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The Novels of Edouard Rod (1857-1910)

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THE NOVELS OF EDOUARD ROD (1857-1910)

BY

JAMES RAYMOND WADSWORTH

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ROMANCE LANGUAGES

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

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PREFACE

Swiss by birth and in his ethical attitude, German by training and in his emotions as well as in his philosophy, French by unofficial adoption and in his intellectual curiosity, Edouard Rod occupied an unusual place among the novelists of his generation.

An inherited tendency toward melancholy, a sad and lonely childhood, and his introduction to the philosophy of Schopenhauer, enabled him to analyze successfully the pessimism of his period and laid the foundation for the doctrine of despair which constitutes one of the most constant factors in his work. Still, the inborn idealism and that enthusiasm for Wagner which helped to turn him from naturalism, also facilitated his acceptance of the teachings of Tolstoy, thus leading him to a firm belief in the merits of sacrifice and in the superiority of simplicity in living.

Because of his introduction of a new type of novel as well as on account of the fidelity with which he reflects the literary evolution of his epoch, his work forms an important chapter in the history of the French novel during the nineteenth century. The fact that shortly after Rod's death M. Giraud includes him among the masters of the hour, with such figures as Loti, Brunetière, Faguet, de Vogüé, Lemaître and Anatole France, indicates his significance for French literature.

This monograph traces through a critical analysis of his novels the evolution of Rod's literary method and his ideals, both of which reflect accurately but from a personal point of view the general tendencies of his period.

I owe much to Mademoiselle Rod, who in correspondence and conversation has given me valuable information concerning her father's work. I am indebted also to MM. Estaunié, Doumic, Bellessort, and Giraud for suggestions about the personality of Rod and the interpretation of his novels. The task of collecting material was facilitated by the courteous assistance of the staff of the Bibliothèque Nationale and by the graciousness of the officials of the library of the University of Geneva in making available their collection of Rod's manuscripts. I wish to express my thanks to the University of Nebraska Committee on Publications for undertaking to print this study, and to Dr. Louise Pound and Dr. Harry Kurz for their encouraging counsel. Special thanks are due to Dr. Thomas Raysor for helpful criticism of the manuscript and to Hazel MacKay Wadsworth for assisting in the reading of proof. Dr. James F. Mason of Cornell University, under whose direction a more detailed study of Rod's life and work was prepared as a doctoral dissertation, deserves my lasting gratitude.

I

THE NATURALISTIC NOVELS

The naturalistic phase of the work of Edouard Rod extends from *Les Allemands à Paris* (1880) to *Tatiana Léïlof* (1886). Notwithstanding the ardor with which the young writer espoused the cause of Zola, his temperament and previous training prevented him from acquiring fame as a naturalist. Although Zola's method proved of the greatest value to a literary beginner, the spirit of this pseudo-scientific school unconsciously repelled him from the very first. The acquisition of technical skill through constant work and the presence in the naturalistic novels of the germs of transformation in style will become apparent upon the examination of the first phase of Rod's literary production.

Les Allemands à Paris (1880) forms a collection of short stories rather than one connected work. Both in style and in method, this book reveals the struggles of a young Vaudois to express himself in pure French¹ and the endeavor of a novice to follow the naturalistic method. The prefatory announcement of Rod's intention to experiment with German individuals in a Parisian environment fits exactly the Zola formula.² Binding them loosely together by fragile connecting links, the experimenter places in that less elegant side of Paris which particularly interested Zola's group, various German types like Joachim Fliridonius, a workman, and Melchior Blinding of the lower middle class. One need not relate here how each attained his goal of wealth, the sordid life of *Fliridoine* as a second hand dealer, the happiness brought into his life by a young German girl placed under his care, her escape to evade his persecutions, leaving him to a final passion for his wealth with transports reminiscent of *Silas Marner*, and his death among his treasures. Blinding, by an advantageous marriage and clever speculations, becomes a figure in the Parisian financial world and leads an existence centering about clubs, theaters, and race tracks. Two examples of the artistic temperament, the violinist and the painter, meet defeat. Rod studies also a Bavarian valet and a German student who, becoming absorbed in the life of the Latin quarter, never takes his degree. In each case the environment has transformed the individual.

Les Allemands à Paris, however little intrinsic literary merit it may possess, deserves study as a prediction of the future Rod. Utilization of autobiographical material, interest in the philosophy of Schopenhauer, the determination to cultivate naturalism, moral preoccupation, doubt of self, struggle for perfection of style, breadth of interests, keen intellectual

¹ *Les Allemands*, p. 248.

² Zola, *Le Roman expérimental*, p. 24.

curiosity, anti-Protestant feeling, all find a place in this initial literary failure. In this, as in all his books, the author put much of himself. Julius Perth, the violinist, a sort of adulterated Jean Christophe with memories of Cologne which one easily recognizes as Rod's own, bears in certain respects a striking resemblance to his creator. He even settles in the identical room which Rod occupied during his first months in Paris.³ Scornful mention of Protestant pastors⁴ foretells the attitude which the rebellious Calvinist will take toward his childhood faith in *Palmyre Veulard*, *Côte à côte*, *Le Ménage du Pasteur Naudié*, *L'Incendie* and *Le Pasteur pauvre*. The description of the artistic development of Maurice Wehland depicts, transposed into the realm of art, the pre-Paris Rod discovering the world of contemporary ideas upon his arrival in the French capital. Marguerite, the painter's wife, represents Rod's old idealistic self, reluctant to join the naturalists whose views are presented by the artist.⁵ No author who includes in an avowedly naturalistic work a discussion of this kind can long remain a disciple of that school.

Whatever interest it may hold for a student of Rod's literary evolution, *Les Allemands à Paris* does not appear in the classification of his works which Rod prefixed to *Aloÿse Valérien*. Rod lists first *Palmyre Veulard* (1881), a volume which he had for some years past consigned to oblivion. In 1879, Rod had condemned his native literature for seeking its inspiration exclusively in nature and in religion and had asserted the necessity of overcoming the repugnance felt by the Vaudois for naturalistic works. With his first real novel Rod endeavored to work this transformation. The Parisian public had read too much Zola to feel shocked by Rod's attempt at naturalism but in the canton of Vaud, *Palmyre Veulard* created a permanently disagreeable impression.⁶ Edouard Secrétan criticized him severely.⁷ Rod replied immediately in the most belligerent manner.⁸

The work which occasioned such adverse criticism discusses the case of a prostitute who wins a fortune, but not happiness, through her treatment of a dying millionaire. Since the days of Mary Magdalene, the prostitute has provided a favorite literary theme. At the time of the publication of *Palmyre Veulard* the current literature presented such examples as *Germinie Lacerteux* (1865), Huysman's *Marthe* (1876), *La Fille Elisa* (1877) and *Nana* (1880), not to mention *La Maison Tellier* (1881).

³ Cf. *Ill. Nat. Suisse*, p. 135.

⁴ P. 152.

⁵ P. 135.

⁶ Cf. *Journal de Genève*, 20 février 1886.

⁷ *Gazette de Lausanne*, 16 août 1881.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 19 août 1881.

Palmyre is of course a product of her environment. Having established herself, after various adventures, with a tubercular millionaire who clings desperately to life, Palmyre, acting under the instigation of her real lover, Profès, takes him to Montreux and shortens his life by every possible means. Profès treats Palmyre with the utmost scorn and after their marriage makes her thoroughly unhappy in spite of her ill gotten millions. While certain details of this tale doubtless shock a sensitive reader, *Palmyre Veulard* seems almost innocuous.

What offended the people of the canton of Vaud was Rod's misrepresentation of them and of their ministers,⁹ particularly when he gives as a typical specimen of the Swiss ministers the bibulous pastor Réval.¹⁰ Rod places in the mouth of the pastor his own abhorrence of the multiplicity of religious sects in the Vaudois country. He points out the hypocrisy¹¹ of the Protestants in general, and especially condemns the Darbyites.¹² As Stendhal had acquired at an early age a permanent hatred of the priests, so Rod, because of his boyhood impressions of the Darbyites, will never cease to dislike them and they will meet with further criticism in *L'Incendie*, *L'Eau courante* and *Mademoiselle Annette*.

From the point of view of composition, *Palmyre Veulard* indubitably deserves the adverse criticism it received.¹³ Nevertheless its construction shows progress over *Les Allemands à Paris* and the style reveals what profit Rod had derived from the school of the author of *La Faute de l'Abbé Mouret* (1875).

Rod's Swiss Protestant friends scarcely experienced less displeasure and apprehension upon the publication of *Côte à côte* (1882). Evidently still resenting the attacks made on *Palmyre Veulard*, he chooses his characters from a respectable environment, places his novel in France and castigates Calvinism in general. In comparison with the indulgent and respectful attitude always assumed by Renan toward his former masters, Rod's antipathetic picture of the Protestants seems unduly severe. None of the impartiality which characterized the ecclesiastical novels of an anti-Catholic writer like Fabre relieves the drab of the sad and hypocritical world seen through his eyes. From his prejudiced viewpoint we behold in *Côte à côte* a strange, distorted world of zealots who live admirable lives, singing hymns devoutly but always off pitch, doing good thoroughly but not without pain to the victim.¹⁴ They deliver sermons in tremulous tones, expectorate good advice, and grind out gossip and religion.¹⁵ Rod

⁹ P. 9.

¹⁰ Pp. 110, 121.

¹¹ P. 141.

¹² P. 109.

¹³ Gaucher in *Revue Bleue*, 1881, t. 28, p. 156.

¹⁴ P. 35.

¹⁵ P. 248.

describes them as spending their evenings piously while the old men deliver commentaries on scriptural passages, anemic pastors pray, and women knit stockings for the Laplanders.¹⁶ Dinner conversation limits itself to discussions of creed and dogma, the subject of foreign missions or the advancement of the kingdom, and the narration of charitable deeds by those who have done them.¹⁷ Weak-voiced pastors distort history to prove Protestantism the universal panacea for all earthly griefs.¹⁸ Filled with proselyting zeal, they consider themselves divinely appointed to convert their Catholic relatives.¹⁹ Rod has produced a caricature of the French Protestants more overdrawn than Prévost's representation of English Methodism in the character of Edith Craggs,²⁰ and utterly lacking in the kindliness which characterized the same writer's portrayal of the Jesuits in *Le Scorpion*.

From this environment, Rod chooses a young man, George Maillange, who marries a Catholic. While one would expect this conflict of creeds to lead to disaster, Rod fails to develop what should have constituted the fundamental problem of this work, and with the true naturalist's physiological preoccupation, brings about their unhappiness on a physical rather than spiritual basis. He depicts both George and his wife Juliette as too indifferent in religious matters to permit the destruction of their happiness by sectarian differences, but the experimental novelist introduces a complication by endowing Juliette with a fragile constitution. George, a moral weakling through the fault of his Protestant training, gradually yields to the temptation to seek elsewhere the sensual gratification denied him by the whim of fate and the author, seduces the servant Marthe and ultimately sinks to the lowest depths of moral depravity. Circumstances of environment and training conquer the individual. George Maillange belongs to that band of the vanquished which includes Maurice Wehland, Henri Vanneau, and Tatiana Léïlof.

Rod has not confined his criticism to Protestantism alone. George's wife, Juliette, likewise lacks strength of character. Too weak to overcome temptation, she yields to her love for M. Planel,²¹ the pastor who teaches her the fallacies of Catholicism and the truth of Protestant doctrines. Her Catholic training seems to have helped her little. In this respect *Côte à côte* contrasts with later works like *La Sacrifiée* in which Rod adopts a sympathetic attitude toward Catholicism.

¹⁶ p. 253.

¹⁷ p. 18.

¹⁸ p. 226.

¹⁹ p. 257.

²⁰ *Les Vierges Fortes*.

²¹ Planel offers the first example of the amative pastor, a type which Rod will develop in *Le Ménagement du Pasteur Naudie* and in *Les Roches blanches*.

Rod has not painted an alluring picture of vice and *Côte à côte* condemns immorality as well as a system which applies an excessively strict code of morals. In spite of the ridicule he heaps upon the Protestants,²² Rod profited by his early training, and at the end, rescues his hero from a dive and sets him like Candide to cultivating his garden in a quiet district where the women of the neighborhood point to him as a model of virtuous conduct.

Curiously enough this inconsistent *dénouement* met with the approval of Zola²³ as did the novel in its entirety, except for certain inconsistencies in the character of Juliette, and the weakness of the secondary figures. That Zola should express his commendation of the book as a whole seems quite justified, for in *Côte à côte*, more than in any other work perhaps, Rod follows the naturalistic formula.

The revolt against Protestantism witnessed in *Côte à côte* finds a parallel in the aversion toward intellectual achievement expressed by the hero of *La Chute de Miss Topsy* (1882). One almost expects to see Rod cast aside his pen and join a troupe of acrobats²⁴ or become a professional clown. This anti-intellectual attitude, like that of Jérôme Coignard, may be ascribed to the disillusionment which results from dilettantism.

Strict application of the criterion of length would properly classify *La Chute de Miss Topsy* as a short story, but like so much of Rod's early production, it holds a place in the discussion of his novels because of indications which it gives of the future and especially because it marks a point in his evolution from naturalism toward the psychological novel. The nervous, anemic André Frémy, sceptical and melancholy, prophesies the creation of a better known figure, for, transposed into the drawing room from the circus ring, this same state of mind will characterize the hero of *La Course à la Mort*.²⁵ Another idea, the immolation of woman to the eternal egoism of man, finds its inception in *Miss Topsy* and will run more or less vaguely through many of the novels, rising to the surface particularly in *Les Trois Cœurs*, *La Seconde Vie de Michel Teissier* and *La Sacrifiée*.

Not only does the entire environment of circus²⁶ and music halls, the cheaper, shabbier aspect of life, show Rod's absorption in the naturalistic school, but certain pages reveal in the choice of detail a strict adherence to the technique of that group.²⁷ A descriptive passage of the preface shows the gradual progress in style since Rod first began to publish and

²² P. 67.

²³ Zola, *Correspondance*, pp. 212-213.

²⁴ P. 32.

²⁵ Cf. *La Course à la Mort*, pp. 117-119.

²⁶ Cf. Goncourt, *Les Frères Zemganno* (1879).

²⁷ P. 34.

presents as well as the future pessimist and intuitivist, the Swiss painter of his native landscapes. The purpose of introducing this nature description, however, lies in its application to psychology.

If *La Chute de Miss Topsy* reveals tendencies toward psychological analysis, with *La Femme d'Henri Vanneau* Rod turns again to the experimental novel. In the prologue of *Les Femmes d'Artistes* (1874), Daudet's painter declares: "Les artistes ne doivent pas se marier."²⁸ Ten years later Edouard Rod chose a slight variation of the same theme as the subject of *La Femme d'Henri Vanneau* (1884): "Un artiste qui veut réussir ne doit jamais se marier."²⁹ The novel really involves two problems. One is a conflict of personalities, the struggle of a naïve artist, painting for the love of his art instead of for worldly success, against an ambitious wife to whom art means nothing, position everything. The issue does not remain long in doubt. Vanneau fulfills Daudet's definition of "un être nerveux, exigeant, impressionnable . . . cet homme-enfant qu' on appelle un artiste," a type ridiculed by Brieux in *Ménage d'artistes*; and Marguerite's ambition prevents her from being the "type de femme spécial, presque introuvable"³⁰ who makes a fitting mate for the artist. In his second problem Rod applies the formula of transplantation used in *Les Allemands à Paris*, tracing the effect upon a scheming but upright *bourgeoise* of the unwholesome, intriguing atmosphere in which she must court success for her husband.

In discussing *Les Allemands à Paris* it was suggested that it offers the preliminary study for *La Femme d'Henri Vanneau*. Careful comparison proves this fact conclusively. Although the wives have nothing in common but the name of Marguerite, the two painters resemble each other closely. Both studied with Schraudolph at Munich³¹ and painted religious subjects. Both undergo the same artistic evolution toward modernism.³² They experience the same physical and moral collapse, even in the matter of seeing hallucinatory bluebirds.³³ One can establish word for word comparisons in numerous cases.³⁴

This amplification of Rod's first work of fiction forms the culminating point of the naturalistic group. In it, notwithstanding fragments of personal experience which almost inevitably creep into any author's work,

²⁸ P. 3. Cf. also Goncourt's Charles Demailly as well as the Coriolis of *Manette Salomon*.

