IV

TRAGIC IMAGINATION

In their definite tragical situations and problems, the Sagas are akin to the older poetry of the Teutonic race. The tragical cases of the earlier heroic age are found repeated, with variations, in the Sagas. Some of the chief of these resemblances have been found and discussed by the editors of *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*. Also in many places where there is no need to look for any close resemblance in detail, there is to be seen the same mode of comprehending the tragical stress and contradiction as is manifested in the remains of the poetry. As in the older Germanic stories, so in the Sagas, the plot is often more than mere contest or adventure. As in *Finnesburh* and *Waldere*, so in *Gísla* and *Njála* and many other Icelandic stories, the action turns upon a debate between opposite motives of loyalty, friendship, kindred. Gisli kills his sister's husband; it is his sister who begins the pursuit of Gisli, his sister who, after Gisli's death, tries to avenge him. Njal has to stand by his sons, who have killed his friend. Gunnlaug and Hrafn, Kjartan and Bolli, are friends estranged by

"Fate and their own transgression," like Walter and Hagena.

The Sagas, being prose and having an historical tradition to take care of, are unable to reach the same intensity of passion as some of the heroic poems, the poems of *Helgi* and of *Sigurd*. They are all the more epic, perhaps, on that account; more equable in their course, with this compensation for their quieter manner, that they have more room and more variety than the passionate heroic poems. These histories have also, as a rule, to do without the fantasies of such poetry as *Hervor and Angantyr*, or *Helgi and Sigrun*. The vision of the Queens of the Air, the return of Helgi from the dead, the chantings of Hervor "between the worlds," are too much for the plain texture of the Sagas. Though, as has already been seen in *Grettir* and *Gisli*, this element of fantastic beauty is not wholly absent; the less substantial graces of mythical romance, "fainter and flightier" than those of epic, are sometimes to be found even in the historical prose; the historical tragedies have their accompaniment of mystery. More particularly, the story of the *Death of Thidrandi whom the Goddesses slew*, is a prose counterpart to the poetry of Sigrun and Hervor.[1]

There are many other incidents in the Sagas which have the look of romance about them. But of a number of these the distinction holds good that has been already put forward in the case of *Beowulf:* they are

[1] It is summarised in Dasent's *Njal*, i. p. xx., and translated in Sephton's *Olaf Tryggvason* (1895), pp. 339-341.

not such wonders as lie outside the bounds of common experience, according to the estimate of those for whom the stories were told. Besides some wonderful passages that still retain the visionary and fantastic charm of myth and mythical romance, there are others in which the wonders are more gross and nearer to common life. Such is the story of the hauntings at Froda, in *Eyrbyggja*; the drowned man and his companions coming home night after night and sitting in their wet clothes till daybreak; such is the ghastly story of the funeral of Viga-Styrr in *Heiðarvíga Saga*. Things of that sort are no exceptions to common experience, according to the Icelandic judgment, and do not stand out from the history as something different in kind; they do not belong to the same order as the dream-poetry of Gisli or the vision of Thidrandi.

The self-denial of the Icelandic authors in regard to myth and pure romance has secured for them, in exchange, everything that is essential to strong dramatic stories, independent of mythological or romantic attractions.

Some of the Sagas are a reduction of heroic fable to the temper and conditions of modern prose. *Laxdæla* is an heroic epic, rewritten as a prose history under the conditions of actual life, and without the help of any supernatural "machinery." It is a modern prose version of the Niblung tragedy, with the personages chosen from the life of Iceland in the heroic age, and from the Icelandic family traditions. It is not the only work that has reduced

the Niblung story to terms of matter of fact. The story of Sigurd and Brynhild has been presented as a drama by Ibsen in his *Warriors in Helgeland*, with the names changed, with new circumstances, and with nothing remaining of the mythical and legendary lights that play about the fortunes of Sigurd in the Northern poems. The play relies on the characters, without the mysteries of Odin and the Valkyria. An experiment of the same sort had been made long before. In *Laxdæla*, Kjartan stands for Sigurd: Gudrun daughter of Osvifr, wife of Bolli, is in the place of Brynhild, wife of Gunnar, driving her husband to avenge her on her old lover. That the authors of the Sagas were conscious at least in some cases of their relation to the poems is proved by affinities in the details of their language. In *Gísla*, Thordis, sister of Gisli, has to endure the same sorrow as the wife of Sigurd in the poems; her husband, like Sigurd, is killed by her brother. One of the verses put in the mouth of Gisli in the story contrasts her with Gudrun, daughter of Giuki, who killed her husband (Attila) to avenge her brothers; whereas Thordis was waking up the pursuers of her brother Gisli to avenge her husband. With this verse in his head, it is impossible that the writer of the Saga can have overlooked the resemblance which is no less striking than the contrast between the two cases.

