



From the portrait by Rodrigo Moynihan

HEATHCOTE WILLIAM GARROD, C.B.E.

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1878-1960

GARROD was a west-countryman, born in Wells on the 21st of January 1878, youngest but one of the six children of Charles and Louisa Garrod. He was christened Heathcote William: hence my surprise in finding the initials H. J. W. G. at the foot of several of his earliest writings. I thought I saw a characteristic small affectation in that extra initial; but the truth (now eighty-three years old and vouchsafed by his sister Mrs. Kathleen Board, in her kindness) is that *Jack the Giant-Killer* was being read aloud in the Garrod nursery when the new baby was brought in to be admired, and Ashley, the next one up, pointed at his brother in great excitement and said 'Jack!' Everyone who knew the man will recognize the whimsical and feeling *pietas* of the undergraduate reluctant to surrender his family pet-name.

Charles Garrod was a country solicitor, and he lived in a rather solemn wide-windowed house in the New Street of Wells. Behind was—and is—a large garden, and beside the house and garden a narrow lane. On holiday with H. W. G. I once climbed the wall dividing lane and garden in order to report to him, as he stood below on the pavement, the condition of things where the six children used to play. A policeman appeared while this was going on. Garrod moved off a few paces, looking the other way (while the policeman satisfied himself of my innocence); then returned and explained in mock-alarm that he was anxious not to be recognized. When I said nonsense, he replied: 'Everybody in Wells called this Garrod Lane'; and he contrived to look hurt at not being believed in this assertion which turns out long afterwards, as his more obvious hasty improvisations have a way of doing, to be true.

Measles contracted in very early childhood left him deaf for life in one ear—which was not discovered until he had been knocked down in the street by a horse-drawn cart approaching unheard from behind. At about the time of this accident, on the brink of his seventh birthday, his long career of letters began at the Wells Cathedral Grammar School; and here he remained until he was nine, when his father died and his mother moved the family to Bath. The boys now went to Bath College, which was our Garrod's school, in its Junior and Upper divisions, for

all but ten years. He went up to Balliol from Bath College in 1897, with an Exhibition.

In *Who's Who* Garrod used to describe himself as self-educated. The joke was aimed (one guesses) at Balliol, and its point lies in his conviction that the best Balliol undergraduates of his time were better than their dons, and what worthwhile teaching they got was mostly from themselves and from one another. He stated this view more than once in conversation; indeed he wrote something very like it in his *Oxford Magazine* notice of Ernest Barker's autobiographical fragment, *Father of the Man*. But it may also be not entirely irrelevant that his tutors discouraged him from competing for a university scholarship—the Hertford—because they did not reckon he was good enough: a circumstance recorded by the present Warden of Merton in a memoir written for the College magazine *Postmaster*. In the event, Garrod won the Hertford and a Craven in 1899 which was the year of his First in Mods., a Gaisford in 1900, and the Newdigate in 1901—the last with a vigorous Pope-baiting poem on the subject of Galileo:

So I found Truth, but not the truth of Rome.

Therefore the 'self-educated' joke was probably against Balliol. And of course there could be no hurting Balliol with it. Certainly it was not aimed at Bath College, for Garrod held his school always in grateful memory, while his headmaster, T. W. Dunn, he venerated. Bath College, now defunct, was a small public school of which the numbers never rose above 200 and were usually much less. Dunn shared the classical sixth-form teaching first with H. F. Fox, who left Bath to become a don at Brasenose, and then (during Garrod's seniority at the school) with D. A. Slater, who went on in his turn to university work and finally to chairs in Wales and London. The admirable classical discipline of Bath mattered less to Garrod, if only in retrospect, than the personal aura of Dunn—and Dunn's obituary notice in *The Times* declares that others felt as Garrod did. What he got from Dunn would be bound to seem, now, very Victorian. We have the sense of it, indirectly, in his first book, *The Religion of All Good Men, and Other Studies in Christian Ethics*, which was published in 1906 (although some of its constituent essays had been appearing separately over the previous year or two). We have the sense of it in the youthful flourish of the book's dedication to Dunn, 'to have known whom is a kind of religion', and in a number of local signs like the footnote reference to Arnold's *Literature and Dogma*—'a book to which I once owed much'. That 'once', penned in