²⁹ P. 41.

³⁰ *Les Femmes d'Artistes*, p. 6.

³¹ *Henri Vanneau*, p. 38; *Les Allemands*, p. 174.

³² *Henri Vanneau*, pp. 206, 229; *Les Allemands*, pp. 184, 183. *Henri Vanneau*, p. 209; *Les Allemands*, p. 198.

³³ *Henri Vanneau*, pp. 237, 280; *Les Allemands*, pp. 196, 203.

³⁴ *Henri Vanneau*, pp. 255-258; *Les Allemands*, pp. 199-200.

Rod approaches nearest to scientific impersonality. Freed from the prejudice which had particularly marred *Palmyre Veulard* and *Côte à côte*, revealing a gradual improvement in style due to the writer's increasing facility of expression,³⁵ this last of the series preceding the publication of *La Course à la Mort* forms the least bad of the group.

Notwithstanding its publication a year later than *La Course à la Mort*, which became the turning point in Rod's literary career and marked his defection from the naturalistic school, *Tatiana Léïlof* (1886) belongs to his earlier manner and the author classes it with *Palmyre Veulard*, *Côte à côte* and *La Femme d'Henri Vanneau* among his *romans de début*. After it he leaves definitively the more unpleasant aspect of Parisian life, having completed the cycle begun by *Les Allemands à Paris*.

Three distinct elements enter into the composition of *Tatiana Léïlof* which, like Rod's other naturalistic novels, shows the defeat of the individual by society.³⁶ Autobiographical material abounds in these pages. One has but to compare with parts of the novel Rod's account of his early days in Paris in *Mes débuts dans les lettres* to ascertain how fully the author has utilized either mental or written notes of this period.³⁷ In spite of this subjective element from which even Zola himself could not escape, the work follows the formula of the *roman expérimental*. *Tatiana Léïlof*, *roman parisien*, as the title at once suggests, relates the struggle of the Russian in Paris. The subtitle reveals Rod's desire to profit by the popularity of the genre whose fortune dates from *Fromont jeune et Risler aîné*.³⁸

Having observed the readiness with which Rod responded to outside stimuli, it seems inevitable, in view of the vogue of Russian literature in Paris, that he should choose a Russian figure, especially when one recalls the part played by Rod's *Revue Contemporaine* in the introduction of the Russian writers. *Tatiana Léïlof* could scarcely have been written without the advent of Russian ideas and literature in France.³⁹ The notion of sacrifice and the religion of human suffering, which, after Vogüé's *Roman russe*, represented to the French the spirit of the newly discovered land, find here their personification in the nihilist Marie Lidine, a young medical student who longs to find happiness in sacrifice and martyrdom.

³⁵ Cf. Gaucher, *Revue Bleue*, 1884, t. 33, p. 478.

³⁶ *Tatiana Léïlof* was suggested by the tragic adventure of an actress in 1883. Cf. X., "Edouard Rod il y a trente ans," *Le Journal de Lausanne*, 6 septembre 1915.

³⁷ For almost identical descriptions, compare *Tatiana*, p. 40 and *Ill. Nat. Suisse*, p. 135; *Tatiana*, p. 55 and *Ill. Nat. Suisse*, p. 138.

³⁸ *Nouv. études sur le XIXe siècle*, "Daudet," p. 18.

³⁹ *Vide* pp. 114 and 255 for references to Russian literature.

Tatiana herself represents an altogether opposite type, thinking only of her own appetites and the environment which prevents her from satisfying them. With this entirely selfish ambition mingles a strain of romanticism, a trait so frequently observed in Rod's characters, especially in *Michel Teissier* and *Dernier Refuge*. She reveals this disposition from the moment she leaves her province to conquer Paris until the last minute of defiant courage when she executes her plan for a stage suicide. Tatiana meets defeat on every side and dies in a spectacular gesture of defiance. Rod has placed her in the Paris of the typical *roman de mœurs parisiennes* with its strange types like the protector of Tatiana, the dramatist Louvier, who belongs to the species studied by Dumas in *L'Ami des femmes*. It is this environment⁴⁰ which has overcome Tatiana, as Paris had corrupted the characters of Rod's other naturalistic novels.

Despite the improvement in style since *Les Allemands à Paris*, *Tatiana Léïlof* was not a success, for Rod did not possess the temperament of a naturalist. While we may call naturalistic the works thus far studied, he has during these years undergone an evolution which will lead him to produce an entirely different type of novel. Having acquired the technique of writing, he will consider himself free to give up the imitation of a movement to which he had never been totally converted. How and why he abandoned naturalism entails a discussion of the intuitivist novels.

⁴⁰ Cf. Goncourt, *La Faustin*.

II

INTUITIVISM

Notwithstanding the wide circulation of Zola's novels, time brought an inevitable reaction¹ to naturalism. One of the most noteworthy manifestations of the growth of an anti-naturalistic spirit was the protest of the *Cinq purs*² which followed the publication of *La Terre* in 1887.³ In this connection, Brunetière, always one of Zola's most severe critics, proclaimed the bankruptcy of naturalism.⁴ An excessive study of the physiological man,⁵ as a logical consequence, directed attention to the observation of the psychological being, almost wholly neglected by the naturalists.

This movement found a leader in Paul Bourget, who had, as early as 1873, pointed out the necessity of developing a new type of novel.⁶ His *Essais de psychologie contemporaine*, appearing in *La Nouvelle Revue* (1883-1885), bring to the field of literature the application of psychological analysis, a method which he follows in the novel, beginning with *L'Irréparable* (1884). Not only did Bourget do this, but he succeeded in stating so forcibly what he was accomplishing that he effected a revolution in the novel of his time.⁷ The novel of analysis assumed the predominant position held only a few years previously by naturalism.⁸

Of the Médan group, Zola and Alexis alone remained naturalists.⁹ In *Pierre et Jean* (1888) Maupassant shows the influence of Bourget.¹⁰ With *Un caractère* (1889) Hennique had turned to spiritualism. Huysmans had left his earlier manner in *A rebours* (1884). Céard had written no novels since *Une Belle Journée*.

Edouard Rod had not awaited the publication of *La Terre* to break with the method of Zola. *La Course à la Mort*, which marks a definite departure from his previous style and connects him with the evolution of the novel of analysis, had already appeared in 1885. He himself recognizes the inevitability of such a rupture, declaring that the voice of authority influences youth,¹¹ which later regains its independence. This had been

¹ Cf. Pellissier, *Etudes de littérature et de morale contemporaine*, Paris, 1905, p. 10.

² Paul Bonnetain, Lucien Descaves, Paul Margueritte, Gustave Guiches, J.-H. Rosny. For Bonnetain's account of this protest *vide* Huret, *Enquête*, pp. 242-243.

³ Cf. A. France, *La Vie Littéraire*, 3e série, p. 368.

⁴ *Le Roman naturaliste*, p. 323 et seq. Cf. also Huret, *op. cit.*

⁵ Cf. Vogüé, *Le Roman russe*, avant-propos, p. xxviii.

⁶ *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 juillet 1873, p. 460.

⁷ Prévost, "Le Roman français au XIXe siècle," *Revue Bleue*, 14 avril 1900, p. 455.

⁸ Cf. Gilbert, *Le Roman en France pendant le XIXe siècle*, "Le Roman psychologique," pp. 308-352.

⁹ Huret, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

¹⁰ Prévost, *loc. cit.*

¹¹ *Le Correspondant*, 25 août 1893, p. 608.

the nature of his attraction to Zola, whose vigorous campaign against his opponents had won for him as many followers as had his literary ability. Rod and his fellows had dreamed of a new literary crusade similar to that of 1830, with the *première* of *L'Assommoir* replacing the battle of *Hernani*. However, the young naturalists had failed to consider some essential facts. "Nous ne savions pas que la loi de la différenciation s'applique à la littérature, qui a perdu ses traits collectifs, et ne produit que des œuvres de plus en plus individuelles."¹² Moreover, the narrow materialism of naturalism, more absorbed in things than in the study of souls, failed to satisfy their tendencies toward idealism.¹³

Rod did not lose his personal admiration for Zola, nor did he underestimate the importance of his work.¹⁴ Zola had defined a work of art as a corner of nature seen through a temperament. The first phase of an author's work, Rod declares, emphasizes the reproduction of the corner of nature. At the end of this period of realism he seeks rather to manifest his own temperament through the corner of nature. He wishes to pass beyond the mere representation of the object and to analyze the laws and the secret forces which determine the sentiments and the actions of his characters.¹⁵

It was in Zola's own theory that Rod found the idea which led to the formation of his doctrine of intuitivism. The articles on *Le Roman expérimental* led him to make between experiment and observation comparisons wholly favorable to the former. The experimental method leaves the writer free to form conjectures and to deduce certain conclusions while observation restricts him in this respect. It has the additional advantage—and this constitutes a capital fact in the explanation of Rod's literary evolution,—“elle l'autorise, elle l'oblige même à tirer de son propre fonds les raccords qui existent entre les faits et échappent à l'observation.”¹⁶ This statement contains in germ the fundamental principle of the theory of intuitivism. Since the analysis of Rod's early works shows them to be of essentially experimental nature rather than based upon direct observation, he had already turned toward the intuitivist novel.

Among the foreign influences which contributed to his gradual emancipation from naturalism Rod places first the music of Wagner,¹⁷ which seems to him based on intuition. At the same time were introduced

¹² *Les Trois Cœurs*, Préface, p. 3.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁴ Rod, "The Place of Emile Zola in Literature," *Contemporary Review*, 1902, vol. 82, p. 617.

¹⁵ *Le Correspondant*, 10 juin 1906, pp. 833, 834, 840.

¹⁶ *Les Trois Cœurs*, Préface, p. 13.

¹⁷ Cf. "Wagner et la France," *La Revue Musicale*, 1er oct. 1923.

the pessimism of Leopardi and especially that of Schopenhauer.¹⁸ Then came the art of the Pre-Raphaelites,¹⁹ and modern English poetry²⁰ which the studies of Rod's friend, Sarrazin, first revealed to France. Still more important than any of these importations was that of the Russian novel.²¹ Through their interpretation of the significance of these exotic elements Vogüé²² and Bourget²³ exerted a profound influence upon the young men of their generation.

In addition to these foreign influences and the result of his own reflections on the subject of Zola's theories, Rod's relations with Hennequin, who became one of his most intimate friends, exercised an important direction upon his thought. In frequent discussions with him on the question of environment, Rod conceived a violent antipathy toward minute and useless descriptions and thought of replacing them by a study of the inner being.²⁴ He proposes to apply still further in the novel the principle which Wagner had used in *Tristan und Isolde*, to divert the interest from externals to the play of passion going on in the hearts of the characters. Life as well as literature completing the process of his detachment from naturalism, Rod implies that we may seek in *Le Sens de la Vie* those influences which effected the final transformation. Marriage, paternity, altruistic aspirations, the serious consideration of religious problems, all produce a state of mind no longer suited to the materialism and brutality of naturalism.

It is not *La Course à la Mort* with which Rod publishes the explanation of his theory of intuitivism. Not until 1889, when he no longer believes in the possibility of forming a definite group with a single aim, does he expound his doctrine in the preface of *Les Trois Cœurs*.²⁵ An *intuitif*, he explains, is a man who indulges in introspection, not for the purpose of seeing himself alone, but to discover the key to the mysteries of the soul of humanity. Intuitivism would apply intuition to literary psychology. Schopenhauer, in his solution of the problem of existence, proposes to conceive the world in analogy with his own *microcosmus*. Rod in like

¹⁸ *Les Trois Cœurs*, Préface, p. 9. For Leopardi *vide Etudes sur le XIXe siècle*, pp. 1-45.

¹⁹ Cf. "Les Préraphaélites," *Etudes sur le XIXe siècle*, pp. 47-97. *Vide* "Les salons de 1895," *Le Correspondant*, 25 mai 1895.

²⁰ "Cette admirable poésie anglaise qui enseigne l'immatérialité des mots et des images." *Les Trois Cœurs*, Préface, p. 9.

²¹ Cf. Charbonnel, *Les Mystiques dans la littérature présente*, pp. 11-34.

²² "Les études de M. de Vogüé, sur les romanciers russes ont, dans l'histoire de la littérature contemporaine une importance sur laquelle on ne saurait trop insister." *Les Trois Cœurs*, Préface, p. 11. Cf. Salomon, "E.-M. de Vogüé," *Art et littérature*, pp. 8-19.

²³ *Les Trois Cœurs*, Préface, p. 11.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

manner would have the author look within himself to know and love others, not himself.

The attainment of this end in the novel involves radical changes among which Rod mentions²⁶ the suppression of descriptions of environment which, he declares, only occupy space and explain nothing, although here he contradicts Balzac. He suggests also the elimination of retrospective narratives which recount the childhood and adolescence of the characters and thus present too definite a picture. He attempts to avoid artificial and theatrical scenes. Even these alterations do not entirely satisfy him. He desires still more complete liberation from the tyranny of precise figures and concrete facts so that their general significance may stand out more clearly. "Il faudrait revenir, sous une forme à trouver, au *Symbole*; et je ne sais si le moule trop brutal du roman s'y prêtera jamais."²⁷ Rod suggests for the novel the evolution which already characterized the idealistic movement in poetry. Never a naturalist in reality, Rod has now become an intuitivist. To exemplify his theory he writes three novels, *La Course à la Mort*, *Le Sens de la Vie*, and *Les Trois Cœurs*.

Rod's theory of intuitivism did not meet with complete success in its first application, *La Course à la Mort* (1885). *La Course à la Mort* analyzes the intimate sufferings of a soul afflicted by the pessimistic spirit of the time and finding escape from the miseries of life only in the aspiration toward death. His unhappiness does not result from the intellectual ambition of a Faust or a Manfred. He does not know the satiety of debauch of a Childe Harold, nor does he experience the proud revolt of Lara. He has little in common with Werther whose moral sufferings come from the struggle of a man against things, from a passion opposed in its development. While he more nearly resembles René and Obermann, he lacks the element of genius which enables René to establish the superiority of his soul over his environment; and although like Obermann, he personifies doubt with his impotent reveries, he seems less sure of his desires and does not render the same impression of moral elevation. He does not possess the profoundly religious spirit and the belief in duty, or the aspiration to mingle his personal life in the general existence which characterized Amiel. He exemplifies Schopenhauer's principle that a never resting, never satisfied want constitutes the kernel of existence. His pessimism has no real foundation as did that of Leopardi²⁸ because nothing happens to him. Those events which do occur change at once into sensations which an immediate but unconscious analysis decomposes.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

²⁸ Leopardi declared, however, that his philosophy had no connection with his physical suffering. Cf. Rod, *Etudes sur le XIXe siècle*, "Giacomo Leopardi."

He aspires to love, for "le jeune homme problème rencontre la jeune fille énigme."²⁹ The attraction of Cécile remains unexplained but he believes she too shares his weariness with life. This romance with only an occasional meeting forms his constant preoccupation, forcing him to a continual introspection. Cécile, too, feels the same indefinable aspirations. In a passage of Wagnerian inspiration Rod describes the spiritual communion which occurs as they waltz together. With no necessity for words to express their common sentiments, their souls vibrate with conflicting emotions, their own unexpressed passions as well as the griefs of other lovers.³⁰ Gradually they rise above the notion of time to a higher sphere where all faculties melt into one—ceaseless, causeless suffering. Then comes the desire for deliverance through death. Their souls attain together a kind of Nirvana, in which time, space and the world have disappeared, while they hear only a murmur of voices glorifying this state of annihilation.³¹ After this ecstatic moment Cécile passes out of his existence so that the news of her death later leaves him untouched. Love seems to him only an instrument of torture which destroys our last illusion and reveals life as the immutable caricature of our dreams.

His literary ambitions appear futile, since universal uncertainty renders it impossible to prove anything. There remains nothing to discover in the field of thought, or at least an original idea would merely be lost in the mass of mediocrity. Art alone, because of its uselessness, merits our interest, but it tortures us by holding before our eyes an unattainable ideal. Schopenhauer praised art from a different point of view, advancing the conception of salvation through esthetic contemplation. He maintained that art alone can cause the sudden breaking forth of the faculty of intuition which results in the predominance of pure perception and the disappearance of the will which removes suffering with it.

