

## THE ENGLISH REVIEW

swallows every kind of idea, the rage for literature, the subsidising of Art, the passion for music. Consider even the new blood that pours into the States to the tune of two millions a year from every art-producing country in Europe: and wonder grows, and grows.

Americans say that the immigrants are the scum of Europe. Perhaps, but they beat the native out of most of his money and power in no time. Isn't there a touching song about the "poor exile of Erin" who in a fortnight became "Alderman Mike inthrojuicing a bill"?

There is, firstly, the question of the critical faculty. This is curiously infantine in nearly all Americans. A man will determine to study philosophy. To whom does he go? To Kant? To Hume? To Aristotle? Dear me, no! he is quite happy with Fra Elbertus, with his sham Kelmscott Press and his platitudes, or with Swami Vivekananda, that burliest of Babus. It never strikes him to refer to the Upanishads, from which Vivekananda derived all that is of value in his work.

He is satisfied with any good machine-made stuff; he really thinks that Swinburne was "the English Ella Wheeler Wilcox." When it comes to criticism of "old masters," he rarely looks at them with the eyes that God has given him; he looks through the spectacles of a guide-book.

Not that the English are not equally incapable in this respect; but they appear less ignorant, because they are fixed in traditional opinions which are (on the whole) right. The American cannot stay there; he is restless; he wants to know—and this will ultimately save him—but as yet he has only learnt to know *viâ* Baedeker, and the moment he is off the track he is hopelessly lost.

The Englishman would be as bad, but he knows the danger, and confines himself to the remark that Shakespeare was a great poet. Show him the Futurists, and he holds out a confiding hand to any professional or amateur leg-puller that may be about.

The "ministry of all the talents" of Art—Leader, Marcus Stone, Poynter, Leighton, Sidney Cooper, and so on—do well enough in England; anything like genius is suspect, as Beardsley found. But the American cannot distinguish between Goya and Gerald Kelly; and if he prefers Leader