the weary fullness of twenty-seven years, is surely directed back upon the high seriousness and the sweetness and light of Arnold expounded by Dunn, or of Dunn—and Bath College—living out the Arnoldian ideal. (Forty and fifty years later we used to tease Garrod by lamenting that the religion of all good men had become the religion of one good man.)

In 1901 he took his First in Greats¹ and won a Prize Fellowship at Merton in a field which included Lord Beveridge, a life-long friend. The next year he became responsible with A. E. Haigh for the classical teaching at Corpus, and continued thus until 1904, when Merton added a tutorship to his fellowship and so gave him permanent tenure. His short connexion with Corpus impressed him deeply; inside Merton he never tired of holding up our small neighbour as a model of the simple and strenuous corporate life. And indeed there were some remarkable people there at the turn of the century, as Garrod himself insists in his British Academy memoir of Percy Allen: Robinson Ellis, 'the most learned Latinist of his time'; Arthur Sidgwick, 'a born teacher, and a man of fine quixotic temper'; Cuthbert Shields, 'a mantic figure and personality, in whose thinking and talk there ran in fact a strain of madness'.

1904, then, saw him finally settled in Merton, saw him teaching as well as living there. Merton remained his home until the day of his death; only three times in nearly sixty years did he leave the college for any considerable period: once in 1929 to go to Harvard as Charles Eliot Norton Professor of Poetry, once in the following year to deliver the Alexander Lectures in the University of Toronto, and once—the first and longest absence—to join the Ministry of Munitions in the First World War. Of his work at the Ministry, which received recognition in 1918 by his being made a C.B.E., he has left an informal, unpublished—and very publishable—account in an essay called 'Three Years in Whitehall', which begins:

In the earlier days of the War, Press and Pulpit, Plinth and Poster—the organized patriotism of men of forty-two—advised me daily upon all hands that I must one day account to my children: one day inevitably my children—or somebody else's—would ask me what I did in the Great War. Till then I need fear only the impertinences of older persons. But

¹ The Warden of Merton records: 'His native ability had assured him an easy First in Greats, but I once asked J. A. Smith, who had been his tutor at Balliol, whether he had any real gift for philosophy, and he answered firmly in the negative. He added, "We once went abroad in a party together. Garrod carried his passion for paradox even into the keeping of the accounts".'

one day I must give an account to inquisitors the very innocence of whose curiosity would make them utterly exigent. To these guileless inquisitors, therefore, I would wish to dedicate what follows, and I would tell them plainly, 'In the Great War I stayed at home, classified C3, eligible for the office of batman (as to which I am still mildly curious), or for sanitary duties (where I have no desire for knowledge), or for clerical work—which I in fact performed. For three years and more I was a clerk in Whitehall.'

He goes on to describe the life of a wartime civil servant, and to sketch from beneath the four ministers whom he served. The first of these (in time) was Lloyd George, and the last Sir Winston Churchill.

The decade between Garrod's accession to the Merton Mods. tutorship and the war had been busy and fruitful. Here the principal landmarks are the editions of Statius (1906) and of the second book of Manilius's *Astronomica* (1911), the revision of E. C. Wickham's text of Horace in 1912, and in that same year, *The Oxford Book of Latin Verse*; but the force and scope of his Latin scholarship are also evident in a steady flow of contributions to learned periodicals, among them the *Journal of Philology* of which he was an editor from 1914 until 1920.

