa (Hotel Jerusalem), and Cairo (Khedivial Hotel).

I thus was able to visit all the principal art galleries, museums, and monuments of southern Europe and the Near East, and to complete more or less my knowledge of the art treasures of the modern world. It was an unforgettable and invaluable experience and coincided with what was certainly the highlight of my friendship with Levy. He was a delightful companion, as most clever Jews always are, understanding instantly what one said and not holding up the conversation, as so many Englishmen will, in order to have elementary psychological truths explained. (He was, moreover, a most generous host throughout, displaying that aristocratic unconcern about expenditure which sets dependants completely at their ease and is one of the more pleasant by-products, if not the best proof, of a long tradition of power in a family line. The behavior of a parvenu in similar circumstances at once reveals the relative recentness of his affluence.

Strange to say, and quite contrary to our expectations, the place

which in the course of our travels made the deepest impression upon both of us was not Venice, Florence, or Athens, but “Jerusalem the golden,” whose beauty and majesty, possibly because unexpected, we both found staggering. No epithet could be more apt than “golden” to describe the picture this city presents to the traveler, and on the strength of that word alone the Rev. J. M. Neale, who wrote Hymn 228 in *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, or else Bernard of Cluny, the author of the original hymn of which Neale’s is an English version, may confidently be suspected of having seen the Holy City at some time in his life.

At all events, it was the only place throughout our journey where I felt irresistibly tempted to do any sketching, and I brought back several water-colors, one of which—that of the eastern view of the city, crowned by the beautiful Omar Mosque built on the site of the ancient Temple of Solomon—I painted from Siloa, the little hill village lying on the height opposite Jerusalem, across the Valley of Kedron. Levy liked the picture so much that when we returned to England I had to make several copies of it for himself and friends.

I knew perhaps too much about Greece and the baneful influence its more famous and later philosophers, especially Socrates, had exerted over European thought to feel strongly prepossessed in its favor, and the time we spent at Athens afforded me very little pleasure. Both Levy and I were depressed rather than edified by the ruins of the Acropolis, for nothing can look more desolate and ugly than classical architecture dismembered and disintegrating. We therefore found the sight of the Parthenon, like a gigantic decayed molar crowning the city, anything but exhilarating, and this impression certainly accounted for our exceptional behavior on a certain occasion at our Athens hotel. When we were all sitting at dinner one evening, our landlord announced that the Minister of the Interior had just kindly sent round to say that he had arranged for a party to view the Parthenon by moonlight that night and, in order that the necessary transport could be provided, he invited us to signify by a show of hands whether we wished to avail ourselves of the offer or not. The response was enthusiastic. All but Levy and me signified their assent, and it was not difficult to sense the perplexity, not to say the *froid*,<sup>27</sup> which our indifference to the romantic prospect provoked in our fellow-guests.

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<sup>27</sup> Chill—JVD.

The incessant chatter of the population, their shrill wrangles and noisy street calls, the buzz of which remained audible even at the summit of the Lycabettos, were also exasperating. They were a constant reminder of the querulous, loquacious, and hybrid stocks composing the local inhabitants – all Levantines of dubious origin, indescribably ugly and bewilderingly heterogeneous. The streets, moreover, were in a deplorable state of age-long neglect, and it was odd to see a low jerry-built structure bearing the words □□□□□□□□ one end and □□□□□□<sup>28</sup> at the other, whilst in front of the palace the king's carriage had got stuck fast in a deep rut.

The Royal Gardens at the back of the palace were then perhaps the most attractive part of Athens, at least to me, and on 14th of February 1910 we sat there in glorious sunshine, as hot as on a June day in England, amid orange trees, beds of violets and pleasant lawns, and we watched the king's grandchildren playing under the eye of an attendant. For although Wednesdays and Fridays were supposed to be the only public visiting-days in the gardens, the guard who had at first barred our way soon proved more accommodating when Levy handed him a handsome tip.