The hero next explores literature, but only to find all books the living witnesses to the contradictions, errors, and defeats of human thought.³² From them all he deduces the Schopenhauerian doctrine that evil constitutes the positive principle of life and that good is merely a mood of thought like time and space.³³

Abandoning literature, he longs to find refuge in some remote spot, loving and loved by a naïve, ignorant creature.³⁴ He aspires to the

²⁹ Gaucher, *Revue Bleue*, 26 septembre 1885, p. 411.

³⁰ Pp. 91-92. The prelude of *Tristan und Isolde* expresses this longing for the unattainable and this unquenchable desire. Cf. Wagner's interpretation cited in Krehbiel, *Studies in the Wagnerian Drama*, p. 51.

³¹ P. 94.

³² P. 153.

³³ P. 177.

³⁴ P. 217. Cf. *La Chute de Miss Topsy*.

quiescence which Schopenhauer offers as a practical deliverance from suffering. Gradually he discovers the source of his complaint. He learns that the iron turning in his wound is Life.³⁵ He hates life, and every living creature because it suffers and causes pain. Rod's hero does not, like Obermann, feel his own sufferings alone; he suffers for all. Yet in spite of his hatred of life he is not sure of desiring death. His dream of solitude brings doubts too when he discovers upon a mountain top two brothers, one contemplative, the other meditative as he himself would be. The latter, without having read Schopenhauer, preaches his same hopeless doctrine. The hero therefore begins to wonder whether solitude brings disillusionment or leads to paradise.

At Bayreuth he finds justification for Schopenhauer's belief in music as the highest art. In Wagner, as in Michel Angelo, the other master whom he profoundly admires, he learns that those who have seen and experienced all aspire only to quiescence.³⁶ Although music has brought temporary cessation of suffering, he has not the energy to maintain the artistic attitude, and the will to live reasserts itself.

He seeks escape from the prison which life builds around him, and taking the five or six hundred books which for him epitomize the history of human thought, retires to an isolated spot. There his days pass in ineffable ennui; he loses interest in ideas, his poets disappoint him, inspiration fails to come and his will, already feeble, grows still weaker. In the midst of his boredom he discovers two desirable things, silence and immobility. More and more he absorbs himself in things, with no desire to leave the quiet valley.

Mon âme est prête à se perdre dans les plantes et dans l'air. Et la terre m'appelle . . . Je pourrais me coucher sur son sein pour m'endormir dans son mystère . . . Je pourrais lui demander enfin ma part de son inconscience . . . Ne ferais-je pas mieux que de contempler passivement ses inutiles floraisons!³⁷

In these final words he has attained the entire negation of the will to live and is passing into Nirvana.³⁸

An analysis of *La Course à la Mort* shows how much Rod owed to Schopenhauer and to Wagner and how far their influence predominated over that of Zola even during his naturalistic period, for he had begun the composition of the novel several years before its publication.³⁹ The extent to which the book reveals its author is not an easy question to

³⁵ P. 227.

³⁶ P. 270.

³⁷ P. 298.

³⁸ Cf. Amiel, *Journal intime*, p. 132.

³⁹ Mlle. de Mestral Combremont, *La Pensée d'Ed. Rod*, p. XXIX.

⁴⁰ *Journal de Genève*, 9 août 1885.

determine. Critics offer conflicting opinions, Sabatier declaring that its evident sincerity forms the principal attraction of the work⁴⁰ and Sarcey likewise accepting it as the portrayal of a personal crisis.⁴¹ Fuster refuses to consider it more than an attempt to become the leader of a literary school,⁴² while Gaucher sees in the novel a sincere journal of the man combined with the exaggerated pose of the author.⁴³ Gabriel Sarrazin, probably Rod's most intimate friend at that time, should offer credible evidence. "Tout est vrai dans ce livre que j'ai vu vivre et écrire."⁴⁴

Rod himself insists that the philosophy which he developed to complete the intellectual mechanism of his hero must not be considered the expression of his own conception of life.⁴⁵ Notwithstanding this public protest, one cannot deny Rod's fundamental pessimism, his belief in evil as the positive principle of life.⁴⁶ Why he did not seek the Nirvana to which his hero aspired will become evident through the analysis of *Le Sens de la Vie*.

While Sarcey and Hennequin⁴⁷ accept Rod's work as representative, Fuster maintains that Rod has analyzed an exceptional case.⁴⁸ Upon the publication of *La Course à la Mort*, which Henry Bordeaux calls the poem of modern pessimism,⁴⁹ a Parisian journalist described Rod as a "*pessimiste pontifiant*"⁵⁰ and devoted to "*la jeunesse où l'on s'ennuie*"⁵¹ a study in which he cites Rod as one of the most prominent examples of precocious old men, "*ânes bâtés qui se croient porteurs de reliques*."⁵² This group of morose pedants as he termed them, best represented by Edouard Rod, "*l'ennui fait homme*," in reality possesses a deeper significance than Champsaur would have us believe, for by 1885, pessimism had profoundly affected French thought. Teodor de Wyzewa wrote in 1885:⁵³ "Notre

⁴¹ *Nouvelle Revue*, ler septembre 1885.

⁴² *Essais de Critique*, p. 142.

⁴³ Gaucher, *Revue Bleue*, 26 septembre 1885.

⁴⁴ Mestral Combremont, *op. cit.*, p. XXIX.

⁴⁵ *La Course à la Mort*, 5e éd., Préface.

⁴⁶ According to the statement of Mlle. Rod, her father constantly declared "Que la vie est mauvais!"

⁴⁷ Hennequin's criticism, that of an intimate friend protesting against the small amount of publicity received by *La Course à la Mort*, may not be entirely unprejudiced. His article in *Vie Moderne*, 25 juillet 1885, appears also in *Quelques écrivains français*, 1890.

⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*, pp. 137-139. In a page filled with a maternal solicitude naïve in its scientific seriousness, Pardo Bazán diagnosed Rod's case as stomach trouble and prescribed a dose of nux vomica. *La España Moderna*, enero 1898.

⁴⁹ Bordeaux, *Pèlerinages litt.*, p. 204.

⁵⁰ Champsaur, *Le Cerveau de Paris*, p. 29.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-27.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁵³ *Nos Mâtres*, p. 3. This article on "Le Pessimisme de Richard Wagner" appeared in *La Revue Wagnérienne*, juillet 1885.

littérature française semble vouloir s'appeler aujourd'hui, décidément, le Pessimisme. Elle nous donne des romans pessimistes, des drames pessimistes, des poèmes pessimistes, des œuvres de critique pessimistes." In an article on the pessimism of Bourget, Fuster himself makes a similar statement⁵⁴ fully in accord with the opinion expressed by Georges Pellissier.⁵⁵ No literary genre reveals this characteristic to a greater degree than the novel.⁵⁶ In this literature of despair, *La Course à la Mort* holds an important place.

In *Le Sens de la Vie* (1889), the second volume of the intuitivist series, Rod attempts to answer the riddle of the meaning of life. Marriage and paternity have transformed his philosophy and he has learned that we live not merely to die but also to love.⁵⁷ The hero, the anonymous protagonist of *La Course à la Mort*, has renounced his futile self-analysis. His marriage constitutes his first action in his emancipation from self, and to his surprise proves less disagreeable than he had imagined. However he can not banish entirely his habit of anticipating misfortunes. His ignorance of the knowledge of happiness menaces the future of their love. Marriage entails obligations, most important of all, that of living.

Tolstoy's *Confession* had appeared in French translation in 1887. The problem of the meaning of life, which had tormented the Russian author, now presents itself to Rod's hero and his reason rejects all solutions suggested to his mind. The collapse of the Greek and Roman civilization prevents him from accepting the ideal of the progress of humanity by which Renan in his youthful enthusiasm for science had replaced faith. He feels indifferent toward humanity, instead of sharing Schopenhauer's misanthropy. Pity, which in the complete application of the term means faith in the religion of human suffering, can no more be acquired than faith in Christianity. Agnosticism gives no answer. The problem still remains and his anxious curiosity persists. In spite of his uncertainty, he accepts life, he experiences joys, he loves.

Paternity brings with it a constant evolution of his sentiments. From his first stage of paternal jealousy, he passes to a feeling of pity for the helpless creature for whose presence in the evils of the world he is responsible. He has not forgotten Schopenhauer's declaration that the human race would cease to exist if children were brought into the world by an act of pure reason alone, for a man would in sympathy spare the coming generation the burden of existence. Pity develops into affection

⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

⁵⁵ "Le Pessimisme dans la littérature contemporaine" (written in 1890), *Essais de litt. cont.*, pp. 1-2.

⁵⁶ Bigot, *Revue Bleue*, 28 janvier 1888, p. 101.

⁵⁷ Sabatier, *Journal de Genève*, 20 janvier 1889.

and finally love, which is revealed by the serious illness of the child. Disgust with life vanishes before the approach of death; he clings to life and finds it preferable to annihilation. A desire to sacrifice himself wholly to the child's happiness indicates that he is approaching the solution of his problem. Yet the question still presents itself as he considers the possibility of a higher ideal than family happiness.

The reading of *Humiliés et Offensés*, *Crime et Châtiment*, *La Guerre et la Paix*, and *Anna Karénine* reveals a new world. Wondering if dilettantism has merely found a new topic of discussion in this Russian religion of human suffering, he questions the sincerity of the enthusiasm of his fellows for the message "Love ye one another." As for himself, he hesitates and doubts, even though he admires the new gospel. A concrete example of its efficacy appears upon the death of an old friend, whose life of self-abnegation and suffering seems to have exemplified perfection in the art of living. This theme Rod will develop more completely in *Mademoiselle Annette*. The idea of the beauty of sacrifice appears likewise in figures like Maria Lidine,⁵⁸ and Baron des Claies in the story *Les Lilas sont en fleurs*.⁵⁹

The working of these various factors on the heart and mind of the hero results in a first step toward altruism, but pity must be accompanied by action and here a difficulty arises. As Tolstoy opposed the artificial philanthropy of the wealthy,⁶⁰ so Rod rejects organized charity as a hypocritical compromise between actual sacrifice and the donation of our superfluous goods to our less fortunate neighbors. He determines to secure an intimate acquaintance with the people whom he hopes to help. One experience suffices to show him the folly of looking for good among so many hatreds. From this contact with the proletariat he gains an understanding of class hatred and becomes convinced that one can hope for nothing from the masses. Moreover he discovers that the Russian novels have deceived him in starting him upon a path which he can not follow.⁶¹ The religion of human suffering lies as far beyond our reach as any other creed. The failure of altruism to solve the problem teaches him that he must find happiness in the small circle of family affections and duties.

From altruism he turns to an analysis of his attitude toward religion. A friend who had once shared his opinions and who has since been reconverted to Protestantism points the way to escape from scepticism through the logical realization of the social and individual necessity for

⁵⁸ *Tatiana Léïlof*, p. 61.

⁵⁹ *Le Correspondant*, 25 juin, 10 juillet 1895.

⁶⁰ *Vide* Brieux, *Les Bienfaiteurs*; Lavedan, *Les Deux Noblesses*.

⁶¹ Hallays, *Journal des Débats*, 26 février 1889.

religion. He arrives at the conclusion reached a few years later by Paul Bourget.⁶² Confronted by this social need for faith, he found it through an act of the will.

The hero finds this difficult to comprehend and understands still less why his friend has returned to the Protestant faith, which he criticizes in words revealing that Rod still retained the aversion for Protestantism shown in *Côte à côte*.⁶³ Rod proved elsewhere that he shared his hero's opinions by parallel statements declaring that the Christian religion at present does not entirely satisfy our conscience because the aridity of the abstract Protestant faith repels us and the concrete faith of Catholicism does not lie within the reach of all.⁶⁴ Notwithstanding his condemnation of Protestantism, he admits that he may be nearer his friend's beliefs than appearances indicate.

He receives further light on the subject of religion through the apparition of his love who had died ten years before. The vision, who seems to have read Renan, characterizes religions as the error of limited brains attempting to imagine infinity. In spite of their illusory nature, we must not treat them as impostures. We must banish curiosity, and knowing not, seek not to know. "Savoir est la suprême duperie."⁶⁵

Experience has finally taught the hero that affection seems to hold the meaning of life. A desire comes to cease to question, and to take his wife and child to some tropical island where life would be as simple and pure as that depicted by Bernardin de Saint Pierre. The island vanishes when he thinks of the future of his child. For her he dreams of a typical *bourgeois* existence, happy in performing the ordinary duties of life.

The pessimist refuses to accept complete happiness. When affection offers its keenest joy an anguishing obsession of approaching death for his loved ones steals over him. Love seems futile when annihilation awaits our affection. Seeing after the tortures of death itself an afterward of uncertainty, he envies the believers who have found an answer to the problem.

During a burst of exaltation produced by hearing a high mass at Saint Sulpice he enjoys with all his senses a moment of faith. He longs to participate in worship, but ignorant of the ritual, he is forced to read his hymn in his own heart and a chant inspired by Schopenhauer and Renan mingles with the words of the pious.⁶⁶ He has only to banish his last doubts and find God in a humble prayer dictated by faith, but his lips

⁶² *Essais de psychologie contemporaine*, Préface, (septembre 1899), p. XII.

⁶³ P. 275. Cf. Dumur, *L'Ecole du dimanche*.

⁶⁴ *Revue Bleue*, 7 septembre 1889, p. 296.

⁶⁵ P. 283.

⁶⁶ Pp. 309-311.

alone murmur a *Pater noster*. His reason has refused to yield to his instinct and to his need for faith.

Amiel had said: "Savoir, aimer, et pouvoir, c'est là la vie complète."⁶⁷ Rod learned from Renan the uncertainty of knowledge. "Pouvoir" in religion does not lie within his power. The book *Vouloir et pouvoir*⁶⁸ which he undertook as the logical sequel to *Le Sens de la Vie*, he failed to finish, doubtless because he feared to have taken as autobiographical a work which did not sincerely represent his own beliefs. If Catholicism attracted him from the esthetic point of view, his Protestant training would forever keep him from a conversion like that of Huysmans. Rod's hero seems to have discovered one possible meaning of life in family affections and reaches a conclusion identical with that of Amiel. "Donner du bonheur et faire du bien, voilà notre loi, notre ancre de salut, notre phare, notre raison d'être."⁶⁹ Yet since the earlier work, he has undergone the influence of Tolstoy, and if he still preaches despair it is no longer that of the individual in solitude but a nobler melancholy resulting from the spectacle of human suffering and our inability to relieve it. We feel too with Lemaître⁷⁰ that Rod concludes life has a meaning only for those who believe and love. His pessimism therefore depends partly upon his failure to achieve faith. This same longing for belief appears in *La Transformation de l'idée de Dieu*.⁷¹ Rod elsewhere declared⁷² that tranquillity of mind requires illusions which we may take for certainties and that even though we may have liberated ourselves from religious beliefs, we cannot escape the need for religion. He might apply to himself his own description of Henri Warnéry as a religious soul and a free intelligence.⁷³

Le Sens de la Vie, perhaps to a greater extent than *La Course à la Mort*, presented an analysis of the state of mind of many of Rod's contemporaries.⁷⁴ Lemaître characterized the book as too true, and confessed having experienced many of the same sentiments. Coinciding with the aspirations of the moment,⁷⁵ it achieved a notable success and was crowned by the French Academy. Thus Rod vindicated his theory of intuitivism.

⁶⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 25.

⁶⁸ The fly leaf of *La Sacrifiée* (1892) announces *Vouloir et Pouvoir* as in preparation.

⁶⁹ Amiel, *op. cit.*, t. 2, p. 2.

⁷⁰ *Les Contemporains*, 5e série, p. 59.

⁷¹ *Cosmopolis*, Feb. 1898.

⁷² *Nouvelles études sur le XIXe siècle*, p. 76.

⁷³ *Revue Bleue*, 24 janvier 1903.

⁷⁴ Bunand, *Le Siècle*, 28 janvier 1889.