These were also, we should remember, the years of *The Religion of All Good Men*, of a striking essay on Matthew Arnold's theology (1909), and of the first volume of his verses, *Oxford Poems* (1912): an early achievement not easy to match in its blending of ability and variety and intellectual boldness. It is against this background that we must interpret the feeling (which not everybody shares of course) that no big or biggish work of his later years, except the Oxford English Texts *Keats*, is entirely worthy of him. The writings of the pre-war decade possess a considerable measure of unity beneath their surface diversity, a temperamental unity proceeding from his love of the poetry of the great Western literatures. And with love goes a high Arnoldian estimate of what poetry can do for us. To suppose that he turned to English studies because he had lost interest in Latin and Greek is as far from the truth as to picture him running to English with his tail between his legs, pursued by Housman or discouraged by his own awareness of the nature of—to steal his phrase—consummate learning.¹

¹ There are many witnesses to this awareness: the remarks about Scaliger and Bentley in his Manilius, the reiterated insistence on Housman's stature, the essay 'Phalaris and Phalarism' in the volume of seventeenth-century studies presented to Herbert Grierson (1938), the J. H. Gray Lectures delivered in Cambridge in 1945 and entitled *Scholarship: its Meaning and Value*.

A different sort of check and change I do believe he suffered. In his twenties and early thirties he had several times argued for the primacy of the Teutonic spirit in our civilization. He had urged on his readers the ideals of chivalry and honour. 'These', he wrote in his essay 'Christian, Greek or Goth?', 'are the out-of-Church morality of all of us.' They inspire us northern men to virtue, yet are remote from the Christian moral imagination and equally from the Greek. Aristotle's *μεγαλόψυχος* 'resembles a gentleman in a novel of Disraeli, but no other kind of gentleman'. In short, Garrod was a Germanophile who, as he confesses in 'Three Years in Whitehall', lost his faith as well as many of his friends between 1914 and 1918.

Back in Oxford at the end of the war, he resumed his teaching; and he also began—at once or nearly at once—to write something on Wordsworth. This something started as an essay and surprised him by growing into a book. Its immediate and great success surprised him too; suddenly, as David Nichol Smith remarked in conversation a few weeks before his own death, academic English became aware of Garrod.¹ Moreover, the truth appears to have been that two things weighed heavily with the graduate population of electors to the Chair of Poetry when W. P. Ker died in 1923 and Garrod became a candidate: his *Oxford Book of Latin Verse* and his *Wordsworth*.

Thus the Wordsworth book led to the Chair of Poetry, and the Chair of Poetry must have had a good deal to do with his resigning his tutorship at Merton and becoming (in 1925) a research fellow; while the next step, which was his translation to the Harvard Professorship of Poetry, also strikes one as following quite naturally. *The Profession of Poetry* (1929) is the principal outcome of his tenure of the Oxford chair, and *Poetry and the Criticism of Life* (1931) of its Harvard counterpart, but in the meantime he had published, after lecturing parts of it, a critical study of Keats (1926), physically slight like the *Wordsworth*, and like the *Wordsworth* an auspicious venture. For writing it brought him into close touch with the poet who was to engage his best powers in the years before the second war.

¹ He had, of course, a narrower and largely Mertonian fame before this. In 1919 Walter Raleigh, Merton Professor of English Literature, invited him to lecture in the English School, and he gave them some of the Wordsworth book. Further back still, in the winter of 1911-12, he was a member of a distinguished team assembled by G. S. Gordon (who later succeeded Raleigh) to lecture on English literature and the classics. Garrod's contribution was on Virgil.