The relation of the Sagas to the older poetry may be expressed in this way, perhaps, that they are the last stage in a progress from the earliest mythical

imagination, and the earliest dirges and encomiums of the great men of a tribe, to a consistent and orderly form of narrative literature, attained by the direction of a critical faculty which kept out absurdities, without impairing the dramatic energy of the story. The Sagas are the great victory of the Humanities in the North, at the end of a long process of education. The Northern nations, like others, had to come to an understanding with themselves about their inherited myths, their traditional literary forms. One age after another helped in different ways to modify their beliefs, to change their literary taste. Practically, they had to find out what they were to think of the gods; poetically, what they were to put into their songs and stories. With problems of this sort, when a beginning has once been made, anything is possible, and there is no one kind of success. Every nation that has ever come to anything has had to go to school in this way. None has ever been successful right through; while, on the other hand, success does not mean the attainment of any definite end. There is a success for every stage in the progress, and one nation or literature differs from another, not by reason of an ultimate victory or defeat, but in the number of prizes taken by the way.

As far as can be made out, the people of the Northern tongue got the better of the Western Teutons, in making far more than they out of the store of primeval fancies about the gods and the worlds, and in giving to their heroic poems both an intenser passion of expression and a more mysterious

grace and charm. The Western Teutons in their heroic poetry seem, on the other hand, to have been steadier and less flighty. They took earlier to the line of reasonable and dignified narrative, reducing the lyrical element, perhaps increasing the gnomic or reflective proportions of their work. So they succeeded in their own way, with whatever success belongs to *Beowulf*, *Waldere*, or *Byrhtnoth*, not to speak of the new essays they made with themes taken from the Church, in the poems of *Andreas*, *Judith*, and all the rest. Meanwhile the Northerners were having their own difficulties and getting over them, or out of them. They knew far more about the gods, and made poems about them. They had no patience, so that they could not dilute and expand their stories in the Western way. They saw no good in the leisurely methods; they must have everything emphatic, everything full of poetical meaning; hence no large poetry, but a number of short poems with no slackness in them. With these they had good reason to be content, as a good day's work in their day. But whatever advantage the fiery Northern poems may have over the slower verse of the Anglo-Saxons, they do not correspond to the same intellectual wants, and they leave out something which seems to have been attained in the Western poetry. The North had still to find out what could be done with simpler materials, and without the magical light of the companions of Sigrun. The Icelandic prose histories are the solution of this new problem, a problem which the English had already tried and

solved in their own manner in the quieter passages of their epic poetry, and, above all, in the severity of the poem of *Maldon*.

The Sagas are partly indebted to a spirit of negative criticism and restraint; a tendency not purely literary, corresponding, at any rate, to a similar tendency in practical life. The energy, the passion, the lamentation of the Northern poetry, the love of all the wonders of mythology, went along with practical and intellectual clearness of vision in matters that required cool judgment. The ironical correction of sentiment, the tone of the *advocatus diaboli*, is habitual with many of the Icelandic writers, and many of their heroes. "To see things as they really are," so that no incantation could transform them, was one of the gifts of an Icelandic hero,[1] and appears to have been shared by his countrymen when they set themselves to compose the Sagas.

The tone of the Sagas is generally kept as near as may be to that of the recital of true history. Nothing is allowed any preponderance over the story and the speeches in it. It is the kind of story furthest removed from the common pathetic fallacies of the Middle Ages. The rationalist mind has cleared away all the sentimental and most of the superstitious encumbrances and hindrances of strong narrative.