It is not surprising, after this, that we were perhaps unduly overawed by the medieval grandeur and beauty of Jerusalem, although when I now dwell on all the experiences of that grand tour I cannot help suspecting that it was the wholly unanticipated splendor of Jerusalem, its almost mint medieval state, and the dignity and picturesque old-world charm of its inhabitants that made it so disproportionately attractive to Levy and me. For, after all, although chiefly through the medium of books and other sources of information, we knew Greece before we got there. We had studied its monuments and its art, and we had long ago become familiar with the Elgin Marbles. Of Jerusalem, on the other hand, I, at least, knew nothing beyond what is said about it in the Gospels.

Everything I saw was strange and new to me – not that novelty alone necessarily has charm. In Jerusalem, however, it was coupled with so much of antiquarian interest, beauty, and calm, primitive industry that at every step one seemed to draw nearer and nearer to the heart of a bygone culture. Another probable cause of the greater pleasure that Jerusalem gave us was its convincing air of superior genuineness and au-

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<sup>28</sup> Women and Men – JVD.

thenticity. Although its inhabitants, their daily chores, and their environment transported us both at one stroke to a period almost barbaric, at least every feature of Jerusalem life was in keeping; nothing jarred the harmony of the scene or jolted one by its incongruity. Few, if any, discordant notes, and hardly any anachronisms, marred the picture of a homogeneous medieval culture. Athens, on the other hand, struck one as offensively bastard. There, surrounded by the decrepit monuments of a glorious past, the scene was crowded with the tawdry and vulgar excrescences of a modern city. Like an Earl's Court travesty of some Western metropolis, Athens in 1910 looked counterfeit. With its ancient background in ruins, it had the air of a centenarian tricked out to resemble her own great-grandchild. I have no idea what it looks like now, but that was certainly how it appeared to me fifty years ago.

Nor, after Jerusalem, could I place even Cairo and Egypt uppermost among the memorable experiences of my tour. The vast distance of time separating the monuments of Egypt from her modern cities certainly gave a less discordant impression than the shorter interval did in Greece, and, odd though it may sound, these monuments seemed to present a less striking contrast to the upstart styleless buildings about them. Their austere and simple silhouettes, not unlike natural features, blended more perfectly with the urban landscape. But there could be no question about the relative beauty of the two places, and I doubt whether any traveler would dispute the justice of handing the palm to Palestine's capital.

We were both greatly depressed by the prevalence of eye disease in Syria and Egypt and, in a desperate attempt to awaken the adult women at least to the importance of hygiene in this respect, I remember that I used to go about the market-place in Jerusalem and wave a fan over the faces of their babies to scare away the clusters of flies that collected on their eyes as they lay sleeping beside their mothers' display of vegetables and fruit. But it was no good. Although the mothers did not seem to resent my action, they looked upon it merely as the vagary of an eccentric foreigner. Indeed, when Levy and I visited the German hospital and spoke to Dr. Wallach about the matter, he said the situation was almost hopeless. The fellahin had no notion either of cleanliness or hygiene. I suggested that the girls, at least, might be made accessible to more enlightened ideas by appealing to their vanity. If it were pointed out that the terrible disfigurement of trachoma could be

avoided by proper care, surely they would be anxious to learn what they should do. But Dr. Wallach said he had found even that expedient of no avail.

Except for the journey from Jaffa to Alexandria, which we performed, *malgré nous*,<sup>29</sup> in a disgusting Russian steamer, the Cezarevich, full of pilgrims and vermin, whose captain had the effrontery to sit at the head of our dining-table and, under our very eyes, to eat a specially cooked meal very much superior to our own, we traveled on the liners of the Messageries Maritimes, the Portugal and the Saghalién, and I thought them excellent in every respect. The *vin ordinaire* at meals was *ad lib.*,<sup>30</sup> the cooking was first-class, and the cabin accommodation most comfortable. There was, however, a brief exception to this rule, for we performed the trip from Trieste to Patras in a very fine ship of the Austrian Lloyd Line which also provided us with every comfort and excellent food.

*Anthony Mario Ludovici (1882-1971) was one of the first translators and exponents of Nietzsche's writings in the English-speaking world and an original philosopher in his own right. Ludovici authored nearly forty books, including eight novels, and hundreds of articles, essays, and reviews setting forth his views on metaphysics, religion, ethics, politics, economics, the sexes, health, eugenics, art, modern culture, and current events.*

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<sup>29</sup> In spite of ourselves – JVD.

<sup>30</sup> The house wine was free of charge. – JVD.