Garrod's Oxford English Texts *Keats* appeared in 1939, the biggest work of his life, overshadowing everything else that belongs to his thirty years of comparative leisure as a research fellow of Merton. All the same, the other achievements of this period were substantial and characteristically wide-ranging. Much hard and fine work—much self-preparation in Renaissance matters—went into his completing, with Mrs. Allen, P. S. Allen's edition of the letters of Erasmus. Garrod's three volumes tell less than the full story. Nor will many people outside Merton be aware of the pains he took, at different times, for all sorts of occasions, over the history of his college and its buildings. Here again the whole truth is more than meets the eye in his published *Merton Muniments* (1927, with P. S. Allen), *The Library Regulations of a Medieval College* (also 1927), *The Injunctions of Archbishop Kilwardby* (1929), *Ancient Painted Glass in Merton College* (1931), *Bodley of Merton* (1937), and in his contribution to the Victoria County History (1954)—this last a triumph of readability and nervous wit, of lumpish material suavely rendered. One unpublished Mertonian lecture springs immediately to mind, that on Warden Savile which he delivered in 1949 in commemoration of the quatercentenary of Savile's birth.

Epigrams (1947) made the third book of his verses—or the fourth, if a set of translations (*Poems from the French*, 1925) is to be included. Widely read and very warmly appreciated was his *Genius Loci and Other Essays* of 1950, discovering him in the role of belles-lettrist, while much of his happiest small-scale journalism also belongs to the last fifteen years of his life. He reviewed fitfully for the *Spectator* and *Oxford Magazine* (as he had earlier for the pre-war *Observer*), and rather more regularly for *The Times Literary Supplement*, lending his talent and eminence to anonymity with an easy selflessness which those who knew him came to take for granted. His last contribution to the *TLS* appeared on the twenty-third of December 1960, two days before his death. He was struck down suddenly, and we have reason to hope painlessly, by a cerebral haemorrhage while he was dressing for dinner on Christmas Eve. He died the next morning.

Garrod received an honorary D.Litt. at Durham in 1930, and an honorary LL.D. at Edinburgh in 1953. He became a Fellow of the British Academy in 1931. He was elected an honorary fellow of Merton in 1955, upon his retirement from his research fellowship.

At the approach of his seventieth birthday Garrod put together

a list of his writings, 'In response to a request which I could not refuse'. His prefatory note says:

Reviewing myself—at seventy—I think poorly of my scholarship, but not too badly of my journalism (including in my journalism seven published volumes of lectures and essays). In some of my bad scholarship I find a redeeming journalistic quality. Most of my poetry I rather like. It begins Victorian (like myself), but gets better, I believe, as it goes on. It has no public. But the people I like best like it. That, indeed, may be why I like them best.

There is a danger that the first half of this will be misunderstood; partly because the standard invoked by Garrod when he calls himself a bad scholar is one which not all scholars are able to conceive and which few judge their own scholarship by; and partly because of Housman. Housman's *Manilius Book Two* appeared a matter of months after Garrod's, in 1912. Reviewing Housman (*Classical Review*, xxvii), Garrod lets fall, not in tones of self-excuse, that he would have abandoned his plan to edit *Book Two* if he had known that Housman's *Book One* (1903) heralded an edition of the entire *Astronomica*. We can see the sense of that. Wasted labour is always a pity, and there can be no doubt that much of Garrod's work went for nothing; for while he ranked with the best English Latinists of his generation—among those, I mean, who were still young when the first war broke out—he was of course no match for Housman.

This combative way of putting it is disagreeable, but for the moment, while Housman's brilliant and exquisitely depressing malice is our theme, not easy to avoid. Concerning Garrod's *Book Two* Housman held his peace until his own edition was complete, and then, in the preface to his *Book Five* (1930), set about diminishing a respectable performance: moving from a favourite device of compliment with sneering overtones (upon Garrod's 'activity and energy' and 'brisk intelligence'), to open mockery (of his 'strong desire to shine'), to a denigration framed in part in such general terms as to make it strangely obvious that Garrod's book was not at all contemptible. One does not have to be a professional classic to apprehend the injustice, alongside the unkindness, of the broad dismissal of Garrod's emendations as 'singularly cheap and shallow'. Fair-minded professionals do indeed say that Garrod's textual work was distinguished by ingenuity rather than by penetration; but at the same time they regret the diffidence, or the regard to the fashion of the times, that kept him from publishing literary criticism. His lectures on

Catullus, of which a manuscript survives, ought to have seen the light of day forty years ago.