The history of the early Northern rationalism and its practical results is part of the general history of religion and politics. In some respects it may have been premature; in many cases it seems (as

[1] *Harðar Saga*.

might be expected) to have gone along with hardness and sterility of mind, and to have left an inheritance of vacuity behind it. The curious and elaborate hardness of the Icelandic Court poetry may possibly be a sign of this same temper; in another way, the prevalent coolness of Northern piety, even before the Reformation, is scarcely to be dissociated from the coolness of the last days of heathendom. The spirited acuteness of Snorri the Priest and his contemporaries was succeeded by a moderate and unenthusiastic fashion of religion, for the most part equally remote from the extravagances and the glories of the medieval Church. But with these things the Sagas have little to do; where they are in relation to this common rationalist habit of mind, it is all to their good. The Sagas are not injured by any scepticism or coolness in the minds of their authors. The positive habit of mind in the Icelanders is enough to secure them against a good deal of the conventional dulness of the Middle Ages. It made them dissatisfied with anything that seemed wanting in vividness or immediate force; it led them to select, in their histories, such things as were interesting in themselves, and to present them definitely, without any drawling commonplaces, or any makeshift rhetorical substitutes for accurate vision and clear record. It did not hinder, but it directed and concentrated the imagination. The self-repression in the Sagas is bracing. It gives greater clearness, greater resonance; it does not cut out or renounce anything that is really worth keeping.

If not the greatest charm of the Sagas, at any rate that which is perhaps most generally appreciated by modern readers is their economy of phrasing in the critical passages, the brevity with which the incidents and speeches are conveyed, the restriction of all commentary to the least available compass. Single phrases in the great scenes of the Sagas are full-charged with meaning to a degree hardly surpassed in any literature, certainly not in the literatures of medieval Europe. Half a dozen words will carry all the force of the tragedy of the Sagas, or render all the suspense and terror of their adventurous moments, with an effect that is like nothing so much as the effect of some of the short repressed phrases of Shakespeare in *Hamlet* or *King Lear*. The effect is attained not by study of the central phrase so much as by the right arrangement and selection of the antecedents; that is, by right proportion in the narrative. It is in this way that the killing of Gunnar's dog, in the attack on Lithend, is made the occasion for one of the great strokes of narrative. The words of Gunnar, when he is roused by the dog's howl—"Sore art thou handled, Sam, my fosterling, and maybe it is meant that there is not to be long between thy death and mine!"—are a perfect dramatic indication of everything the author wishes to express—the coolness of Gunnar, and his contempt for his enemies, as well as his pity for his dog. They set everything in tune for the story of Gunnar's death which follows. It is in this way that the adventures of the Sagas are raised above the common

form of mere reported "fightings and flockings," the common tedious story of raids and reprisals. This is one of the kinds of drama to be found in the Sagas, and not exclusively in the best of them. One of the conditions of this manner of composition and this device of phrasing is that the author shall be able to keep himself out of the story, and let things make their own impression. This is the result of the Icelandic habit of restraint. The intellectual coolness of the Sagas is a pride that keeps them from pathetic effusions; it does not impede the dramatic passion, it merely gives a lesson to the sensibilities and sympathies, to keep them out of the way when they are not wanted.

This is one notable difference of temper and rhetoric between the Sagas and the old English poems. One of the great beauties of the old English poetry is its understanding of the moods of lamentation—the mood of Ossian it might be called, without much error in the name. The transience and uncertainty of the world, the memory of past good fortune, and of things lost, with themes like these the Anglo-Saxon poets make some of their finest verse; and while this fashion of meditation may seem perhaps to have come too readily, it is not the worst poets who fall in with it. In the Icelandic poetry the notes of lamentation are not wanting, and it cannot be said that the Northern elegies are less sweet or less thrilling in their grief than those of England in the kindred forms of verse. It is enough to think of *Gudrun's Lament* in the "Elder Edda,"

or of *Sonatorrek*, Egil Skallagrimsson's elegy on the death of his two sons. It was not any congenital dulness or want of sense that made the Sagas generally averse to elegy. No mere writer of Sagas was made of stronger temper than Egil, and none of them need have been ashamed of lamentation after Egil had lamented. But they saw that it would not do, that the fabric of the Saga was not made for excessive decoration of any kind, and least of all for parenthesis of elegy. The English heroic poetry is more relenting. *Beowulf* is invaded by pathos in a way that often brings the old English verse very nearly to the tone of the great lament for Lancelot at the end of the *Morte d'Arthur;* which, no doubt, is justification enough for any lapse from the pure heroic. In the Sagas the sense of all the vanity of human wishes is expressed in a different way: the lament is turned into dramatic action; the author's sympathy is not shown in direct effusions, but in his rendering of the drama.[1] The best instance of this is the story of Howard of Icefirth.

