

FOREWORD.

Editorial prefaces to new magazines generally lay great stress on the effort of the directorate, and all concerned, to make the forthcoming periodical popular.

We have no such expectation: not even, it may be added, any such intention. We aim at thorough-going unpopularity: and there is every reason to believe that, with the blessed who expect little, we shall not be disappointed.

*
* * *

In the first place, THE PAGAN REVIEW is frankly pagan: pagan in sentiment, pagan in convictions, pagan in outlook. This being so, it is a magazine only for those who, with Mr. George Meredith, can exclaim in all sincerity—

*“O sir, the truth, the truth! is't in the skies,
Or in the grass, or in this heart of ours?
But O, the truth, the truth!”*—

and at the same time, and with the same author, are not unready to admit that truth to life, external and internal, very often

*“ is not meat
For little people or for fools.”*

To quote from Mr. Meredith once more:

*“ these things are life:
And life, they say, is worthy of the Muse.”*

But we are well aware that this is just what “they” don't say. “They”, “the general public”, care very little about the “Muse” at all; and the one thing they never advocate or wish is that the “Muse” should be so indiscreet as to really withdraw from life the approved veils of Convention.

Nevertheless, we believe that there is a by no means numerically insignificant public to whom THE PAGAN REVIEW may appeal; though our paramount difficulty will be to reach those who, owing to various circum-

stances, are out of the way of hearing aught concerning the most recent developments in the world of letters.

* *

THE PAGAN REVIEW conveys, or is meant to convey, a good deal by its title. The new paganism is a potent leaven in the yeast of the "younger generation", without as yet having gained due recognition, or even any sufficiently apt and modern name, any scientific designation. The "new paganism," the "modern epicureanism," and kindred appellations, are more or less misleading. Yet, with most of us, there is a fairly definite idea of what we signify thereby. The religion of our forefathers has not only ceased for us personally, but is no longer in any vital and general sense a sovereign power in the realm. It is still fruitful of vast good, but it is none the less a power that was rather than a power that is. The ideals of our forefathers are not our ideals, except where the accidents of time and change can work no havoc. A new epoch is about to be inaugurated, is, indeed, in many respects, already begun; a new epoch in civil law, in international comity, in what, vast and complex though the issues be, may be called Human Economy. The long half-acknowledged, half-denied duel between Man and Woman is to cease, neither through the victory of hereditary overlordship nor the triumph of the far more deft and subtle if less potent weapons of the weaker, but through a frank recognition of copartnery. This new comradeship will be not less romantic, less inspiring, less worthy of the chivalrous extremes of life and death, than the old system of overlord and bondager, while it will open perspectives of a new-rejoicing humanity, the most fleeting glimpses of which now make the hearts of true men and women beat with gladness. Far from wishing to disintegrate, degrade, abolish marriage, the "new paganism" would fain see that sexual union become the flower of human life. But, first, the rubbish must be cleared away; the anomalies must be replaced by just inter-relations; the sacredness of the individual must be recognised; and women no longer have to look upon men as usurpers, men no longer to regard women as spiritual foreigners.

* * *

These remarks, however, must not be taken too literally as indicative of the literary aspects of **THE PAGAN REVIEW**. Opinions are one thing, the expression of them another, and the transformation or reincarnation of them through indirect presentment another still.

This magazine is to be a purely literary, not a philosophical, partisan, or propagandist periodical. We are concerned here with the new presentment of things rather than with the phenomena of change and growth themselves. Our vocation, in a word, is to give artistic expression to the artistic "inwardness" of the new paganism; and we voluntarily turn aside here from such avocations as chronicling every ebb and flow of thought, speculating upon every fresh surprising derelict upon the ocean of man's mind, or expounding well or ill the new ethic. If those who sneer at the rallying cry, "Art for Art's sake," laugh at our efforts, we are well content; for even the lungs of donkeys are strengthened by much braying. If, on the other hand, those who, by vain pretensions and paradoxical clamour, degrade Art by making her merely the more or less seductive panoply of mental poverty and spiritual barrenness, care to do a grievous wrong by openly and blatantly siding with us, we are still content; for we recognise that spiritual byways and mental sewers relieve the Commonwealth of much that is unseemly and might breed contagion. **THE PAGAN REVIEW**, in a word, is to be a mouthpiece—we are genuinely modest enough to disavow the definite article—of the younger generation, of the new pagan sentiment, rather, of the younger generation. In its pages there will be found a free exposition of the myriad aspects of life, in each instance as adequately as possible reflective of the mind and literary temperament of the writer. The pass-phrase of the new paganism is ours: Sic transit gloria Grundi. The supreme interest of Man is—Woman: and the most profound and fascinating problem to Woman is, Man. This being so, and quite unquestionably so with all the male and female pagans of our acquaintance, it is natural that literature dominated by the various forces of the sexual emotion should prevail. Yet, though paramount in attraction, it is,

after all, but one among the many motive forces of life; so we will hope not to fall into the error of some of our French confrères and be persistently and even supernaturally awake to one functional activity and blind to the general life and interest of the commonwealth of soul and body. It is LIFE that we preach, if perforce we must be taken as preachers at all; Life to the full, in all its manifestations, in its heights and depths, precious to the uttermost moment, not to be bartered even when maimed and weary. For here, at any rate we are alive; and then, alas, after all,—

“how few Junes

Will heat our pulses quicker . . .”

* * *

“Much cry for little wool”, some will exclaim. It may be so. Whenever did a first number of a new magazine fulfil all its editor's dreams or even intentions? “Well, we must make the best of it, I suppose. 'Tis nater, after all, and what pleases God”, as Mrs. Durbeyfield says in “Tess of the Durbervilles.”

* * *

Have you read that charming roman à quatre, the “Croix de Berny?” If so, you will recollect the following words of Edgar de Meilhan (alias Théophile Gautier), which I (“I” standing for editor, and associates, and pagans in general) now quote for the delectation of all readers, adversely minded or generously inclined, or dubious as to our real intent—with blithe hopes that they may be the happier therefor: “Frankly, I am in earnest this time. Order me a dove-coloured vest, apple-green trousers, a pouch, a crook; in short, the entire outfit of a Lignon Shepherd. I shall have a lamb washed to complete the pastoral.”

* * *

This is “the lamb.”

THE EDITOR.

* * * Readers are requested to note the administrative remarks on the inside of the cover (p. ii.), and the Forecast and Editorial intimations printed at the end of the text.