Housman waited a long time, as I say, to deal with Garrod's Manilius; but a separate opportunity to hurt the younger editor occurred much earlier, and he seized it at once. In 1916 Garrod published a rather shoddy and tendentious, though not grossly blundering, article ('Varus and Varius': *Classical Quarterly*, x)¹ upon which Housman hastened (*CQ*, xi) to spend his cruel wit most lavishly. A short note would have sufficed for the refutation of Garrod and for truth, but not for its author's perfect gratification. Is it a coincidence that Housman's 'Mr. Garrod, whom I should not judge to be skilled in self-analysis . . .' follows the review by Garrod of his Manilius Book Two, written four years earlier, in which the reviewer had tempered his praise by remarking a 'want of self-criticism' in the great scholar?

None of this deserves mention but for its bearing on Garrod's reputation, at a time when Housman's Manilius Book Five Preface—the relevant or more correctly the irrelevant part—is newly available in paperback, and there are many people aware, vaguely, that Garrod was put to rout by him. Many people also know (less vaguely) how English studies have been plagued by failed classics who came across and did nothing or—worse still—did only bad things. Garrod was not one of these. He was a good classical scholar (and incidentally a writer of beautiful Latin) whose OET *Keats* stands with the best modern editions of an English author: admirable in design, its execution firm-based on long and careful search ('scraps of the draft of *Isabella*'—to name just one poem and one problem—'still blow about the world like Sibylline leaves') and on disciplined collation. Yet the book is splendidly unpedantic. And when the time came for a second edition, the amount of error brought to light in the course of nineteen years proved impressively small.

Flanking the *Keats* are a handful of articles and reviews on English subjects, and a great deal of scholarship passed off by Garrod as journalism. Another of his ways of doing scholarly deeds by stealth was to lend his learning to others. Mr. Kenneth Sisam writes to say that in his time at the Clarendon Press,

Garrod was the first man I would turn to in this country for some fine point of late medieval Latin. His judgments, when he reported to the Press, were severe; but with all his personal whimsies and exaggerations

¹ It does contain one hideous mistake: Garrod forgot that Euripides had written a *Thyestes*.

he could be relied on for good sense—even horse-sense—when it was needed.

And in later years Mr. D. M. Davin continued to call on Garrod as his predecessor had done; the files of the Clarendon Press shyly declare his availability for consultation over a long period, on a wide range of subjects. Individual scholars, too—friends and others—knew they could have his time and talents for the asking. David Nichol Smith liked to dwell upon his frequent recourse to Garrod's judgement, and I believe Helen Darbishire would also have welcomed some record of his help to her—a record confirming and enlarging the acknowledgement in her OET *Milton*. A complete list of persons conscious of indebtedness would be long indeed. The Warden of Merton speaks for many members of his college and not a few outside: 'To those of us concerned with the humanities he was the first consultant to whom one turned in the throes of writing something difficult.'

Garrod never (I believe) called himself a literary critic when engaging in what the rest of us would consider criticism, but always a journalist. He saved the word critic for a few masters among whom he placed Hazlitt first—and Coleridge last; for he was less interested in originality even of the most important kind than in a settled habit of good writing. I have heard him prefer Lamb to Coleridge for the sweet nature informing his prose, and for his readability. He was slow to call a book empty but very quick to complain of being bored.