⁷⁵ "M. Rod fit le livre de tout le monde." Charbonnel, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

In *Les Trois Cœurs* (1890), the final novel of the intuitivist series, he endeavors to discredit self-analysis and to show man's duty to his family and to everyday life rather than to himself and the world of fancy represented by the poets of the past. Rod has here only partly succeeded in the application of his doctrine. If he created Richard Noral through intuition, thinking him a general type, he deceived himself, for Noral is as exceptional as the nameless hero of *La Course à la Mort*. Having formed him thus, he does with this unusual character show the workings of the human heart under certain circumstances. He proves likewise the point in his theory which condemns wholly selfish introspection. The epigraph taken from the *Imitation* contains the whole substance of *Les Trois Cœurs*. "Dès que quelqu'un se cherche soi-même, l'amour s'étouffe en lui." Knowing men only through the mirror of himself, Noral instinctively avoids his fellow creatures. Fascinated by the dreams of vanished poets, he deplores his own ignorance of passion and the selfishness of his individuality. He curses the century which has banished the great emotions of the past. He feels his soul still capable of love, but like the hero of *La Course à la Mort*, he knows that pleasure can only bring final disillusionment.

At this opportune moment, an American, Rose-Marie, arriving in Paris, expresses her willingness to renew their former friendship. Selfish and hardhearted, Richard deserts the affections of his wife and his little daughter Jeanne in order to cultivate his ego, no longer in futile introspection, but in action, in love and pleasure. Noral soon discovers that his love for Rose-Marie too has passed, or rather, might have existed and did not. This intuitivist Adolphe succeeds only in weakening the affection he already possessed and degrading his soul through lies and hypocrisy. As Anatole France said, "Richard Noral est un misérable, qui gâche à la fois le mariage et l'adultère et qui cherche Cléopâtre."⁷⁶ Noral's two victims have, however, something which he lacks,—the power to love. He finally extricates himself from a difficult situation by breaking both hearts for a third woman for whom he feels a strange affinity. Even so, he suspects that Madame d'Hays is only a pretext created by himself for the satisfaction of his ego. Rose-Marie discovers that she alone has loved, and heartbroken, she slips quietly into the ocean from her transatlantic liner. The love which Noral has just killed casts a shadow over his new passion. At this moment, his daughter Jeanne, whose resistance has been weakened by her mother's grief and her own unhappiness at her father's neglect, falls seriously ill. Richard abandons his egoism only too late and his daughter dies. This catastrophe brings him to his senses. Richard and his wife, united in suffering, feel that they have

⁷⁶ *La Vie litt.*, t. 3, p. 271.

much to forgive each other, although one can scarcely understand how Hélène could have acted differently toward this egoist who has fed his soul on the compositions of the Pre-Raphaelites and on the *Vita Nuova*.

Richard at last perceives his mistake, but instead of blaming himself, reproaches the poets whose dreams have influenced him. This theme Rod will study from the author's point of view in *Au milieu du Chemin*. Having destroyed his possibility of happiness, he perceives that the man of to-day loves, but differently, and that the powers of affection and devotion which he once possessed in his own heart were worth quite as much as Dante's ecstasy or the passion of Musset. Anatole France points out the true significance of *Les Trois Cœurs*⁷⁷ when he calls it a warning to fear egoism as the worst of evils and a lesson in simplicity and purity of heart. Thus the last of the intuitivist trio has its place in the idealistic movement of the time.

Intuitivism stands out in the work of Edouard Rod as his most original contribution to literature. He formulated a theory and applied it with sufficient success to be acclaimed the apostle of pessimism in *La Course à la Mort*. By the same method he expressed in *Le Sens de la Vie* the idealistic⁷⁸ aspirations of the epoch and came into prominence as one of the leaders, along with Paul Desjardins, of a neo-Christian movement.⁷⁹ While *Les Trois Cœurs*, with its study of the results of selfish introspection, fails to attain the same standard of excellence, it forms a valuable link in the proof of his theory.

However, if intuitivism has thus far more or less achieved its purpose, Rod could scarcely continue to find new themes for works of pure intuition.⁸⁰ He turns for the moment to a study of contemporary writers and the positive or negative nature of their influence in *Les Idées morales du temps présent*. Convinced of the necessity of fine examples to set before his fellows, he will analyze in the *études passionnelles* a series of superior men and women faced by the eternal conflict of life and love.

⁷⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 274.

⁷⁸ *Vide* Renard, "La Renaissance de l'idéalisme," *Critique de Combat*. Desjardins, *Le Devoir présent*. Rod, *Nouvelles études sur le XIXe siècle*, p. 282. Brunetière, *La Renaissance de l'idéalisme*.

⁷⁹ Charbonnel, *op. cit.*, p. 42. Lemaître, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁸⁰ Cf. Maurois, *Au pays des articles*.

III

ETUDES PASSIONNELLES

As Rod had in the intuitivist series renounced naturalism, so after *Les Trois Cœurs* he abandons the novel of introspection of which he recognized the limitations.¹ He agrees with Bourget that self-analysis constitutes a vice or at least a weakness deleterious to him who indulges in it.² Since writers communicate this contagion as Adrien Sixte imparted it to Robert Greslou, it becomes necessary, in order to suppress this evil in life, to banish it from the literature which propagates it. Convinced that the poison has profoundly affected contemporary letters, Rod attempts to administer an antidote by depicting in a series of *études passionnelles* characters of moral strength³ confronted by the conflict between love and duty. His method still remains that of psychological analysis, and although he would have us believe that he has abandoned introspection as a key to universal human nature, it would be more exact to say that his characters have ceased their speculations concerning the general meaning of life and now meet its individual problems. As I have shown elsewhere,⁴ their emotional behavior is largely determined by Rod's own reactions to a personal situation, and therefore depends upon the author's introspection and intuition. The study of the relations between Edouard Rod and André Gladès (Nancy Vuille) reveals the fact that he did, in this series of *études passionnelles*, elaborate in various fictional forms the conflict between love and the duties of life which constantly confronted the two writers from the period of Rod's professorship at Geneva until the death of Gladès.

Rod claims as his sole purpose in writing this group of novels the unprejudiced description of "les troubles semés dans la vie humaine par les jeux cruels de la passion."⁵ Passion which leads to murder, only to find the attainment of its goal thwarted by the voice of conscience, is the theme of *La Sacrifiée* (1892), the first of the *études passionnelles*. Rod shows us here that life presents tragic situations "dont tout le drame est intérieur, dont tous les fils sont dans la conscience, et qui pourtant nous remuent jusqu'à nos fibres les plus secrètes."⁶ The interest of the novel lies in the portrayal of the struggle taking place in the mind of Dr. Morgex, the "mercy killer" of the husband of the woman he loves.

¹ *Nouvelles études*, p. 36.

² *Les Idées morales*, p. 107.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

⁴ "Edouard Rod and André Gladès," *PMLA*, Dec. 1937, pp. 1170-1182.

⁵ *Aloïse Valérien*, Préface, pp. V-VI.

⁶ *La Sacrifiée*, p. 181.

For Rod's literary evolution this work is important not only as evidence of the influence⁷ of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, but also as an expression of Rod's interest in neo-Catholicism.⁸ Morgex, although still refusing rationally to accept the doctrine, still unbelieving, nevertheless submits to the dictates of the church and governs his life by them.

Like most men of his generation, Morgex had hated the priest as the instrument of superstition and as an anti-clerical had cursed him in the name of his trinity,—Progress, Science, and Truth. However, after his crime, his conscience refuses to let him rest, his ideas of right and wrong become completely confused, and the priest appears to him the only authority to whom to make final appeal. Although Morgex belonged by family tradition and early training to the Calvinistic church, his rupture with the reformed faith had been so complete that it did not occur to him to consult a Protestant minister. Remembering that Rod wrote *Côte à côte*, we find Morgex expressing the sentiments of his creator when he points out the weaknesses of Protestantism.⁹ He considers the priest much better qualified than the magistrate to pronounce judgment. Morgex accepts therefore without hesitation his condemnation by Abbé Borrant, "l'inévitable abbé qu'on est presque sûr de trouver depuis *Mensonges de Bourget*."¹⁰ After the anguish of all his struggles Morgex arrives at a restatement of the old Christian precept,—“en renonçant à soi-même on trouve plus de bien qu'on n'en aurait pu acquérir en laissant se développer son énergie et son esprit de conquête.”¹¹ He preaches Tolstoy without the faith of the Russian apostle. In addition to this revelation of Rod's neo-Catholicism, *La Sacrifiée* also suggests the future *études sociales* with its reflections on the injustice of society toward criminals¹² and its condemnation, as in *La Robe Rouge*, of a system which considers most highly the magistrate who secures the greatest number of convictions.¹³ This leads to a sentiment of pessimism, no longer the personal despair of *La Course à la Mort*, but a feeling imbued with social consciousness.

La Vie privée de Michel Teissier (1893) transfers to political life the conflict between passion and honor which forms the theme of *La Sacrifiée*. Not content like mediocre souls to compromise between love and duty,

⁷ P. 261.

⁸ Concerning the importance of this movement, cf. the statement of Brunetière. "Le néo-catholicisme est un fait." *La Science et la religion*, 1895, p. 40.

⁹ P. 288. Cf. *Le Sens de la Vie*, p. 275.

¹⁰ Renard, *op. cit.*, p. 371.

¹¹ P. 316. The doctrine of renunciation finds an exponent in Fogazzaro, whose work Rod admired. *Vide* Rod, "L'Evolution actuelle de la Littérature Italienne.—M. A. Fogazzaro," *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 juillet 1893.

¹² Pp. 34, 36, 39.

¹³ P. 63.

Teissier insists upon fighting to the end, and sacrifices both his political career and the happiness of his family. In his public life, Teissier holds lofty ideals, thus offering a marked contrast to the politician usually portrayed in the literature of the period.¹⁴ The energetic leader of a party striving for the moral regeneration of France, through an active program including the abolition of divorce, the reform of school, army, and society, the reconciliation of the republic with the Catholic church, a system in which family, church, and society form a sacred whole whose integrity must be respected, Teissier finds his private life in violent contradiction with his professed principles. He eventually abandons his conservative principles and secures a divorce to marry a girl whom he loves with romantic ardor.

With his habitual capacity for reflecting the life around him, Rod has placed this struggle of duty and passion against a background of political actuality which heightens the interest.¹⁵ Mgr. Russell sums up the opinion of the clerical party at that moment in recognizing the permanence of the republic and its tendency to assume a favorable attitude toward the church. Here we see the conservative Rod who feels the influence of Brunetière. Having, in *La Sacrifiée*, shown the tendency to return to authority, which characterized the work of Bourget, he does not come far from joining the ranks of the Catholics. These ideas are of course of secondary importance. For the author as well as for the reader the passion of Michel Teissier and its fatal consequences hold the center of attention.

The sequel to *La Vie privée de Michel Teissier*, *La Seconde Vie de Michel Teissier* (1894), portrays the unhappiness forecast at the end of the first book. As if he feared the consequences of painting too alluring a picture of passion, the author here completely silences his romanticism and the Protestant preaches a sermon on the wages of sin. If we may have felt that his sympathies lay with Michel in his love and struggles we now find that his attitude has changed entirely as Rod forces his hero to atone for his fault.

In *La Seconde Vie*, Rod's ideas on general social questions differ somewhat from those expressed in *La Vie privée*, particularly on the subject of divorce. In the earlier work, while he does not openly advocate divorce, he pleads like Hervieu in *Les Tenailles* for less difficulty in securing it when both husband and wife agree to separate. In the sequel, however, Rod seems rather to turn away from the institution of divorce although from different motives from those of Bourget.

¹⁴ For a discussion of the politician in literature *vide* Pellissier, *Etudes de litt. cont.*, 2e série, pp. 237-268.

¹⁵ Cf. Sabatier, *Journal de Genève*, 15 janvier 1893.

The critics detected a change of attitude toward Teissier on Rod's part in *La Seconde Vie de Michel Teissier*. Renard declared that Rod, after his apparent sympathy for Teissier in the first volume, has now applied an overstrict morality to his case.¹⁶ In connection with Rod's apparent shift of opinion, Sabatier speaks of a skillful moral indecision which prevents the author's talent from revealing itself in a definitive form.¹⁷ Wyzewa, praising the classic simplicity of the subject and the discreet art shown by Rod in the portrayal of his characters, alleges the influence of Tolstoy and points to Anna Karénine as Rod's model, seeing in Teissier as in Anna the victim of obedience to an unwise desire.¹⁸

That passion which, both for Teissier and Anna Karénine, brought unhappiness and defeat Rod was to study under a different aspect in his next novel, *Le Silence* (1894). In the development of the story, the author has diverged from the customary practice of novelists who disclose all the thoughts of their characters. The narrator produces in *Le Silence* entirely a novel of observation, presenting the personages and surrounding circumstances only as he sees them, with no effort to fill through artificial means the *lacunæ* contingent upon the incompleteness of direct observation and with mere indications of the hypothetical interpretations developed in his own mind by the course of events.¹⁹ Nevertheless, all the essential features appear so skillfully suggested that not once do we fail to divine what occurs in the hero's soul, while to the end, Kermoyan conceals his secret from us as well as from his friends.²⁰

Rod has chosen the characters of the usual triangle,—the misunderstood wife, the coarse, brutish husband, and Kermoyan, the sympathetic lover. *Le Silence* does not, however, relate a cheap tale of vulgar passion. Mme. Herdevin suffers in silence the indignities forced upon her by her husband's conduct and never reveals the existence of her relations with Kermoyan. The latter, through fear of compromising her reputation, keeps from his most intimate friends the knowledge of his passion, even after the death of his mistress.

A totally different tale on the same theme forms the second part of *Le Silence*. The originals of the characters were a Prussian officer and his mistress, whose husband he had killed in a duel. The lovers had fled to Switzerland where they lived for a time in seclusion and eventually disappeared.²¹ The characters Rod took with considerable exactitude but changed their nationality, making the man a French officer and the

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 374-390.

¹⁷ *Journal de Genève*, 25 février 1894.

¹⁸ *Revue Bleue*, 1894, t. I, p. 250.

¹⁹ *Le Silence*, p. 10.

²⁰ Wyzewa, *loc. cit.*, p. 56.

²¹ Tissot, *In Memoriam Ed. Rod*, pp. 118-120.

woman the wife of the subprefect of a garrison town, and transported the final scene to Weimar. The real novel begins where the true details passed beyond the range of the author's vision and left the rest to his imagination.

The nobility of character of the two lovers becomes evident only when Madame H. remains disfigured for life, as the result of an accident. This change in circumstances precipitates and renders more tragic the inevitable *dénouement*, the disappearance of their love. In their isolation from the world, M. de Sourbelles finds himself forced to feign a love which he can no longer feel. While he never reveals his true sentiments to his companion, the close communion of their spirits makes it impossible for him to conceal entirely the termination of his former passion, and she poisons herself that she may not see herself altogether hated.

Kermoyan's silence, self-imposed, has a scrupulousness and a conception of honor characteristic of a Corneille hero. M. de Sourbelles, whose silence is forced upon him by painful circumstances, for that reason seems a more tragic and at the same time a more nearly contemporary figure. The religion of human suffering finds no more effective gospel in Rod's work than in *Le Silence* and the book closes on a word of pity for mankind. If men wrong individuals or society in general, they punish themselves. Learning to know them, one forgives and sometimes pities them. Thus Rod's attitude has altered since the period of his introspective studies. Rather from the sympathetic observation of the souls of other men than from self-analysis, he concludes, does one begin to catch a glimpse of the true significance of life.

While Saintsbury condemns *Le Silence* as the worst book Rod ever wrote,²² the French critics on the contrary have praised it highly. Bourget,²³ Bordeaux,²⁴ and Lemaître²⁵ pronounce it a masterpiece, and others place it among his best works.²⁶ The author himself preferred it to any of his other novels.²⁷

Les Roches blanches (1895), which follows *Le Silence*, possesses a special significance as a connecting link between the studies of passion and the novels of Swiss life. Although from the period of the *débuts* with *Palmyre Veulard*²⁸ we perceive glimpses of Switzerland scattered through

²² *History of the French Novel*, vol. II, p. 546.

²³ *Pages de critique et de doctrine*, p. 315.

²⁴ *Pèlerinages littéraires*, p. 222.

²⁵ Letter dated 24 août 1910, quoted by Tissot, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

²⁶ Wyzewa, *loc. cit.*

²⁷ Unpublished letter from Mlle. Rod.