Howard's son Olaf, a high-spirited and generous young man, comes under the spite of a domineering gentleman, all the more because he does some good offices of his own free will for this tyrannical person. Olaf is attacked and killed by the bully and his friends; then the story goes on to tell of the vengeance of his father and mother. The grief of

[1] The pathos of Asdis, Grettir's mother, comes nearest to the tone of the old English laments, or of the Northern elegiac poetry, and may be taken as a contrast to the demeanour of Bjargey in *Hávarðar Saga*, and an exception to the general rule of the Sagas in this respect.

the old man is described as a matter of fact; he was lame and feeble, and took to his bed for a long time after his son's death. Then he roused himself, and he and his wife went to look for help, and finally were able to bring down their enemy. In all this there is no reflexion or commentary by the author. The pathos is turned into narrative; it is conveyed by means of the form of the story, the relation of the incidents to one another. The passion of the old people turns into resolute action, and is revealed in the perseverance of Bjargey, Olaf's mother, tracking out her enemy and coming to her kinsmen to ask for help. She rows her boat round her enemy's ship and finds out his plans; then she goes to her brothers' houses, one after another, and "borrows" avengers for her son. The repression and irony of the Icelandic character are shown in the style of her address to her brothers. "I have come to borrow your nets," she says to one, and "I have come to borrow your turf-spade," to another; all which is interpreted aright by the brothers, who see what her meaning is. Then she goes home to her husband; and here comes in, not merely irony, but an intentional rebuke to sentiment. Her husband is lying helpless and moaning, and she asks him whether he has slept. To which he answers in a stave of the usual form in the Sagas, the purport of which is that he has never known sleep since the death of Olaf his son. "'Verily that is a great lie,' says she, 'that thou hast never slept once these three years. But now it is high time to be up and play the man,

if thou wilt have revenge for Olaf thy son; because never in thy days will he be avenged, if it be not this day.' And when he heard his wife's reproof he sprang out of bed on to the floor, and sang this other stave,"—of which the substance is still lamentation, but greatly modified in its effect by the action with which it is accompanied. Howard seems to throw off his age and feebleness as time goes on, and the height of his passion is marked by a note of his cheerfulness and gladness after he has killed his enemy. This is different from the method of *Beowulf*, where the grief of a father for his son is rendered in an elegy, with some beauty and some irrelevance, as if the charm of melancholy were too much for the story-teller.

The hardness of the Sagas is sometimes carried too far for the taste of some readers, and there is room for some misgiving that in places the Sagas have been affected by the contrary vice from that of effusive pathos, namely, by a pretence of courage and endurance. In some of the Northern poetry, as in *Ragnar's Death-Song*,[1] there may be detected the same kind of insincere and exaggerated heroism as in the modern romantic imitations of old Northern sentiment, now fortunately less common than in the great days of the Northern romantic movement at the beginning of this century. The old Northern poetry seems to have become at one stage too self-conscious of the literary effect of magnanimity, too quick to seize all the literary profit that was to be made out of the

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 162, and *infra*, p. 338.

conventional Viking. The Viking of the modern romantic poets has been the affliction of many in the last hundred years; none of his patrons seem to have guessed that he had been discovered, and possibly had begun to be a bore, at a time when the historical "Viking Age" had scarcely come to its close. There is little in the Icelandic Sagas to show any affinity with his forced and ostentatious bravery; but it may be suspected that here and there the Sagas have made some use of the theatrical Viking, and have thrown their lights too strongly on their death scenes. Some of the most impressive passages of the Sagas are those in which a man receives a death-wound with a light remark, and dies forthwith, like Atli in the story of Grettir, who was thrust through as he stood at his door, and said, "Those broad spears are in fashion now," as he went down. This scene is one of the best of its kind; there is no fault to be found with it. But there are possibly too many scenes and speeches of the same sort; enough to raise the suspicion that the situation and the form of phrase were becoming a conventional device, like some of the "machines" in the secondary Sagas, and in the too-much-edited parts of the better ones. This suspicion is not one that need be scouted or choked off. The worser parts and baser parts of the literature are to be detected by any means and all means. It is well in criticism, however, to supplement this amputating practice by some regard for the valid substances that have no need of it, and in this present case to look away from the scenes where there is suspicion of

journey work and mechanical processes to the masterpieces that set the standard; more especially to the story of the burning of Njal, which more than any other is full of the peculiar strength and quality of the Sagas.