In his own writing he strove before all else to be readable, and he bothered tirelessly (since he knew his job) about seeming not to bother. He kept his sentences short and his meanings pert with dense antitheses and abrupt, witty punctuation. Who but Garrod (to return to that prefatory note to his list of writings) would assert parenthesis within the sentiment 'Reviewing myself—at seventy—I think poorly of my scholarship . . .'? The succeeding bright flurry of sentences is equally in character. (And how appealing the voice!) Like all good journalists, he knew how to get off the mark quickly and with nice adjustment of tone. I particularly enjoy the opening of an unpublished paper on Free Verse which he read to a Boston society when he was professing poetry at Harvard:

Though I have the misfortune to have been born an Englishman, I always nurse a sneaking regard for freedom. It suffices for a thing to be called free to excite my curiosity; and I count myself happy to have been thrown upon a world bristling with unheard-of freedoms. Before I could articulate, I loved free speech. At fifteen I was drawn to what

is called free thought by a passionate impulse in which I still see all good—for there is in thinking no bad element, but alone of our activities it suffers nothing from the corruption of liberty. When I became a man and took up with political thinking, no sort of freedom seemed to me impossible. I believed in a free Ireland; and even now I hate to see it the slave of itself. Later, I dreamed of a free Russia. . . .

Of course there is more to his writing—even to his lightest writing—than jokes; when he wanted he could darken its mood towards gravity, as in the fourth sentence of the passage I have just quoted. And the jokes themselves are clever nearly always, while now and then they hint at a subtle, undestroying pessimism that 'was' Garrod more fully and more worthily than his obvious cleverness. In fact his best light writing seems to me more poetic than his poetry, which tends to be banged to and fro between the aggressively common-sensical and the hyper-romantic parts of him.

I would risk the generalization that Garrod was capable of one kind of thoroughly bad writing, and one only. This kind:

For myself, let me say frankly that I have never so much admired as I should, that is to say, as other persons do, those famous lines from the *Ode to a Grecian Urn* in which Keats, more formally, perhaps indeed more flatly, than there was need, instructs us that

Beauty is truth, truth beauty,

and that we neither have, nor can want, any other knowledge. Whether this is to have a theory of truth, and not rather neither to have one nor to want one, I am not sure.

The impression left is at once overwrought and superficial, partly because of the idle stylistic gestures ('let me say frankly'; the rocking, bantering rhythm; the clutter of negatives in the second sentence with their pseudo-analytic effect; the concluding inversion),¹ but also, and more damagingly, because of the ominous suggestion—it could be no more than a suggestion in so short a passage—of metaphysical feebleness. This feebleness infects nearly all his philosophical criticism;² the first three professorial lectures ('The Profession of Poetry', 'Poets and Philosophers', 'Pure Poetry') are well nigh ruined by it, and the

¹ He had a special fondness for the form 'That so-and-so is the case, I think not likely'. Nor was he different from the rest of us in being largely unconscious of his mannerisms. I recall his puzzlement on receiving a postcard: 'If you tell me that you did not write last week's *TLS* front page, I shall find it *ever so hard to believe you.*'

² His Taylorian Lecture, 'Tolstoi's Theory of Art', is a notable exception.

critical studies of Wordsworth and Keats are both seriously reduced by their habit of circling round and round two closely related Garrodian tenets (Wordsworth's mysticism is 'rooted, actually, in the senses'; Keats is a great poet 'only when the senses capture him, when he finds truth in beauty, that is to say, when he does not trouble to find truth at all') which might do very well for beginnings of argument, but ought not to be left lying there empty and inert.

His success, on the other hand, defies generalizing commentary, for he did many different things well. He was good at broad appraisal—very good when in sympathy, as he was with Hazlitt and Arnold; less good in his hostile criticism (I am thinking particularly of his sallies against modern poetry and his 'Depreciation' of Jane Austen), but still fearless of reputations and enormously readable. He could present his learning to the unlearned without vulgarizing it. His reviews of apparently intractable books—works of reference and the like—are the most skilful I have met anywhere. He had the precious gift of stating uncomfortable truths kindly; a review by him of P. S. Allen's Letters appears in a pre-war *Observer*, and this can have given nothing but pleasure to Mrs. Allen and others near to the dead man. And yet it contains the sentence: 'In the whole book there is, perhaps, no letter that anybody could call striking.' If something needed writing, as thirty years ago an account of Merton's stained glass needed writing, Garrod was prepared to equip himself from scratch to write it. I do not believe he skimmed an assignment in his life—unless it was his edition, with R. B. Mowat, of Einhard's Life of Charlemagne. He was often through love of paradox perverse; he had many literary blind spots; and he could be forensically unscrupulous.¹ But he was almost never negligent. Nor did he apply a double standard to hack work and