²⁸ *Palmyre Veulard*, pp. 95-197.

various portions of his work,²⁹ in *Les Roches blanches* for the first time the entire action had Rod's native land for its background. At the same time it continues the discussion of the problems of love and duty discussed in the two *Michel Teissier* and in *La Sacrifiée*. Yet it can scarcely be called a work of transition for there occurs no definite break in continuity of style comparable to that which took place at the time of the rupture with naturalism.

In *Les Roches blanches* for the first time Rod chooses a pastor as a hero. He had already sketched figures like M. Réval in *Palmyre Veulard* and M. Planel of *Côte-à-côte*. Now he makes Pastor Trembloz the central character of a successful struggle against passion. The action takes place in the gossip-loving town of Bielle, which represents Rod's birthplace, Nyon. Rod succeeds in creating true types, or rather in representing them, for he takes nearly all his characters from life. He selects those details which give the impression of reality, particularly in the case of such figures as the jovial mayor, sweating beneath the burden of his obesity,³⁰ the hatmaker³¹ who neglects his business for politics, the shrill-voiced, pessimistic notary,³² the sceptical Dr. Mathorel,³³ and a dozen other types inevitably produced by the environment of a small city like Nyon. Yet in spite of the multiplicity of personages, each possesses his own individuality. While he points out the foibles of the people of Bielle, Rod does so with indulgent good humor which shows his fundamental sympathy.³⁴ He displays none of the antipathetic pessimism of Flaubert. The description of the arrival of Pastor Trembloz at Bielle and his impressions of doubt and discouragement recall the ecclesiastical novels of Ferdinand Fabre.³⁵

Like the legendary lovers whose victory over earthly love had transformed them into two white rocks³⁶ devoid of all humanity, Trembloz eventually acquired a heart of stone after conquering his love for the aristocratic Mme. de Bussens. *Les Roches blanches* shows in Rod's work a tendency to accept Rousseau's belief in the rights of love, for while the moralist approves this repression of the natural instincts, the romanticist points out the disastrous effect. Trembloz, by refusing to yield, destroyed affection in his heart. Rod, in his way, condemns the ascetic ideal as does André Gide in *La Porte Etroite*.

²⁹ *La Femme d'Henri Vanneau*, pp. 131-142; *Le Sens de la Vie*, pp. 214-228; *Scènes de la vie cosmopolite*, "L'Idéal de M. Gindre," pp. 93-168; *Nouvelles Romandes*.

³⁰ P. 4.

³¹ P. 2.

³² P. 3.

³³ Pp. 58-59.

³⁴ Cf. Sabatier, *Journal de Genève*, 27 janvier 1895.

³⁵ Cf. Deschamps, *Le Temps*, 3 février 1895.

³⁶ Pp. 305-306.

Les Roches blanches, because of its accurate reproduction of the social life in a small city, received favorable criticism. Gaston Deschamps commended Rod for turning to his native soil for inspiration and pronounced it undoubtedly the best novel Rod had yet written.³⁷

The romanticism which led Rod to sympathize with rather than condemn the love of Trembloz becomes still more pronounced in *Dernier Refuge* (1896). In this work which is completely saturated with Wagnerian ideas of life, love, and death, Rod glorifies love triumphant overcoming the obstacles of life and seeking death as the ultimate summit of happiness. The Wagnerian inspiration of the novel has already been indicated in some detail.³⁸ The other significant fact to be retained is the position of the work as the logical climax reached in the evolution of Rod's treatment of the conflict of passion and duty.

After the culmination of the studies of passion reached in *Dernier Refuge*, Rod turned for a moment to the *études sociales* in *L'Innocente* and *Là-Haut* before presenting another story of love in *Le Ménage du Pasteur Naudié* (1898). His new novel adds the most human figure to the portraits of Protestant ministers. Having traversed his most violent period of revolt, the author has now abandoned his prejudice and presents an impartial, almost sympathetic picture of the Protestant world in La Rochelle, that old stronghold of the faith. Perhaps the most truly remarkable figure is that of the venerable Charles Naudié, a portrait of Rod's old teacher Charles Secrétan.³⁹ The real importance of *Pasteur Naudié* does not, however, lie so much in the study of Protestantism and the pastor as of the man. In the story of his misfortunes,⁴⁰ another example of disaster caused by love, Naudié joins Morgex, Teissier, Trembloz, and those other unhappy heroes of the novels of passion. A few years hence (1898) Pastor Mikils in Lemaître's Protestant play will say: "Mon caractère? ma profession? hélas! c'est d'être un homme, un pauvre diable d'homme. Qu'est-ce qu'un ministre de Dieu amoureux de sa femme?"⁴¹ That question Rod had already answered. He has further complicated the problem by introducing the themes for four or five novels. A widower with four children remarries. Jane, the stepmother, after the first rebuffs, no longer has the sympathy necessary to win the affection of her newly acquired family. A poor man weds a rich woman and in consequence finds himself reduced to a position of secondary importance in his own household. What is still more serious for a pastor, his worldly affairs

³⁷ *Loc. cit.*

³⁸ *PMLA*, Dec. 1937, pp. 1176-1177.

³⁹ Faguet made a curious comment in this respect. "Son père est une figure admirablement vraie, étonnamment forte à croire que c'est un portrait un peu idéalisé (et j'en suis sûr, sans le savoir)." *Revue Bleue*, t. X, 1898, p. 217.

⁴⁰ It is based upon the experiences of a cousin of the family.

⁴¹ *L'Ainée*, p. 123.

steal his time from the Lord's service. A man of forty-five marries a girl of twenty. Too tender, too anxious to please, not sufficiently masterful, he soon finds her love transformed to scorn, then almost hatred while she seeks elsewhere the passion which she has failed to discover in her own husband. A pastor marries a girl whose religious sentiment proves to be only a caprice. Any one of these subjects would have sufficed as the matter of a novel. By combining them all and stressing especially the incompatibility of temperament between the gentle, middle-aged pastor and his willful, capricious young wife, Rod has produced a most convincing tragedy of domestic life. After a silent struggle followed by open conflict between man and wife, a battle which inflicts a terrible martyrdom on Naudié, who is obliged to conceal his suffering from all, the union dissolves through Jane's open abandonment of her husband. Naudié, in order to atone for the past, somewhat melodramatically sacrifices his career and becomes a missionary. Thus love has brought him disaster no less than to Teissier and Trembloz.

With *Le Ménage du Pasteur Naudié*, Rod concludes for the moment his studies of the problems of love. *Au milieu du Chemin*, *Mademoiselle Annette*, and *L'Eau courante* separate *Pasteur Naudié* and *L'Inutile Effort*. *L'Inutile Effort* (1903) strikes a new note in the *études passionnelles* yet bears a greater resemblance to *La Sacrifiée* than to any of the other novels of this group. Since *La Sacrifiée*, the subject of love had predominated. In *L'Inutile Effort* Rod, appearing to have felt remorse for the pernicious influence which a work like *Dernier Refuge* might possibly exert, eliminates that element, portraying rather a conflict between conscience on the one hand and selfish and family interests on the other. Seeking his inspiration in Tolstoy's *Resurrection* and in a newspaper account of a crime,⁴² Rod produced in *L'Inutile Effort* a tense description of a struggle between a man and his conscience far more vibrant with tragic emotion than the Russian tale.⁴³ For both Tolstoy and Rod, two questions are involved: the fallibility of human justice and the moral responsibility of the man who attempts to evade the consequences of his own misconduct. In each case the struggle in the conscience of the protagonist constitutes the essential problem.

In the study of this moral and spiritual crisis, Rod's work shows a distinct superiority in certain respects. When Nekhudov has once decided to atone completely for the past, he becomes a fanatic guided in all his actions by a superhuman force.⁴⁴ Rod presents a more normal figure in Léonard Perreux, hesitating to take a step which may ruin a future

⁴² For a detailed relation of the facts, *vide* Bordeaux, *op. cit.*, pp. 233-236.

⁴³ Faguet, *La Revue Latine*, 25 nov. 1903, p. 652.

⁴⁴ Schinz, "Count Tolstoy and Edouard Rod," *Bookman*, Aug. 1903, p. 646.

career in order to redeem past actions. He risks compromising the fortunes of his family to save his former mistress, whom he had sent away upon learning of her approaching maternity. The Russian, on the other hand, encounters no such dilemma. After once reaching his decision, he finds no serious obstacles in his path, for the simplicity of Tolstoy's story almost causes the moral problem to disappear at this point. Rod, perceiving this weakness in Tolstoy's work, places Perreuse in a situation involving a continual struggle.

The question of the injustice of human justice, which Rod developed later in *Le Glaive et le Bandeau*, remains in both *Resurrection* and *L'Inutile Effort* one of secondary importance,⁴⁵ Tolstoy perhaps giving it more attention than Rod. If the scene of the trial in *Resurrection* could be accepted as an impartial portrayal of the methods of judicial procedure, this parody on justice through the agency of ignorant jurors presents a striking indictment of the entire system but nevertheless offers hope for the possibility of reform. One feels rather that the fault here lies in social conditions. Rod, on the contrary, assumes the more pessimistic attitude that, even with intelligent and conscientious English jurors who endeavor to render a fair verdict, humanity and its efforts are doomed to failure.

Certain criticisms of the technique and method of composition of *L'Inutile Effort* merit consideration. It has been said that Rod committed a serious technical error in placing the action of the novel, the trial of Françoise, in London, while the real problem of the novel, the inner struggle of Perreuse, occurs mostly in Paris where he remains until too late to accomplish anything to save an innocent victim from the gallows.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, it is precisely this geographical separation which renders so poignant the combat between Léonard's conscience, supported by his brother's efforts, and his baser nature encouraged by the arguments of his wife.

Henry Bordeaux criticized Rod for making the English jury condemn Françoise on what seems to us doubtful testimony and on her past life.⁴⁷ This objection Faguet meets by pointing out that those who make this criticism reason about the English jury as they would about the French, disregarding social differences.

As in all except his naturalistic novels, Rod describes in *L'Inutile Effort* characters honorable at heart. In Léonard's brother Raymond, almost a Hugo personage with his idealism imprisoned in a misshapen body, he creates a noble figure. Perreuse himself, not essentially bad, merely allows his selfishness to blind him to the possible consequences of his deeds.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 645.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 646.

⁴⁷ Bordeaux, *op. cit.*, pp. 236-237.

Mme. Perreuse defends the future of her family as would any respectable *bourgeoise*. Françoise, a pathetic figure, dies a martyr to the egoism of Perreuse, adding another victim to the group of *Sacrifiées*.

From this moral and psychological tragedy results a sentiment of pessimism and human helplessness in the grasp of the tragedy of life. Rod has succeeded in penetrating to the depths of the soul, depicting the pettiness of man, his incapability of accepting his moral obligations, and his failure to rise to the height of his noblest instincts when confronted by the tragic problems of existence.⁴⁸

In spite of its classification among the studies of passion, *L'Inutile Effort* had raised a serious social question. His next two works, *Un Vainqueur* and *L'Indocile*, fall entirely within the category of the *études sociales*, revealing Rod's increasing preoccupation with the problems of his time. After *L'Incendie* an emotional crisis in his own life leads him to add another volume to the *études passionnelles* in *L'Ombre s'étend sur la montagne* (1907). I have shown in the article mentioned above⁴⁹ that this entire novel is a literary transposition of the love of Rod and André Gladès, and that her death inspired its creation. Rod here portrays in one of his strongest novels what he had already experienced in life. As the twilight of life and love approached, life formed for two lovers a barrier which their loyalty could not pass and which death alone could destroy.

Faguet pointed out the analogy between this work and *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, employing it as a proof of Rod's increasing sympathy for Rousseau.⁵⁰ As Faguet admits, Rod doubtless had no intention of imitating Rousseau, but the two novels do present notable resemblances. The philosopher Jaffé, in his earlier attitude toward the relations of his wife and Lysel, recalls M. de Wolmar and his conduct toward St. Preux and Julie. The inevitable consequences of this situation, which Rousseau merely indicated, Rod develops completely. Rod, like Rousseau, finds the only possible *dénouement* in the death of his heroine. Bourget detects in this novel an attempt to produce with literature the effect of music, and compares the phrases of the description of Lysel's playing to the melodies of Chopin and Schumann.⁵¹ For him *Le Silence* and *L'Ombre s'étend sur la montagne* are Rod's masterpieces.

The necessity of reconciling love and truth finds further expression in *Aloÿse Valérien* (1908), the concluding volume of the *études passionnelles*. Rod the Protestant and Rod the romancer meet in this volume, showing both the fatality which directs love and the truth of the precept which

⁴⁸ Ernest-Charles, *Rev. Bleue*, 1903, t. XIX, p. 507.

⁴⁹ Note 4.

⁵⁰ *Rev. des deux mondes*, 15 février 1910, p. 878.

⁵¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 316, 317.

declares that the sins of the mothers shall be visited upon the children. Mme. Valérien, after devoting the years of her widowhood to making her daughter the kind of woman she herself should have been, discovers with horror that the same sort of illegitimate love which led to the death of both her lover and her husband has already gained a foothold in her daughter's life. All her efforts, reinforced by those of M. Mazelaine, the guardian of Agnes and the father of Florian the lover, prove futile. The young couple are driven irresistibly to an open rupture with social conventions.

Rod adopts in *Aloÿse Valérien* Corneille's method of making all his characters face the same central problem. Opposed to the romantic lover, his father presents the conservative point of view. The latter indubitably expresses certain opinions, but not decisions, of the author. He declares that the religious and moral principle of monogamy determines the family, not for the purpose of assuring the transmission of wealth to legitimate children, but because the Deity has so willed it. He also rejects the doctrines of Ibsen which had been in special favor in France during the preceding decade. In Mazelaine's opinion, a woman's life belongs to her children and she has no right to seek her own personal happiness at their expense.⁵²

The originality of *Aloÿse Valérien* lies in its failure to offer any definite conclusion to the love problem of Florian and Agnes, for the *dénouement* leaves the reader as well as Mme. Valérien still in doubt as to whether they deserve pity or blame. We remain ignorant of their ultimate fate, which may bring them expiation, remorse, or pardon. The romantic who wrote *Dernier Refuge* has here turned sceptic. Nor does an attitude of resignation accompany his doubt. It is rather with a pessimistic conviction of the necessity for constant conflict between the social order and the individual that he presents a problem which he dares not attempt to solve.⁵³ Thus the last of the *études passionnelles* reveals, as did *La Sacrifiée* of sixteen years earlier, Rod's fundamental pessimism which, through the spectacle of the misfortunes of mankind, becomes akin to the religion of human suffering.

Throughout this group of psychological studies, Rod's work shows a continuous struggle between the moralist and the romanticist. Rod comes not far from sharing the point of view of religious morality which he had explained in *Les Idées morales*,⁵⁴ the simple application of the Decalogue. In *La Sacrifiée* he had chosen the case in which one might best justify murder in order to condemn the conduct of Morgex. In those novels

⁵² Pp. 124-126.

⁵³ Schinz, "The Crisis of the Novel in France," *The Forum*, Jan. 1909.

⁵⁴ *Les Idées morales*, p. 117.

studying more directly the problem of love, he depicts few cases of actual adultery, in this respect differing from Bourget, Anatole France and many of his other contemporaries. Where he has done so, as in *Le Silence* and *Dernier Refuge*, he does not deal with a vulgar *liaison*, but with a deeply romantic passion. The romanticist seems to have defeated the moralist here as in *L'Ombre s'étend sur la montagne*. Nevertheless, considering the group as a whole, one finds no definite conclusion. Having sought in his earlier work the meaning of life, he still continues to investigate its problems without advancing a final solution.

IV

SWISS AND PROVINCIAL LIFE

Les Roches blanches had disclosed a new phase of Rod's talent. Not only had he seemed distinctly out of his element in describing the setting for his naturalistic novels, but he had failed as well in his attempt to give the requisite touch of reality to the political atmosphere of *Michel Teissier*.¹ When he turned to Switzerland, he chose a *milieu* which he could render in natural colors for reasons he himself acknowledges.² However French Rod may have become through long years of residence in Paris,³ he always remained politically and emotionally loyal to the country of his birth. After his return from Geneva, he leads two existences, so to speak, spending his winters in Paris and the summers in Switzerland, a life which results in two parallel streams of literary production.