The beauty of *Njála*, and especially of the chapters about Njal's death, is the result of a harmony between two extremes of sentiment, each of which by itself was dangerous, and both of which have here been brought to terms with each other and with the whole design of the work. The ugliness of Skarphedinn's demeanour might have turned out to be as excessive as the brutalities of *Svarfdæla* or *Ljósvetninga Saga*; the gentleness of Njal has some affinities with the gentleness of the martyrs. Some few passages have distinctly the homiletic or legendary tone about them :—

Then Flosi and his men made a great pile before each of the doors, and then the women-folk who were inside began to weep and to wail.

Njal spoke to them, and said: "Keep up your hearts, nor utter shrieks, for this is but a passing storm, and it will be long before you have another such; and put your faith in God, and believe that He is so merciful that He will not let us burn both in this world and the next."

Such words of comfort had he for them all, and others still more strong (c. 128, Dasent's translation).

It is easy to see in what school the style of this was learned, and of this other passage, about Njal after his death :—

Then Hjallti said, "I shall speak what I say with all freedom of speech. The body of Bergthora looks as it was

likely she would look, and still fair; but Njal's body and visage seem to me so bright that I have never seen any dead man's body so bright as this" (c. 131).

At the other extreme are the heathenish manners of Skarphedinn, who, in the scene at the Althing, uses all the bad language of the old "flytings" in the heroic poetry,[1] who "grins" at the attempts to make peace, who might easily, by a little exaggeration and change of emphasis, have been turned into one of the types of the false heroic.

Something like this has happened to Egil, in another Saga, through want of balance, want of comprehensive imagination in the author. In *Njála*, where no element is left to itself, the picture is complete and full of variety. The prevailing tone is neither that of the homily nor that of the robustious Viking; it is the tone of a narrative that has command of itself and its subject, and can play securely with everything that comes within its scope.

In the death of Njal the author's imagination has found room for everything,—for the severity and the nobility of the old Northern life, for the gentleness of the new religion, for the irony in which the temper of Skarphedinn is made to complement and illustrate the temper of Njal.

Then Flosi went to the door and called out to Njal, and said he would speak with him and Bergthora.

Now Njal does so, and Flosi said: "I will offer thee, master Njal, leave to go out, for it is unworthy that thou shouldst burn indoors."

[1] Pp. 111 130, above.

"I will not go out," said Njal, "for I am an old man, and little fitted to avenge my sons, but I will not live in shame."

Then Flosi said to Bergthora: "Come thou out, housewife, for I will for no sake burn thee indoors."

"I was given away to Njal young," said Bergthora, "and I have promised him this, that we should both share the same fate."

After that they both went back into the house.

"What counsel shall we now take?" said Bergthora.

"We will go to our bed," says Njal, "and lay us down; I have long been eager for rest."

Then she said to the boy Thord, Kari's son: "Thee will I take out, and thou shalt not burn in here."

"Thou hast promised me this, grandmother," says the boy, "that we should never part so long as I wished to be with thee; but methinks it is much better to die with thee and Njal than to live after you."

Then she bore the boy to her bed, and Njal spoke to his steward and said:—

"Now shalt thou see where we lay us down, and how I lay us out, for I mean not to stir an inch hence, whether reek or burning smart me, and so thou wilt be able to guess where to look for our bones."

He said he would do so.

There had been an ox slaughtered, and the hide lay there. Njal told the steward to spread the hide over them, and he did so.

So there they lay down both of them in their bed, and put the boy between them. Then they signed themselves and the boy with the cross, and gave over their souls into God's hand, and that was the last word that men heard them utter.

Then the steward took the hide and spread it over them, and went out afterwards. Kettle of the Mark caught hold of him and dragged him out; he asked carefully after his father-in-law Njal, but the steward told him the whole truth. Then Kettle said:—

"Great grief hath been sent on us, when we have had to share such ill-luck together."

Skarphedinn saw how his father laid him down and how he laid himself out, and then he said:—

"Our father goes early to bed, and that is what was to be looked for, for he is an old man."

