

for lack of which his splendid gifts and his amazing energy now sometimes run to waste. But, as he wrote himself of Carlyle, of whom he so often reminds us, 'if he did no perfect work, he had lightning's power to strike out marvelous pictures and reach to the inmost of men with a phrase.' The riot and confusion of the books, the sudden changes of perspective, the disconcerting mixture of the soaring and the didactic, disturb but do not destroy their power and their insight. And always as we read we feel that we are in the presence of a Greek god who sits incongruously surrounded by innumer-

able ornaments in a suburban drawing-room; who talks incessantly at the top of his voice; who is deaf to the lower tones of the human spirit; who is a little rigid and immobile perhaps, but at the same time marvelously alive and alert. This brilliant and uneasy figure has his place rather with the great eccentrics than with the great masters. His books are like the freakish blossoms which flower suddenly and strangely upon an old tree. He will be read, one may guess, by fits and starts. By many he will be found repellent, and by a few he will be idolized. But he will not be forgotten.

## GONE, BUT HERE

BY JOHN FREEMAN

[*London Mercury*]

SHE was here, and she is gone,  
 Yet there is singing;  
 Round this heart of crumbling stone  
 Music still is clinging  
 As birds round cliffs where tempest groan  
 All day are winging.  
 How can music still go on — on —  
 And she gone?

She is here no more, but can  
 Her song be gone?  
 Stars that waned when dawn began  
 Still burn purely on,  
 Silence sings when every song of man  
 Is done —  
 How shall her song be mute although her span  
 Of life be done?

## LIFE, LETTERS, AND THE ARTS

### *Came Dawn*

OPINION on the censorship of 'Dawn,' the British war film depicting the execution of Nurse Cavell, has been anything but unanimous either abroad or in America. Sir Austen Chamberlain made a beautiful gesture of friendship when the German Ministers in London and Brussels protested that the showing of the film would 'revive painful memories and embitter relations between countries,' for he declined an invitation to see the film, stating that he understood it to 'contain incidents for which there is no authority, and which can only provoke controversy over the grave of a woman who has become one of the world's greatest heroines.' Disgusted with this attitude of the British Foreign Office, Madame Ada Bodart, who was condemned with Edith Cavell but escaped the firing squad, returned the decoration of the Order of the British Empire which had been conferred upon her.

Just before catching a boat for America, T. P. O'Connor declared for the official Film Censors that 'in our opinion the theme of this film renders its exhibition in this country inexpedient in the present circumstances.' This aroused George Bernard Shaw, who can never be restrained from taking up the cudgels against censorship. He attended a private showing of the picture, and then asserted:—

'You might as well suggest that Sir George Frampton's monument should be demolished or veiled. Are you to commemorate Edith Cavell in stone and not commemorate her in picture? The only question to be considered is

whether the film as a work of art is worthy of her. And you may take my word for it that it is.

'You have a most moving and impressive reincarnation of the heroine by our greatest tragic actress, whose dignity keeps the whole story on the highest plane. It has been planned and told by a young film poet who has been entirely faithful to his great theme—that of a woman who, at the risk of her life, kept a refuge for mercy and kindness in the midst of the European tornado of hate and terror.

'He has not betrayed her by a single stroke of bitterness or rancor, much less by any triviality of idle fiction. Both actress and author have felt, and will make us feel, that the law that Edith Cavell set above the military code and died for is an infinitely higher law than the law of war and the conceit of patriotism.

'The film can go to Germany as an English film without provoking any German to remind us that people who live in glasshouses should not throw stones. It rebukes us all impartially, and will edify us impartially. I hope it will take its lesson to the ends of the earth.'

Contradicting this Shavian outburst, Sir Alfred Butt curtly remarked: 'I agree entirely with the action of the Censor.'

The war-film war has called forth leader comment in most British journals. The *Tory Morning Post* and the *Daily Telegraph* make the people the final arbiter, but the latter suggests that 'public opinion is quickly veering round to the view that it is not only an act of courtesy, but of common sense,