In his portrayal of the manners and customs of the Vaudois country, Rod produced a group of novels which entitle him to a creditable place among the regionalists. To the provincial Frenchman, the crossing of the frontier may give cause to exclude Rod from this class of French writers, but to a Parisian the *pays de Vaud* seems perhaps no more remote than the Quercy of Pouvillon, the Cévenol of Ferdinand Fabre or the Auvergne of Ajalbert. From the *Nouvelles Romandes* (1890) to *Le Pasteur pauvre* (1910) extends a series of portrait albums and sketch books characterized by simplicity of plot and accuracy of description. With few exceptions, Rod takes his figures from life, painting them with such exactitude that one acquainted with the originals had no difficulty in identifying them.⁴

Nyon we have already seen faithfully described under the name of Bielle as the setting for *Les Roches blanches*. *L'Innocente* (1897) proves equally successful in portraying the habits, especially the mental behavior, of a small town. In his analysis of the temperament of the peaceful *bourgeois*, Rod reveals their defects quite as clearly as did Maupassant in his provincial tales or Balzac in the *Scènes de la vie de province*. He shows especially the viciousness of their curiosity, which criminally destroys the happiness of Countess Micheline without violating any law or even occasioning remorse on the part of the guilty.⁵ The gossips make no direct

¹ Deschamps, *Le Temps*, 3 février 1895.

² *Nouvelles études*, p. 21.

³ Cf. *Reflets d'Amérique*, p. 80.

⁴ Mademoiselle Rod assured me that she often recognized characters, and upon asking her father if he had not described a certain person, invariably received an affirmative reply.

⁵ *L'Innocente*, p. 62.

accusation; they merely employ a discreet and completely innocent method of slander.⁶ The unexplained suicide of the countess' husband delivers this charming but too happy creature into the hands of the anonymous tormentor, and the morbid imagination of the townspeople, perverted by reading newspaper novels, pictures her as a dangerous and vicious monster. The children, following the inhuman example of their elders, torment her sickly son Anthony and finally cause his death. Only when they have thus completely ruined her life do the criminals, entirely unconscious of their guilt, experience some pity for their victim.

The simplicity of the narrative, rendered more effective through its recital from a child's point of view, throws into deeper relief the basic thought. In spite of the nobility of character displayed by the few faithful friends of the countess, the novel conveys a sense of the universality of evil and the despairing realization of the fundamental badness of humanity. *L'Innocente* therefore holds a double place in Rod's work as an expression of his pessimism and as a study of provincial manners.⁷

Like *L'Innocente*, *Pernette* (1904)⁸ belongs rather to the studies of provincial and Vaudois life than to the intuitivist group.⁹ While the element of psychology enters into the description of the gradual evolution of the attitude of the sexagenarian mayor, Pierre Antoine Crevoux, toward his young wife, that problem of love and jealousy is so inextricably bound up with the actions of the inhabitants of Monthodin that the interest lies largely in narration and description instead of in character analysis. Crevoux traverses all the stages of passion from profound love to violent hatred. Although he braves public opinion by marrying Pernette, a girl of worthless ancestry, he falls prey to doubts aroused by false accusations. Anonymous letters sent by the neighborhood gossip foster Crevoux's suspicions, which he thinks confirmed by the premature birth of the child. Circumstantial evidence outweighs Pernette's protestations of innocence and she finds herself made the household slave and given over to the most merciless punishment. Crevoux aggravates his tortures of jealousy by the thought that the results of his own lifelong efforts will pass into the hands of an interloper and that the lie¹⁰ which admits the presence of another's child in his house will ruin his family integrity. Pernette, a hardier soul than Countess Micheline, has enough faith in the eventual triumph of right to endure all her trials, a confidence vindicated after months of almost unbearable torment. Thus Rod has here reached

⁶ P. 46.

⁷ *Revue Bleue*, t. VII, 1897, p. 32.

⁸ Written at Paris, Oct.-Dec. 1901.

⁹ Rod had placed *Pernette* in the same category as *La Course à la Mort* in the classification published with *Aloÿse Valérien*.

¹⁰ Cf. *Le Glaive et le Bandeau*, p. 59.

a happier conclusion than in *L'Innocente*, demonstrating that occasionally at least innocence can withstand or rise above the attacks of slander in a provincial town.

Pernette, although Rod classed it with his novels, appeared as one of a series of *Nouvelles Vaudoises*. Within the compass of the *nouvelle* he also condensed the matter of a novel in *Luisita* (1903),¹¹ a tale naturalistic in content, although the sobriety of style removes it from the category of *Palmyre Veulard*. Rod has depicted with his customary veracity the existence of a small town where each man knows his neighbor's business, where wine growers love their vineyards as their lives but accept with philosophical resignation the ruin of the year's harvest by hail,¹² where life though simple appears none the less intense. The tragedy moves swiftly in this little village of Borins, located in the rich vineyard section of La Côte, under the guardianship of the Jura and the Alps. The arrival of an exotic creature, Luisita, the Argentine cousin of the Baudruz, disconcerts the entire town and results in the murder of one cousin by his brother. In the bitter rivalry between his two sons for the affection of this charming foreigner, M. Baudruz attempts to arrange matters by marrying Luisita to the ridiculous young schoolmaster. Pierre Baudruz, although married, conceives a brutal passion for this girl of fifteen. His brother Gaspard, who loves quietly but no less passionately, threatens to commit suicide if his father gives Luisita to another. Pierre's drunken attack on Luisita precipitates a crisis. As she cries for help, Gaspard comes to her rescue and in the struggle Pierre stabs him. Luisita disappeared the day after Gaspard's funeral and several years later was living in a large city where men continued to kill each other for her sake. In *Luisita* Rod has given us a true *étude passionnelle* in a Vaudois setting, showing in more elemental form than in *Michel Teissier* the disastrous effects of passion in the lives of men.

While *Pernette*, *Luisita*, and especially *L'Innocente* emphasize the defects of the society described, in *Là-Haut* (1897) Rod by his own admission has presented a more idealistic picture,¹³ attempting for the Swiss Alps¹⁴ what George Sand had done for Berry. He had originally conceived the book as an Alpine idyll in four parts, each of which should describe the charm of a different season. To accomplish that task he considered it essential to spend an entire year in the Alps, a luxury beyond his means at that time.¹⁵ The novel therefore developed along different

¹¹ Written at Paris, Feb.-March 1900.

¹² Cf. Fabre, *Taillevant*, p. 224.

¹³ Dédicace, p. VI.

¹⁴ Cf. *François le Champi*, p. 13.

¹⁵ Tissot, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

lines, emerging as a combination of patriotic hymn,¹⁶ a glorification of a passing civilization, and a study of the regeneration of a soul through contact with the wholesome and simple life of the mountains.

Rod places his story in the High Alps in the little Valaisan town of Vallanches, which has thus far escaped the contaminating influences of modern life. Connecting the existence of this remote spot to the life of the nation, he reveals the outstanding qualities of the Swiss¹⁷ and expresses his admiration for their pride in national integrity,¹⁸ their love of simplicity and their persevering industry. In three picturesque scenes he symbolizes national, cantonal, and communal solidarity: the celebration of the national holiday typifies the fraternal spirit of the united country; the *fête des vignerons*¹⁹ portrays the collective life and traditions of a canton; the ceremony of the blessing of the tombs indicates the communion of the living with past generations.

In spite of this sentiment of the continuity of tradition, there comes a definite rupture between the old and the new. This conflict of two opposing civilizations,²⁰ one old and picturesque, the other sordidly commercial, forms the main theme of *Là-Haut*. The conservative element which constitutes one of Rod's salient characteristics guides him as he laments with Volland the encroachment of modern life with its railroads and tourist hotels.²¹ At first the villagers, wary and suspicious, seem disposed to fight bitterly, but the forces opposing them year by year gain ground before our eyes. Ultimately Providence intervenes. The conflagration which destroys part of old Vallanches with its secular châteaux appears a manifest sign that they must rebuild on the ruins a modern village offering accommodations for tourists. Even yet they are not entirely ready to renounce their present manner of life. Only through intimidation and the liberal flow of wine does the promoter secure the authorization to construct the railroad.

As in the case of Toussaint Lumineau and his sons,²² the attitudes of Clêvoz, called "Vieille Suisse," and his son Gaston symbolize the passing of the old order. Through Vieille Suisse, Rod expresses his recognition of the importance of the collectivity rather than the individual.²³ Vieille Suisse, puzzled and helpless in the new current, leaves matters to Gaston, who razes the old châteaux, spends all they possess and even borrows money

¹⁶ P. 199.

¹⁷ Sabatier, *Journal de Genève*, 14 février 1897.

¹⁸ Cf. *La Fête des Vignerons*, p. 51.

¹⁹ *Le Temps*, 8, 10 août 1889 gives Rod's account of the fête of that year which he utilized as the background for a chapter of *Là-Haut*.

²⁰ Cf. *Reflets d'Amérique*, p. 113.

²¹ *Conférence sur un village alpestre*, p. 17.

²² Bazin, *La Terre qui meurt*.

²³ P. 145.

to build a modern hotel. Eventually Rarogne, the modern robber baron, secures the establishment for a fraction of its actual cost, and Vieille Suisse, completely ruined, dies in a wretched hovel.

Subordinate to the principal ²⁴ theme of the social aspect of two conflicting ages runs the tale of the regeneration of Sterny through the revelation of this world of hardworking people, and his winning of Madeleine, whom he meets at Vallanches on successive seasons. Rod here studies a case of the influence of environment, as he had attempted to do in his earliest work, and having chosen more idealistic surroundings, achieves regeneration rather than the degeneration characteristic of his naturalistic heroes. The mountains play a part in his metamorphosis, but it is in participating in the life of the people that he actually effects the transformation. The ceremony of the blessing of the tombs and the *fête des vigneron*s reveal to him the poetry of tradition and the sacredness of humble toil, and leave him with a passionate aspiration for a life of usefulness.²⁵

In addition to the note of patriotism, the poetic cult of the past, and the praise of simple living, *Là-Haut* presents special interest as an expression of Rod's attitude toward nature, which, although differing from that of Rousseau, DeVigny, or Mme. de Noailles, still resembles that of each. He does not here envisage nature exclusively as a symbol and a setting, but conceives of it too as an actor capable of playing a role in the drama of life. The flowers and trees he paints possess nearly human characteristics. The mountain especially becomes almost a living creature and the object of a passionate adoration on the part of Volland. Volland's nature worship, less ecstatic than that of the Comtesse de Noailles, possesses more depth and quiet dignity. Rod doubtless took as the original of this portrait Emile Javelle, a Frenchman who settled at Vevey. Always seeing the Dent du Midi, he fell violently in love with it, even to the point of obsession, and devoting his life to the contemplation of its beauty and the conquering of its almost inaccessible heights, he became the first to scale two of its five peaks.²⁶ Javelle did not, however, meet the glorious death of Volland. The mountain in *Là-Haut* is Hervieu's *Alpe homicide* and causes the death of her lover at the end of his long and difficult ascent. Thus nature becomes a tomb, as proclaimed by DeVigny, but only after inspiring human admiration and devotion. Under Rod's pen, the mountain assumes the qualities of an animate being.²⁷ "L'énorme

²⁴ Cf. *Reflets d'Amérique*, p. 97.

²⁵ P. 193.

²⁶ *Conférence sur un village alpestre*, p. 16. Cf. "E. Javelle et l'Alpinisme," *Gazette de Lausanne*, 26 décembre 1891.

²⁷ Cf. *Au milieu du Chemin*, p. 223.

montagne, à cette heure, semblait vivre d'une vie active et rapide, d'une vie personnelle, presque humaine."²⁸

The fatal devotion of Volland, the passing of old Vallanches, and the purification of Stern's soul, all have as a background a realistic portrayal of Alpine life with its survivals of legends like that of the Matze²⁹ and of such traditional ceremonies as the blessing of the flocks and the festival of the wine growers. We see the women clattering along in their wooden shoes to wash the family linen in the community pool; we watch the aged men resting on the bench beside the cemetery wall; we join the merry gatherings of mountain youths and maidens;³⁰ in short we actually live in Vallanches.

This faithful and sympathetic portrait, while escaping the dullness of Pereda's *Peñas Arriba*, proves perhaps less successful as a novel than the rural scenes of Thomas Hardy or George Eliot. This superiority of the English works is due primarily to a gift of humour which lends them a certain charm not found in the sterner depiction of the more rugged life of the Alps. Rod's few attempts at humour do not possess spontaneity.³¹ *Là-Haut* also lacks the idyllic simplicity of George Sand's rustic tales.

Critical opinion varies concerning the merits of *Là-Haut*. Sabatier, while admitting its worth as a work of patriotism and admiring the fresh charm of its wholesome poetry,³² criticizes Rod for his failure to give a complete and distinct picture of the life he describes, a point well taken in respect to the few Protestant types³³ introduced. One can scarcely agree, however, with Sabatier's statement that the characters lack flesh, blood and soul. Faguet uses such terms as "des types observés de très près . . . bien vivant, et tout plein de vraie et de reconnaissable rumeur humaine."³⁴ Faguet also commends Rod's taste in his limited use of mountain descriptions. In fact, although the mountains always dominate the horizon, Rod has contented himself with a few presentations of outstanding scenes and glimpses at various moments of the day.³⁵ Faguet begins by suggesting that he finds *Là-Haut* written "un peu à la manière des romans russes" and presently declares it "tout à fait un roman russe." While Rod's work may not possess the broad scope of a Tolstoy novel, he has followed to a certain degree and perhaps with more attempt at artistry the method of the author of *War and Peace*. His admitted idealiza-

²⁸ P. 105.

²⁹ P. 60.

³⁰ Cf. *La Terre qui meurt*.

³¹ Pp. 51, 86, 172, 211, 219.

³² *Journal de Genève*, 14 février 1897.

³³ Pp. 45, 163.

³⁴ *Propos littéraires*, pp. 72-73.

³⁵ Pp. 33, 36, 73, 101, 112, 157, 286.

tion prevents him from attaining that completeness of reality which Tolstoy seems to have achieved. What the two novelists hold most in common, derived partly at least from Rousseau, is their belief in the essential dignity of manual labor and their faith in the fundamental goodness of man when uncorrupted by civilization. Both of these principles will find expression in *Mademoiselle Annette*.

The influence of Tolstoy, evident in Rod's work since *Le Sens de la Vie*, appears to have dominated *Mademoiselle Annette* (1901) more than any of his other novels. While taking exception to a certain exaggeration in Tolstoy's criticism of the present state of society, Rod had pronounced his moral doctrine irrefutably logical.³⁶ In *Mademoiselle Annette* he almost exactly illustrates his interpretation of the remedy which the Russian author prescribed for the evils of the world, a remedy found only in the complete sacrifice of the individual to his fellows in a pure, humble life.³⁷

Remodeling the episode of *Mademoiselle*, the merit of which partly explains the awarding of a French Academy prize to *Le Sens de la Vie*, Rod chooses as a setting the little city of Bielle. We immediately recognize characters already encountered in *Les Roches blanches*; and incidental criticisms of the Darbyites³⁸ assist still further in establishing an atmosphere familiar to a student of Rod's works. The central figure, Mademoiselle Annette, devotes her entire life to the service of others. She hides her broken heart when her prospective father-in-law cancels the engagement of his son and Annette because of her father's bankruptcy. Remaining in Bielle to care for the paralytic grandfather when the other members of the family seek a new life in Canada,³⁹ she continues to teach the school of which Rod retained so many pleasant memories.⁴⁰ Later when the Americanized uncle installs her in the finest villa in the vicinity, she still sacrifices her own comfort, adopting her godson, a halfwitted, diseased creature, and giving shelter to the prodigal Jules, who has returned home to die.

From this simple story of Swiss life, the author draws two lessons: first, that the spirit of sacrifice is the greatest of the virtues; Nicolle expresses Rod's second conclusion after observation of his brother Adolphe, the gardener, with his humbler but happier conception of life. The best work, admits the rich man, is that which involves the greatest fatigue⁴¹

³⁶ *Les Idées morales*, p. 254.

³⁷ For criticisms *vide* Bordeaux, *Pèlerinages littéraires*, p. 224; Beaunier, *Revue Bleue*, 20 juillet 1901.