The harmonies of *Laxdæla* are somewhat different from those of the history of Njal, but here again the elements of grace and strength, of gentleness and terror, are combined in a variety of ways, and in such a way as to leave no preponderance to any one exclusively. Sometimes the story may seem to fall into the exemplary vein of the "antique poet historicall"; sometimes the portrait of Kjartan may look as if it were designed, like the portrait of Amadis or Tirant the White, "to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline." Sometimes the story is involved in the ordinary business of Icelandic life, and Kjartan and Bolli, the Sigurd and Gunnar of the tragedy, are seen engaged in common affairs, such as make the alloy of heroic narrative in the *Odyssey*. The hero is put to the proof in this way, and made to adapt himself to various circumstances. Sometimes the story touches on the barbarism and cruelty, which were part of the reality familiar to the whole of Iceland in the age of the Sturlungs, of which there is more in the authentic history of the Sturlungs than in the freer and more imaginative story of Kjartan. At one time the story uses the broad and fluent form of narrative, leaving scene after scene to speak for itself; at other times it allows itself to be condensed into a significant phrase. Of these emphatic phrases there are two especially, both of them

speeches of Gudrun, and the one is the complement of the other: the one in the tone of irony, Gudrun's comment on the death of Kjartan, a repetition of Brynhild's phrase on the death of Sigurd;[1] the other Gudrun's confession to her son at the end of the whole matter.

Gudrun meets her husband coming back, and says: "A good day's work and a notable; I have spun twelve ells of yarn, and you have slain Kjartan, Olaf's son."

Bolli answers: "That mischance would abide with me, without thy speaking of it."

Said Gudrun: "I reckon not that among mischances; it seemed to me thou hadst greater renown that winter Kjartan was in Norway, than when he came back to Iceland and trampled thee under foot. But the last is best, that Hrefna will not go laughing to bed this night."

Then said Bolli in great wrath: "I know not whether she will look paler at this news than thou, and I doubt thou mightest have taken it no worse if we had been left lying where we fought, and Kjartan had come to tell of it."

Gudrun saw that Bolli was angry, and said: "Nay, no need of words like these; for this work I thank thee; there is an earnest in it that thou wilt not thwart me after."

This is one of the crises of the story, in which the meaning of Gudrun is brought out in a short passage of dialogue, at the close of a section of narrative full of adventure and incident. In all that precedes, in the relations of Gudrun to Kjartan before and after her marriage with Bolli, as after the marriage of Kjartan and Hrefna, the motives are generally left to be inferred from the events and

[1] Then Brynhild laughed till the walls rang again: "Good luck to your hands and swords that have felled the goodly prince" (*Brot Sgkv.* 10; cf. p. 119 above).

actions. Here it was time that Gudrun should speak her mind, or at least the half of her mind.

Her speech at the end of her life is equally required, and the two speeches are the complement of one another. Bolli her son comes to see her and sits with her.

The story tells that one day Bolli came to Helgafell; for Gudrun was always glad when he came to see her. Bolli sat long with his mother, and there was much talk between them. At last Bolli said: "Mother, will you tell me one thing? It has been in my mind to ask you, who was the man you loved best?"

Gudrun answers: "Thorkell was a great man and a lordly; and no man was goodlier than Bolli, nor of gentler breeding; Thord Ingwin's son was the most discreet of them all, a wise man in the law. Of Thorvald I make no reckoning."

Then says Bolli: "All this is clear, all the condition of your husbands as you have told; but it has not yet been told whom you loved best. You must not keep it secret from me longer."

Gudrun answers: "You put me hard to it, my son; but if I am to tell any one, I will rather tell you than another."

Bolli besought her again to tell him. Then said Gudrun: "I did the worst to him, the man that I loved the most."

"Now may we believe," says Bolli, "that there is no more to say."

He said that she had done right in telling him what he asked.

Gudrun became an old woman, and it is said that she lost her sight. She died at Helgafell, and there she rests.

This is one of the passages which it is easy to quote, and also dangerous. The confession of Gudrun loses incalculably when detached from the whole story, as also her earlier answer fails, by itself, to represent the meaning and the art of the

Saga. They are the two keys that the author has given; neither is of any use by itself, and both together are of service only in relation to the whole story and all its fabric of incident and situation and changing views of life.