¹ Consider the Introduction to his Selection of Donne's Poetry and Prose: 'If I were asked why today so many persons who do not know good from bad read so good a poet as Donne—and the more easily where he is most difficult—I should be inclined to assign as one reason for it our New Psychology . . . His *Divine Poems*, which, to myself at least, seem far less divine than the secular ones, and which a considered criticism might reasonably rank below the best of Crashaw, make a rather special appeal to Anglo-Catholic thought and feeling. These poems, moreover—and Donne's poems generally—are now widely read (as is proper) in connexion with Donne's Sermons. The Sermons elevate Donne, in the opinion of some good critics, to a place among the great orators. If it is not in flesh and blood to wish the Eighty Sermons to be ninety, nor the Fifty fifty-five, at least they can no longer be neglected.'

real work, to what makes money and what one wants to do. (His Introduction to Goldsmith in the popular series 'Nelson's Poets' deserves to be reprinted.) He was a self-knowing man, without false pride and without false modesty, and for that reason it would be difficult to improve on his own summing up in a poem called 'Testamentary Dispositions' which he wrote as long ago as 1919, and which remains in this respect unassailable.

First I'll commend my soul in dying—
 No! I'll die game. They shall not boast
 'I changed at the end'. I'll have no crying
 Over spilt milk, spoilt souls, and lost
 Talents and unused powers. I used
 Those that I had down to the bone.
 I think they never once refused
 A job of work that was their own.

Perhaps it will not be impertinent to recall, since these things get forgotten, that Garrod in old age was a little under average height—I would guess 5 feet 8 inches. His good features were his delicate small hands, his brow, and his massive cranium. He was not a handsome man. The overall impression was impish inclining to froglike, and he was cursed with a weak, monotonous voice which must have had a lot to do with the fact (about which everybody seems agreed) that he was a poor lecturer. But—like some other considerable people—he became beautiful in the beholder's eye when he was about those things which he was born to do well: at moments of intellectual concentration, snatching for his reading spectacles while his eye rested on the page, waiting to be lent vision; or in *serious* discussion. He was physically memorable, too, in the eloquence of his sympathy. I wonder how many of us have been to him with bad—not necessarily very bad—news of ourselves, and have been taken aback to observe him turn pale and stand stock-still in evident pain.

He dressed simply, in grey flannels and rough jackets and old trilby hats,¹ and a scarf for winter—seldom an overcoat. And yet the simplicity was tinged with odd vestigial gallantries; he liked pretty ties and socks and fine silk handkerchiefs that flopped amply from his breast pocket displaying his initials.

¹ He often wore a hat indoors, until Mr. Rodrigo Moynihan painted him thus.

There was also a large measure of conscious comedy in the incidentals of his dress. For example, he always wore a Nuclear Disarmament badge in the last year or two of his life, and when taxed with this would say that the atomic bomb tests had ruined our weather.

He loved Merton, which means that he loved learning, and old and beautiful buildings, and the company of young men. It means more than that, of course, but I would rather not try to be precise. He did not wear his heart on his sleeve, and he took pains to be unpredictable; so that a dozen accounts of him by a dozen people who knew him well, while showing no deep contradiction, would probably be very unlike each other. All would pronounce him an incomparable friend; and after that, surely, a babel of voices, some very reasonably dwelling upon matters I have not even mentioned: his dogs, or his social passion for chess, or his vacation reading-parties, or the hospitality and peace of his rooms. One must speak for oneself, and that is what I did, very briefly, in the *Oxford Magazine* a week or two after he died. I am made bold to repeat it here by the recollection that a number of people who had known Garrod longer than I told me they were able to recognize him.