³⁸ Pp. 19, 49.

³⁹ Cf. *Reflets d'Amérique*, p. 70.

⁴⁰ *Scènes de la vie Suisse*, p. 116.

⁴¹ Cf. *La-Haut*, p. 23.

and increases the store of the essentials of life. With Pastor Trembloz he maintains that we should measure the value of occupations by their immediate usefulness to society. Such praise of the humble toil of life logically leads to a contrast of the past with the present,⁴² with the conclusion reached in *Là-Haut* and *Au milieu du Chemin*,—the inferiority of the present.⁴³ However, the spirit of sacrifice does not necessarily clash on all points with the new spirit of conquest.⁴⁴ With the impressions of his voyage to America still fresh in his mind, Rod offers an idealistic interpretation of American individualism of the rugged variety.⁴⁵ While admitting the value of effort, Rod insists that force alone is an animal quality, requiring other and finer qualities to regulate it. Nicollet, through his final words, and Annette, through a life of deeds, teach the glory of sacrifice and the joy of a tranquil existence. Even the bedraggled butterfly Jules delivers his little homily in praise of the native heath.⁴⁶ Tolstoy is therefore the most important source of this work. The student of Schopenhauer has not entirely vanished from the scene, although we find him perhaps inclined to accept with resignation the inequalities and the injustices of life.⁴⁷

These hardships of life, partly determined by an unjust fate, Rod studies in *L'Eau courante* (1902), a story of Swiss peasants with their complete helplessness in business and their resulting financial difficulties. This novel, based on the disastrous adventure of a family known personally by Rod, presents an example of the best qualities of his art,—simplicity of plot and directness of narration combined with profundity and exactness of observation. The Bertigny family depend for their living upon their sawmill. Sickness and misfortune harass them year after year. Unable to obtain money from his avaricious father-in-law, Bertigny is forced to appeal to a village money lender,⁴⁸ who suddenly creates a mirage of prosperity through the possibility of the development of the water power of the Arne. Louis' son dams the stream to convince their rivals that, since the river rises on their land, they own the water. This at once involves the family in serious litigation. Thus the hopeless struggle continues until at last the property must be sold to pay the debts. Bertigny, in despair at the loss of his inheritance, after drinking several glasses of absinth, sets fire to the buildings and drowns himself in the pond.

⁴² Cf. *Reflets d'Amérique*, p. 114.

⁴³ P. 312.

⁴⁴ Vogüé's *Le Maître de la mer* contrasts this new spirit of conquest with the older European tradition. Vide also Brieux, *La Française*, *Les Américains chez nous*.

⁴⁵ P. 297.

⁴⁶ P. 140. Cf. *Là-Haut*, p. 8.

⁴⁷ P. 122. Cf. *Un Vainqueur*, p. 382.

⁴⁸ Cf. the usurer Malgrison in *Le Chevrier* of Fabre and Rigon, the money lender in *Les Paysans* of Balzac.

Rod scarcely seems to have intended to do more than relate a tragic tale. Yet one also finds here a condemnation of the ruthlessness of justice, a theme treated likewise in *L'Inutile Effort* and *Le Glaive et le Bandeau*. One figure stands out in bright relief because of his freshness of spirit and his common sense. "Le père Biolle," almost a Rabelaisian character, serves as justice of the peace at Luville. His method of adjusting cases out of court seldom fails. He invites the litigants to visit his wine cellar, and while discoursing at length upon the expense entailed by lawsuits and suggesting various compromises, he makes the adversaries pause at each barrel to drink three glasses. The cellar accomplishes wonders and those who enter it as bitter enemies usually leave it arm in arm, offering mutual and necessary support.⁴⁹ This good-humoured satire on justice contrasts with the more serious study of the novels dealing specifically with social problems.

In *L'Eau courante*, as a critic⁵⁰ points out, Rod has painted a complete and accurate picture of Swiss rural types, who might also be French peasants with all their weaknesses and foibles, their love of the land of their fathers, their acquisitiveness, their ignorance of legal procedure, their implicit faith in the wisdom of those who pretend to know, and finally, their strong sense of family ties. He has undoubtedly given a truer representation of country life than did Zola in *La Terre*. The familiar narrative style, almost giving the illusion of a recital by a countryman, compares favorably with the linguistic compromise adopted by George Sand in *François le Champi*.

L'Eau courante presents a typical example of Rod's peasant novels because of its theme of the unhappy rustic who allows himself to become entangled in inextricable difficulties. None of these tales is more tragic than that of Eloi Vallamand, the hero of *L'Incendie* (1906). This village drama, accompanied by an invisible chorus of gossip, stands out against a realistic setting of provincial life. Rod portrays industrious, sensible folk, human ants striving to fill their granaries and bequeath property to their offspring.⁵¹ In this environment one would scarcely expect to find much of the romantic temperament, but this trait governed Vallamand throughout his life, making him its first victim. His willingness to respond to the unusual idea helped to make a criminal of a fundamentally good man. Pressed for money because of two unprosperous years following a costly escapade of his son Maurice, Vallamand sets fire to an old shed in order to secure the insurance money. His Darbyite neighbor, Boudry, injured while assisting in extinguishing the blaze, has

⁴⁹ Pp. 152-154.

⁵⁰ Ernest-Charles, *Les Samedis Littéraires*, p. 69.

⁵¹ P. 6.

seen him commit the deed and practices systematic blackmail, forcing Vallamand to pay for silence in land, hay, and other crops as well as money. Boudry strikes the final blow by refusing to consent to the marriage of his son Paul with Vallamand's daughter. In spite of Mélanie's condition, her father himself must withhold his consent. Vallamand knows no peace on earth and dies with a lie on his lips, telling Mélanie that Boudry will accuse him falsely after his death. The villainy of Boudry would appear almost incomprehensible did we not know of his Darbyite affiliation. After *Mademoiselle Annette* and *L'Eau courante* we anticipate nothing good from any of the sect in a novel by Edouard Rod, and indeed, Rod never wrote anything more bitter against the Darbyites than *L'Incendie*, a novel in that respect comparable to Daudet's indictment of cant and hypocrisy in *L'Evangéliste*.

A measure of indulgence characterizes his treatment of the Protestants in *Le Pasteur pauvre* (1911). This novel, published posthumously, holds a unique place among the tales of Vaudois life. Starting with the episode of *La Vigne du Pasteur Cauche* (1904) it gradually developed⁵² into a complete sketch, approximating a caricature, of this strange figure. It reveals a phase of Rod's personality seldom evident in his writing, for although his intimate friends bear witness to the strain of gayety which enlivened his conversation, the more serious side of his mind almost invariably directs his pen. This simple story, the last of the series, with its gentle, mocking irony similar to that of Anatole France, shows a mellowness and sympathetic sparkle totally absent from his other Swiss scenes.

While Rod never wrote an ecclesiastical novel, he has portrayed an interesting group of pastors comparable to the priests of Ferdinand Fabre. Among these pastors we observe a divergence of type almost as wide as that found in Louis Dumur's caricatures of the preachers of Geneva:⁵³ Réval, indulgent and fond of drinking;⁵⁴ Planel, damning his own soul and closing the gates of heaven to his proselyte;⁵⁵ Trembloz, winning a doubtful victory over his passion;⁵⁶ and Naudié, learning the bitterness of unrequited love.⁵⁷ Réval, sketched in a few strokes, offers merely a passing interest.⁵⁸ The others prove that the assumption of ecclesiastical garb does not make a saint.

⁵² Mlle. Rod relates that Pastor Cauche became a kind of family character whom they discussed as an actual person, wondering what adventures could be contrived for him.

⁵³ *Op. cit.*

⁵⁴ *Palmyre Veulard.*

⁵⁵ *Côte-à-côte.*

⁵⁶ *Les Roches blanches.*

⁵⁷ *Le Ménage du Pasteur Naudié.*

⁵⁸ *Vide also Contes italiens, Bibliothèque Universelle, décembre 1909.*

In the case of Pastor Cauche, too much occupied with parental cares to indulge in intrigues, his vocation does determine his character. He constantly experiences the difficulties usually encountered by the excessively virtuous. His strict application of Christian rules of conduct finds little favor in the eyes of his parishioners. The natives of a wine producing country look with suspicion upon a man who, to convert a drunkard, destroys the fruitful vineyard bequeathed him by his father and plants potatoes. In his next parish at St. Presles in the High Alps, a community of sanatoriums, he falls into disgrace by objecting to the dangers of infection encountered in the communion service. His simplicity reveals itself still further in his attitude toward the worldly success of his daughter Eveline under the patronage of an American multi-millionaire; he considers her engagement at the Opéra-Comique a moral catastrophe. When her death makes him a wealthy man, he accepts the millions only after protests and to rescue his other children from the evil that would befall them should they inherit the money in his stead. He does not long survive this crowning misfortune.

The lesson which comes from his experience we find in the advice given to him by his superior, Jean-Louis Testard: "Les saints, voyez-vous, ils ont fini leur temps . . . vivez donc comme les autres, si vous voulez qu'ils vous laissent tranquille!"⁵⁹ Although Pastor Cauche lacks the violence of Dorgelès's Saint Magloire, his case demonstrates quite as clearly the impossibility of reconciling modern life and Christian principles. Rod, even in his lighter vein, never escaped entirely from his innate philosophy of despair.

At a certain moment in his career, Rod, in defining the novel, declared: "Il est, il doit être la reproduction vivante d'un morceau de la vie."⁶⁰ In this respect and also judged by Stendhal's figure of the mirror carried along the highway, the group of works just discussed probably offers the best proof of his literary skill, a fact explained largely by the greater emphasis placed upon observation as opposed to imagination. Notwithstanding his success as a regionalist, Rod could not limit his activity to this genre. "Je n'entends pas m'arrêter au bord de la route, et tenir immobile mon petit miroir, pour y regarder toujours la même branche d'arbre ou le même pan de colline. Je veux marcher à travers des aspects variés."⁶¹ This desire for inclusiveness, as well as the sense of social consciousness already frequently referred to, explains the composition of the final series relating to social problems.

⁵⁹ Pp. 232, 236.

⁶⁰ *Nouvelles études*, p. 23.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

V

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Edouard Rod never held himself aloof from the life around him.¹ His interest in social problems, shown even during the naturalistic period, supplies the dominant motive for his remaining novels. Of this group, *Au milieu du Chemin* (1900), the first in date, marks a turning point in Rod's career. Like Dante, for whom Rod always expressed admiration,² and like his hero Clarencé, Rod reaches the middle point of the path of life and finds himself within a dark forest. Always anxiously seeking the meaning of life, Rod asks himself what he has thus far accomplished. He had frequently expressed a fear that the influence of his novels might prove harmful. In an effort to determine the value of his work to society, he therefore undertakes a study of the question of the moral responsibility of the author.

Rod has not given us a simple story, but rather combined it with a moral treatise, perhaps to the detriment of both.³ He also seizes this opportunity to denounce diletantism, which he had condemned some ten years before.⁴ Now along with Bourget,⁵ he renews the attack in certain words of Clarencé.⁶ Delambre and Clarencé typify two successive phases of thought. The former, representing the older generation, teaches the law of upright thought and resolute action. On the other hand, Clarencé's generation, always seeking, ever doubting, devours ideas with astonishing rapidity, thereby acquiring moral and cerebral indigestion. This diletante attitude is censured by the conservative element which, encouraged by the influence of Brunetière, more and more dominated Rod's character.

Diletantism is not the author's only preoccupation. He stresses the fact that literary inventions can never attain the richness of real life. When confronted by reality, the author perceives the inferiority of his fictions. If writing injures the man of letters through hypertrophy of the imagination, his works may prove still more harmful to the minds and lives of his readers. Confronted by the tragedy of the suicide of one of his readers, Clarencé tries to determine what share of responsibility belongs to him as an author. He can not adopt the attitude which Goethe assumed toward the epidemic of suicides provoked by the publication of

¹ Rod, *Stendhal*, p. 6.

² Vide Rod, *Dante*.

³ Beaunier, *Rev. Bleue*, 31 mars 1900, p. 414.

⁴ *Le Sens de la Vie*, p. 256.

⁵ Salomon, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

⁶ P. 179.

⁷ P. 117. Cf. Tolstoy, *What is Art?*

Werther.⁸ Even though Claudine, who represents the romantic viewpoint, offers a defense of the author's right to express his conception of existence, Clarendé no longer doubts the harmful influence of literature.⁹ Through the words of Laurier, whose life has just been wrecked, Rod condemns the false ideas with which poets play. Clarendé declares that the only valid excuse for writing is the necessity to express some of the eternal truths.¹⁰ Though he once believed in the rights of art, the sufferings of life convince him of the inferiority of art to the simplicity and grandeur of life.¹¹

That enthusiasm for simple living which permeated *Là-Haut* reappears here in Clarendé's admiration for the robust strength of his country brother Maurice. Like Tolstoy he affirms that only the peasants lead the true and good life.¹² Even while Clarendé despises the stupidity of his old comrades and feels that he holds nothing in common with these ignorant peasants, he continues to envy their existence and confides to Claudine his dream of a simple life where they will train their children in modest tastes and the wholesome wisdom of domestic virtues, teaching them the hatred of cities with all their corruption.¹³ These ideas are characterized as a combination of Tolstoy and Rousseau¹⁴ by the sceptical Claudine. Jeanne Laurier, with her *bourgeois* common sense, reveals a loyalty of heart, a depth of philosophy and an unselfishness of spirit which first amaze and then convince the emancipated Claudine. She discovers that social conventions are based on the traditional heritage of human experience. Even the uneducated peasant, with his acceptance of "doing like other people" as the only possible moral basis, very nearly approaches the truth. Rod accepts Vogüé's theory of collectivity,¹⁵ but pessimistically sees only the dangerous influence literature may have on national life and on the progress of the race toward its destiny. He still questions whether a writer can do enough good to balance the evil, but lacks sufficient conviction to suggest the Catholic panacea proposed by Bourget to cure the individual and society.¹⁶

Such is the substance of this moral treatise woven about the successful dramatist Clarendé. His reflections, the death of Céline Bouland, whose

⁸ Cf. Bordeaux, *Pèlerinages litt.*, p. 214.

⁹ Cf. Maigron, *Le Romantisme et les mœurs*, pp. 312-350.

¹⁰ P. 180.

¹¹ Vogüé, *Le Roman russe*, Avant-propos, p. xxiv.

¹² *Les Idées morales*, p. 253.

¹³ Tolstoy had expressed this idea in *My Religion* published in French in 1885. Cf. *Les Idées morales*, p. 252.

¹⁴ P. 278.

¹⁵ *Les Idées morales*, p. 278.

¹⁶ Salomon, *op. cit.*, p. 200. Cf. also Bourget, *Essais de psychologie contemporaine*, Préface.

suicide seemed linked with her reading of his book *L'Amour et la Mort* (strangely similar to Rod's *Dernier Refuge*), the collapse of the girl's lover who proves to be the dramatist's most intimate friend,—all confirm his doubts. He reaches the state of mind which led Racine to renounce the theater. At the same time he recognizes the necessity of making his private life conform to accepted moral standards and of concluding by marriage a *liaison* of ten years duration.

The *dénouement* has been criticized,¹⁷ for Clarencé will still continue to write in spite of his scruples. Rod himself acknowledged that the book had failed through his desire to avoid conveying a false impression concerning his own beliefs.¹⁸ Rod's critics, in spite of his statement to the contrary, consider *Au milieu du Chemin* an expression of personal convictions.¹⁹ From the point of view of his acceptance of the author's responsibility, the novel does begin a new phase of his career.

When Rod published *Un Vainqueur* (1904), the renaissance of the social novel had already begun.²⁰ Rod joins Bourget and Vogüé in presenting the problem of the old industrialism in conflict with new ideas and conditions, particularly with respect to governmental regulation. While the conservative Bourget in *La Barricade* favors the capitalist, Rod condemns Délémont, who represents the self-made manufacturer of the old school. This conqueror brooks no opposition from below or above. He considers government inspection of his plant for the enforcement of labor laws a flagrant violation of his rights.

