form of the mechanical-mathematical. Spengler points out that the living sense of direction (time) is in science reduced to another mathematical dimension which includes it in the law of reversible action; this law, strictly spatial, denies time as direction and destiny; it denies organism in the reduction of organism to causality. Again, Space is Time not felt but perceived—Time actualized. And Spengler revises Kant: Time is the form of perceiving, Space the form of the perceived. Now every culture (men in life-unity) must perceive; every culture, then, must have its idea of Time and its own way of actualizing the idea. Therefore the way in which a culture actualizes its idea of Time is the way in which it envisages Space; the conception of Space is thus the index to the spirituality of a particular culture, the key to its "prime symbol." The postulate of prime symbol (pure Platonism) is the basic assumption of Spengler's philosophy; its corollary, the consistent homogeneity of a culture, is more obviously questionable. But he makes no pretension to empirical foundations; the conception is deductive and visionary. Its weakness is that of the Germans and Procrustes: Spinoza is thrown out of Western culture a priori because he lacks the idea of force and continues the "Magian" (Arabian-Semitic) notion of two soul substances.

Spengler identifies nine distinct cultures and as many prime symbols. He develops his philosophy through a parallel analysis of the Classical and the Faustian (Western) world-attitudes, for these are presumably homogeneous and antithetical. The prime symbol of the Classical is the Extended, Time actualized as corporeality, as multiplicity of sensuous bodies; Time as direction is intolerable and its actualization as infinite Space is consequently denied; hence the notion of space as the Void (Parmenides, Plato). The Extended Body being the inherent form, the prime symbol, of the Classical, all the activity of that culture was a priori predetermined to actualize it. The mathematics of the Greeks was therefore three-dimensional (ontologically neither true nor false), not because the Greeks lacked the wit for more complex operations but because they were conditioned spiritually to the given spatial construction; their religion was polytheistic because they could imagine only a multiplicity of bodies and abhorred the desensualized idea of infinity, of the Unextended. The Unextended, on the other hand, is the prime symbol of Faustian men. It is Time actualized as infinite Space; sensuous extension is intolerable to our spirit, and particular bodies (appearances) are denied; infinite relations, conceivable only in pure Space, are affirmed. Our metaphysics identifies Reality with Space the infinitely immaterial; our religion conceives God as the infinitely immaterial. The Gothic cathedral is symbolic of this infinity; Western contrapuntal music is a system of functional relations, an image of unsensuous Space; Western mathematics is spiritually identical with Western music—relational, unconfined by optical, Euclidean dimension.

Since cultures are organisms they must die. They must disintegrate when their prime symbols are actualized—the doctrine of conceptualism which the scholastics derived from Aristotle's revision of Plato. The period of actualization is Culture proper; the aftermath, in which nothing new may be spontaneously created out of the prime symbol, is Civilization. Classical culture flowered in the millennium before Caesar; after that time, it was spiritually sterile, skeptical, practical, lacking in grand religions, occupied with craft-arts, with eclectic philosophies; it had become Civilization. Spengler examines the Faustian culture and maintains that, on the analogy of parallel forms, we are contemporary with Divus Julius. Our forms are actualized and exhausted. We are Alexandrians; our chief absorption must be a practical, unmetaphysical pursuit of the materials of living, for our sole remaining activity in letters is morphological research into the past. No expression-form is universally valid; the Western mathematics is not "true"—except for Western men as a major form in which they have actualized the prime symbol of Space. This spirit of relativity, of skepsis, has rounded off every great culture. The great forms of pure expression break up; systematic metaphysics abdicates in eclecticism (Santayana, Keyserling); literature orders the past (the neo-classical school of Eliot); architecture confounds the modes, existing for utility.

Spengler examines the scientific problem in this spirit, in the last chapter of the volume. He is a mathematician and a physicist; his critique of physics—culturally "contemporary" with Sextus Empiricus's attack on the ancient mathematicians—destroys it as sheer fiction; in fact, even as an expression-form it is collapsing, for it begins to doubt the law of reversible action and merges with a metaphysic in entertaining the concept of organism. But whatever the future of science may be, it is absolutely certain that with Oswald Spengler metaphysics returns to its medieval position; it becomes the critic of science, the queen of the sciences; it resumes authority. Spengler would evaluate the resumption of philosophical authority historically, as symbolic of profound decadence in the Faustian spirit; for metaphysics as authority annihilates the separate integral expression-forms of the culture. Nevertheless, Spengler is involved in a new Western tendency. Ten years ago Hulme called for the historical method and deprecated the confusion of mechanism with the organic. The present school of neo-realism is fundamentally concerned with an organic philosophy of nature and with the extent to which the law of reversible action is valid. It is, moreover, a rationalist Fundamentalism—in which Bishop Manning would not be conceded authority—and it promises to send the ambitious experimenter back to his test-tubes. Spengler says that this is a sterile if necessary task. But the Alexandrian Age, which could produce a Sextus Empiricus and collect the texts of Homer, was not an age of conspicuous disorder.