You were bound to notice that Garrod had grown more frail in the last year or two, even if you were seeing him all the time in that happy monotonous intimacy which dulls observation and almost excludes the thought of a friend's death. Certainly he made it easy to forget he was an old man; on Christmas Eve—he died on Christmas morning—his entire stable of clockwork monsters was spitting fire and running races round the floor of his room; the electric drunkard, one eye alight, the other dark (for the bulb had failed at last), raised his arm and opened his mouth and slopped down his drink and replenished his glass from his sleeve and raised his arm and opened his mouth, without end; and the children visiting him that afternoon watched the display languidly and wondered if Garrod had bought their Christmas presents yet, and if so—where were they hidden? His life changed scarcely at all; but a lot of the things in it he found more difficult to do, simply because his eyes and ears were undependable and his limbs were stiff.

It may be that these disabilities of old age irked him most at teatime. He liked a crowd round his table, which meant venturing into the town to buy his formidable buns, and toasting them, and then straining to see and hear what was going on. You would expect to find Merton undergraduates there, and perhaps a young bachelor tutor or one of Garrod's 'girls' of any age, with chocolates laid out beside her place, to accommodate her sex. Often he would ask a Harmsworth Scholar. Or a Harmsworth Scholar would drop in. This was the only point, Garrod

being for many years secretary to the Harmsworth Trust, at which his day-to-day hospitality had anything official in it: not that anybody was ever so perverse as to call Garrod's hospitality—or anything about him—official. Many generations of these new graduates came to know his kindness, to feel and never to forget its instinctive force, and to have the awkwardness of their in-between status dispelled by him. In retrospect, they honour the sweet tact with which he judged their first attempts at a black tie and overhauled the phrasing of their applications for jobs.

And if some were sophisticated in these ways, they will still wish to acknowledge a more important debt to Garrod's civilizing influence upon their minds—a difficult thing to talk about since the process was comically indirect. One would say: 'Garrod, you don't really think Yeats is no good.' And he would answer at once: 'You want to read aloud to me.' One did want, and one would read. And he would sit thoughtful for a moment, his old cheeks quaking; then declare: 'A man needs to be a great poet if he's going to say "mackerel-crowded seas".'

His scholarship was very English, and he enjoyed striking insular poses. But more than one young man has been sent off by him to learn German in his first long vac after Schools, with the warning that there is no other way to begin to be learned. Again, nobody who worked with him stood in danger of over-rating the virtue of mechanical accuracy; and yet to turn up after dinner for a game of chess and find one's hasty journalism of the week lying there with the blunders scored, was chastening. It never paid to suggest that this transient stuff was good enough to wrap the fish and chips in, for Garrod would flush and say 'Don't be a donkey', in a voice strangely unlike his own.

One cared what he thought, and the act of searching one's heart for the reason causes all donnish consideration to fade. His splendid intellectual talents are less in issue than those qualities for which hundreds of Merton men—and others—of all ages and conditions loved him dearly. He was careful never to be caught in a high-minded attitude: hence, in part, those intricate whimsicalities and contradictions in which the truth about him was overlaid with its trivial opposite. The least self-seeking of men, he displayed to the point of ostentation his small greedinesses of the strawberries-and-champagne sort. A life of the most simple and moving dignity was decked out with toys and games and all manner of absurd fancies. He would account for his wonderful kindness to the young by saying this boy was a Blue and that one was well connected and the other wrote poems in secret. He would disguise, often with complete success, his probity in College affairs by a debating address of fiendish casuistry.

One cared what he thought while often having no idea whether he meant what he said, and without being greatly troubled not to know. No doubt this is nonsense in the telling. In the experience of his friendship it was plain and precious sense.

JOHN JONES