In direct contrast with Délémont, Rod places Romanèche, at present a history professor, but potentially a socialist leader.²¹ As a freethinker he has replaced the Christian Trinity by Science, Socialism, and Revolution. While Délémont sees in the State with its absurd laws a new and dangerous enemy, Romanèche asserts that the salvation of modern society lies in governmental regulation of business. Romanèche, a sort of academic Homais, recalls Monneron of Bourget's novel *L'Etape*.²²

Still a third point of view is presented by Burier, the government inspector of factories. He divides society into two rival classes,—the capitalists, the incarnation of all social vices, and the downtrodden laborers who possess all the virtues which their enemies lack. Until labor has accomplished the eventual suppression or subordination of capital, he considers that the State must preserve the equilibrium. Labor legislation

¹⁷ Bordeaux, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

¹⁸ Tissot, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

¹⁹ Bordeaux, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

²⁰ Doumic, *Rev. des deux mondes*, 15 août 1904, pp. 923-934.

²¹ Cf. Prof. Bouteiller, in Barrès, *Les Déracinés*.

²² Ernest-Charles, "Le Pessimisme social d'Ed. Rod," *Rev. Bleue*, 1904, p. 825...

is for him the first revelation of a new religion and he therefore enforces with apostolic zeal the provisions for which he is responsible.

Délémont's lack of human sympathy,²³ the often ridiculous theorizing of Romanèche, the official enthusiasm of Burier, all fail to win the author's sympathy. He appears rather to favor the youthful idealism of Bernard Délémont²⁴ and his sister Alice, but points out the fact that with her dream of the replacement of force by justice, she like so many others, was in reality only working toward the establishment of other forms of injustice and tyranny.

Délémont, as a result of his violations of labor laws, discovers the force of the opposing power and finds himself helpless before the representatives of the government. His family affairs give him additional cause for anxiety. Life with his wife becomes intolerable. The marriage of Alice to Soutre, his assistant manager, is prevented by the revelations of the young man's discarded mistress. Délémont considers it a business matter and arranges a marriage between Soutre and the younger daughter Estelle who has always loved him. This apparent solution ends in tragedy. On the wedding day, the shots aimed at her lover by the deserted woman kill Alice, whose idealism had made her life more valuable than that of any of the others. The conqueror, stunned by this blow and the additional misfortune of his wife's madness, completely loses his former assurance. In memory of Alice and for other reasons which, once obscure to him, he now understands perfectly, he determines to reform many features of his business. Bernard fails to see how fate can punish Alice for the father's errors. These apparent injustices of destiny which seem to depend on chance sometimes have secret reasons whose mysterious relations men call fatality.²⁵ This mystery Bernard can not penetrate, and the book concludes with his query of anguished doubt: "Peut-être saurons-nous un jour!"

The preceding analysis of *Un Vainqueur* shows that in the case of Edouard Rod, the social novel differed from the thesis novel which George Sand or Paul Bourget might write. Rod seems to point the lesson that the man who disregards the laws of humanity in search of material success must pay the penalty in the sacrifice of personal happiness. For the perplexing social problems which he presents, he offers no solution and assumes no definite position, in this respect resembling Curel in many of his plays. He appears to anticipate a gradual amelioration of society as

²³ Cf. Landrecy in Brioux, *Les Bienfaiteurs*.

²⁴ In Mirbeau, *Les Mauvais Bergers*, the son of the employer condemns his father's principles and carries on socialist propaganda.

²⁵ Cf. *Mlle. Annette*, p. 122.

the result of the spread of altruistic and idealistic principles.²⁶ At the same time, the death of his noblest figure, Alice, through no fault of her own but as an indirect result of the baseness of those around her, leaves a sentiment of the sadness of modern life with its problems, and almost a conviction of the futility of an existence apparently governed by fate.

In *L'Indocile* (1905), the sequel of *Un Vainqueur*, Rod continues his analysis of French society, studying the conflict of ideas between the two Frances at the turn of the century,²⁷ the opposition of tradition and revolution, reactionary principles and tendencies toward socialism, anticlericalism and anarchism.²⁸ While *L'Etape* deals with the same questions, Bourget assumes a much more definite position than Rod, who for that reason presents a more impartial statement of the case. Where Bourget possesses convictions, Rod has only sympathies which appear divided between Catholicism and an almost anarchic individualism. As in *Un Vainqueur*, Rod here explains the various points of view through the character and opinions of figures who represent types rather than individuals. In the presentation of these opposing political, religious, and social beliefs, one can find no better proof of Rod's basic conservatism than his satirical portrayal of the socialist demagogue Romanèche, one of the leaders of the political Homais of his generation. It has been suggested that the sympathies of the author lie largely with Claude Brévent, the Catholic disciple of Marc Sagnier; this fact becomes still more evident in the final scene in which Claude attempts to rescue Valentin from the depths of his anarchism and despair by preaching a doctrine of conservatism, altruism, and social duty, the program outlined by the *Sillon*. The failure of Claude to win Valentin to his side, and the break between Claude and the anticlerical Lourtier, prove the impossibility of reconciling these divergent doctrines. Rod's analysis of the conflicting ideas of the time therefore results in a sentiment of pessimism which we have come to consider one of his permanent attitudes toward life.

Les Unis (1909) stands out as one of Rod's few attempts to prove a definite thesis. Fearing that *L'Indocile* might have appeared to reveal anarchistic tendencies, he now defends established institutions and laws.²⁹ In manner he seems to imitate Bourget's thesis novel, and to indict certain evils embodies a specific idea in one character, who consequently resembles a puppet more than a figure taken from actual life. In *Les Unis* he attacks, as did several of his contemporaries,³⁰ *l'union libre*, which, as

²⁶ Cf. A. France, *M. Bergeret à Paris*, pp. 69, 250.

²⁷ Salomon calls *L'Indocile* "un précieux témoignage sur l'âme de la France contemporaine." *Journal de Genève*, 29 oct. 1905.

²⁸ Cf. Seippel, *Les Deux Frances*.

²⁹ *Aloÿse Valérien*, Préface, p. vi.

³⁰ Bernard, L., *Claire Bergeron*; Thévenin, L., *Un Libérateur*; Lefebvre, L., *Le Couple Invincible*.

practiced by the ideologist Verrès, means scarcely more than an imitation of civil marriage. He himself unites the couples, speaking in the name of common sense and reason instead of in the name of a "supposed God."³¹ Verrès is too blind to see that with the exception of one, who has secretly legalized her marriage, all his older "united" daughters are miserably unhappy. As the novel opens, he "unites" his youngest daughter to a lecherous brute whom she is soon forced to leave. The "*uni*" takes the old idealist at his word and considers the union dissolved. Toward this one feature of his system Verrès has adopted a curiously inconsistent attitude: in order to prove the merits of free union there must be no failures in his experiment. To ward off the bitterness of disillusionment, his older daughters conceal from him their own unhappiness and thus prove instrumental in ruining the life of their younger sister. For all except Verrès himself, the experiment has failed.³²

Another problem arises in connection with the marriage of the granddaughter of Verrès to the son of the conservative and Catholic Gressant. Against a background of the rising power of radicalism after the *progressistes*, the opportunists, Boulangists and the *Ordre Moral*,³³ Rod contrasts these two extremes of radical and reactionary thought. Like Bourget,³⁴ Gressant pronounces marriage at the same time a divine institution and the keystone of the social structure. In spite of the author's evident sympathy with the position of Gressant, he uses Uncle Emmanuel to express more thoroughly his personal attitude. Humanity, he declares, will never reconcile the contradiction between the individuality of passions and the collectivity of life. Although laws at best merely attenuate the effects of this conflict, we must respect and defend them. Rod shows his conservatism in Emmanuel's reluctance to modify existing laws since changes in the Code cannot alter human nature.³⁵ With this conservative pessimism of Emmanuel mingles a sentiment of scepticism concerning the existence of such a thing as divine justice. As for earthly justice, "c'est seulement la logique des choses. Or, quand cette logique se dérange, ce n'est pas toujours au profit des plus dignes. Donc, que croire?"³⁶ The gentle irony of Emmanuel's philosophy at times reminds one of the musings of Anatole France. He feels that men as individuals matter more to us than humanity, which in some fashion always succeeds in groping its way toward its uncertain destiny.³⁷ Emmanuel and Rod admit

³¹ *Les Unis*, p. 33.

³² Verrès had his real counterpart,—the geographer Elisée Reclus. *Vide* Evrard, *Nos Mandarins*, pp. 254-258.

³³ *Les Unis*, p. 44.

³⁴ Cf. *Un Divorce*.

³⁵ Cf. *Les Idées morales*, p. 189.

³⁶ p. 355.

³⁷ Pp. 317-318.

that men like Verrès may perform a useful task by preventing the herd from abandoning the pursuit of truth, liberty, and justice.

Rod's thesis novel, therefore, does more than merely castigate the institution of free union by the presentation of a ridiculous example. *Les Unis* reflects the general anxiety concerning the future of France, and in this respect resembles *L'Indocile*. Advocating, through the lips of Gressant, the traditionalism of Barrès, Rod concludes with this salutary counsel:

Il faut que les bons citoyens chassent de leurs cœurs les ferments de discorde et de haine civile qui les empoisonnent, car le pays a besoin des forces de tous ses enfants.³⁸

While the type of free union depicted in *Les Unis* may be an infrequent phenomenon, in *Le Glaive et le Bandeau* Rod turns to a problem of constant and universal interest, that of the weaknesses of human justice. In dramatic tensivity, this work, which was appearing in *l'Illustration* at the time of Rod's death, surpasses all his other novels. *L'Inutile Effort* had given a hint of the author's power in this direction, but even it proves inferior to this last volume. Underlying the story of love and hatred runs an attack on human justice, which Rod had already criticized in *L'Inutile Effort*. Possibly justice is a cruelly brutal natural force, walking slowly through the world with eyes blindfolded. Around her, misdeeds and crimes accumulate unseen by her. Suddenly the band falls from her eyes and she strikes those who chance to stand within reach of her glaive. Justice, having thus reminded us of her existence, again covers her eyes and continues her way. This method of punishment, which to us seems monstrous, remains inexplicable merely because of our limited vision. Ignorant of causes and effects, we fail to understand her, although we sometimes have a vague notion that her blows do not fall entirely by chance. All our efforts fail to render justice more human.

Even if we accept justice from this philosophical standpoint, its methods of administration offer ground for complaint. While Rod does not make the systematic attack upon the magistracy which one finds in *La Robe Rouge*, he nevertheless points out serious defects. The career of the magistrate may depend upon the number of convictions which he secures.³⁹ Newspaper accounts of the case may influence witnesses and jurors.⁴⁰ The jury, flattered by the sovereign power conferred upon it, exaggerates its own importance. The judges, who in Tolstoy's opinion have no right to judge their fellow men, know that their duty obliges them to apply the law and even when they later discover that they have

³⁸ P. 347.

³⁹ Cf. Brioux, *La Robe Rouge*, (1900); Tolstoy, *Resurrection*, Part I, Book I; Adam, *Robes Rouges* (1891); Bordeaux, *Le Lac Noir*, 1902.

⁴⁰ Cf. Gide, *Souvenirs de la Cour d'Assises*, pp. 11-81; Adam, *Robes Rouges*, p. 228.

erred, they feel no remorse, conscious of having accomplished their duty. The testimony of experts varies, depending upon which side of the case they ought to prove.⁴¹ The prosecuting attorney and the lawyer for the defense each follows his prejudice in good faith, but the eloquence or skill of one or the other will weigh down one side of the scales unless some irresistibly heavy weight interferes. Yet nothing better than this balancing of two forms of error has been discovered to assure the finding of the truth.

To demonstrate his case, Rod presents a murder trial, not only from the point of view of the accused, but from that of magistrates, jurors, and spectators as well. Lermantes had killed in a hunt his godfather, the retired General Gustave de Pellice. What had at first seemed an accident resembled murder when it became known that the General had left all his property to Lermantes, at that time badly pressed for funds. The accused man finds that his past as a promoter of various extensive business enterprises and his reputation for extravagant living prejudice public opinion against him.⁴² The principal witness against him, D'Entraque, has changed his testimony since the beginning of the investigation. Each day of the trial ends with a dramatic revelation: first the disclosure to the court and to Lermantes himself of the fact that the accused man was the son of the general and may have murdered his own father; next, that the case involves Mme. d'Entraque; finally that Lermantes is her lover. The husband secures his revenge by shooting her at the end of the hearing. The jury acquits Lermantes by a vote of seven to five. Thus the glaive of that mysterious justice incomprehensible to man falls upon Mme. d'Entraque, apparently an innocent victim, but in reality guilty of violating the conventions of society.

A bare outline of the plot gives almost the impression of melodrama, but Rod has narrated the story with such sobriety that it constitutes drama of the most gripping sort. At the same time he analyzes the problem of justice through the presentation of various types of lawyer, magistrate, and juror. He has chosen, one feels, honest and genuine representatives of human machinery, yet this system almost condemned an innocent man and therefore appears only the more terrible.⁴³ The final verdict of acquittal, rendered by a vote of seven to five, reveals the narrowness of the margin which prevented conscientious men from condemning an innocent victim. Thus Rod, even without the satirical purpose of Anatole France in *Crainquebille*, proves the weakness of human justice.

⁴¹ Pp. 41, 83, 94.

⁴² In *La Robe Rouge*, Etchepare's previous convictions count against him. Cf. also Landay, M., *La loi de pardon* (1905); Gide, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

⁴³ Cf. Gide, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

Le Glaive et le Bandeau, coming at the end of Rod's career, reveals the best qualities of every phase of his work combined in one novel. In his portrayal of the spectators of the trial, his powers of observation and choice of distinctive detail give proof of his ability as a naturalist, comparing favorably with the most brilliant pages of Daudet. He displays his habitual moral preoccupation, and the conclusion brings a characteristic note of pessimism at the failure of mankind to comprehend the workings of a higher system and at the impossibility of attaining justice. The psychological analysis of the leading characters does not lack the skill and delicacy of that of his previous works. Nor has Rod's romanticism abdicated its position, for *Le Glaive et le Bandeau* might well rank among the *études passionnelles*. Through its complete expression of its author's literary personality as well as by its forceful and dramatic presentation of one of life's eternal problems, *Le Glaive et le Bandeau* deserves to rank as one of Rod's most successful works.

CONCLUSION

In literary method as in thought Edouard Rod passed through a constant and logical evolution. The natural incompatibility of spirit displayed as early as *Les Allemands à Paris*, an increasing conviction of the shortcomings of naturalism, and contact with both native and foreign influences detached him from his first affiliation with Zola's literary group, making him an exponent of psychological analysis, which developed in its most acute phase as intuitivism. While at times he later referred to his passage through naturalism with a certain regret, he acknowledged his indebtedness to it.

Always remaining in a measure an *intuitif*, he nevertheless discovered the limitations imposed by his invention and recognized the necessity of a certain objectivity of method for the truly creative writer. Yet, with Estaunié and Mauriac, conceding the impossibility of knowing the details of the lives of others, he found the imaginative element equally essential.

Rod's Swiss heritage enabled him to bring to his literary work the cosmopolitanism of Madame de Staël, the romanticism of Rousseau, and the moral inquietude of Amiel. An anti-Protestant Calvinist, he inveighed not only against the Darbyite sect, but against Protestantism in general, yet created characters governed by Calvinistic principles. A conservative anarchist in social theory, Rod championed the rights of the individual against society but, with few exceptions, sacrificed his heroes to conventional morality and concluded by maintaining the necessity of subordinating selfish interests to the collective good and of accepting the social order established by centuries of human experience. A melioristic pessimist, he pointed out the preponderance of evil in the world while propagating the doctrines of neo-Christianity.

The seemingly conflicting aspects of Rod's character have as a basis innate and hereditary qualities and influences of social and intellectual environment. There occurred too a natural evolution in the course of his career. Although reproached for his changing attitudes in literature and in thought, Rod did not succumb to the dilettantism of Renan and his disciples. While his shifting points of view reveal the suppleness of his intelligence, they also display an earnest desire to seek the truth and they follow a logical development. This element of change and the fact that his evolution parallels that of his contemporaries gives his works, apart from their worth as pure literature, a value as an index to the successive intellectual phases of his period from the age of materialism, dilettantism, and pessimism through the idealistic reaction, with its interest in the religion of human suffering and neo-Christianity, to an epoch of social consciousness.

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