ALLEN TATE

Marcel Proust

Marcel Proust, Sa Vie, Son Œuvre. Par Léon Pierre-Quint. Paris: Simon Kra.

M. PIERRE-QUINT has based his study upon the three-fourths of Proust's novel already in print, without waiting for "Le Temps Retrouvé." For he believes it possible at this stage to grasp the harmony of its vast proportions—a cathedral with uncompleted towers. His work includes an animated sketch of Proust's life; an interpretation of his universe, as reflected in his novel; and a technical analysis of his style—to be omitted, remarks the author, by people who "do" Paris in eight days. But not to be omitted by readers who are awaiting the next volume, or who are stalled somewhere in the midst of "Sodome et Gomorrhe." It deals lucidly with that absorption in the intricacies of memory association which grew out of Proust's conviction that we recapture the past, with its emotions, not by any effort of the intelligence but through the accidental stimulus of an odor, a musical phrase, an involuntary movement, a flavor upon the tongue. His aim—to reach by intuition, to express by intelligence, the most fugitive sentiments of our inner life—conditions his style. Its transitions are not logical, but imitative of the movements of memory association. In a single period he endeavors to inclose a complex moment of our consciousness. Yet his style moves; the verbs are numerous; it conveys his sense of the perpetual evolution of our conscious and unconscious life. And his characters evolve, though no method would seem less adapted to display their evolution than one which devotes 150 pages to an hour or two in a salon of the Faubourg. But such pages paint the great frescoes. A person like Swann appears in one, years later in another, later again in a third. Between these appearances evolution has occurred. We measure its nature and extent in the contrasts revealed by the figures in the three frescoes.

Proust himself presents a striking contrast between the two phases of his career: in society, and in retreat. "Is he really so charming?" inquired his father, the doctor, puzzled by his son's social success. During the years of dizzy oscillation between the Étoile and the Faubourg St. Germain, Proust felt that he had a work within him, but the only outward signs of it were countless notes jotted down on calling cards, invitations, telegrams, recording this gesture or that form of salutation. Forced by illness to withdraw more and more into seclusion, protected by walls lined with cork when his mother's adoration no longer shielded him, he emerged now and then into society only to verify his documents—as when, at one in the morning, he called on a lady and asked to see a certain hat she had worn twenty years before. He couldn't believe she hadn't preserved it: "But Mme Daudet has kept all her hats! I have seen them." "A charming idea! But I haven't a museum."

In analyzing his universe the critic is at pains to account for Proust's interest in the drama of the salons on some basis other than snobbery. He was no more a snob in writing about society than he was a seeker after sensational themes in dealing with inversion. His long contact with the world of society was a progressive disillusionment. His philosophy of desire and disenchantment reveals itself here, but even more in his treatment of love. Underneath all the diverse manifestations of love runs this refrain: love is a drama, played out within us; its object is our own creation, resembling in little more than name the person we love; one love differs from another according to the strength of our desire and the quality of our imagination; love substitutes for our habitual self another which presently disappears without our having been any more responsible for its birth than for its death; in the last analysis, it is perhaps only a nervous state.

This conception of love M. Pierre-Quint thinks "nearer to psychological reality than any other." As if there were any one psychological reality of love! His conclusion appears inconsistent with his belief that in the consciousness of each artist the world reflects itself in a unique manner. The Proustian drama of love, then, is that of the artist who, as a boy of fourteen, asked for his idea of misery, replied, "to be separated from mama"; who spoke of his mother ten years after her death as if she were still living; who felt alone after her death until the day of his own; who makes his hero suffer the same pangs when Albertine withholds herself from him as he suffered when his mother did not kiss him goodnight; whose hero found a momentary calm and happiness in love only when Albertine lay passive in sleep. Another artist, another *drame d'amour;* another psychological type, another psychological "reality." Proust, the perfect emotional introvert, escaped from his intense awareness of self only at rare moments of ecstasy when he had the sense of communion with a reality outside himself. "Neither society nor travel nor love—or very rarely—," says M. Pierre-Quint, speaking as if we were all introverts, "can bring to us this mystical fusion of our lives with the life that surrounds us, because they are not powerful enough to permit us to escape from our self." For Proust, art realized this miracle. Hence his idealization of art, and the complete gift of himself to art after he withdrew to his tower of ivory—or of cork—to "summon up remembrance of things past."

DOROTHY BREWSTER

Helmholtz in English

Helmholtz's Treatise on Physiological Optics. Translated from the third German edition. Edited by James P. C. Southall. Volume I. Published by the Optical Society of America.

HERMANN VON HELMHOLTZ, the foremost German physicist of the nineteenth century, gave a new direction to physiological research in his "Sensations of Tone" and