

of music, he is not deeply musical.

And while he honored me with these self-revelations, I watched his restless face and hands, his frequent gestures. He appealed, protested, argued and denied, with little foreign shrugs, and other movements of the hands and face. His eyes and lips were quite as expressive as his words. And they were all, of course, incredibly un-English.

But every now and then he would remind me, in a passing phrase, that though by birth a Pole, he was intensely English. And so, perhaps, he is in certain ways. Yet, temperamentally, he is a Polish sailor.

I had heard from friends of his that Conrad was a dreamer and impractical in his politics, a devotee of monarchies long ruined, a partisan of lost and hopeless causes. I tried to draw him out upon this point, but he seemed shy of being made to talk about them. He touched on Ireland in a glancing way, and only told me that, while he might sympathize with some ideals of the Irish, he thought that now they had no reason to rage furiously. "Once an Irish rebellion may have been justified. It is so no longer."

Had he lived centuries ago, I do not doubt he would have fought with the Crusaders. There is a vein of very fine romantic chivalry in some of his characters—for example, Heyst—which he has borrowed from his own romantic soul.

It relieved him to get back to books and authors—above all to Flaubert, and "that work of beauty absolute, 'Salammbô.'" Next to "Salammbô," though in quite a different way, he ranked, not, as I had foolishly suggested, "Mme. Bovary" but "L'Education Sentimentale." Of Balzac he said many reverent things. But they were less spontaneous than this praise of Flaubert. He admitted that there might be some analogies between his own literary methods and that of the inventor of "La Comedie Humaine."

"Only," he added, "let us not forget the fact that we are comparing a great genius with a writer who—"

And again he shrugged his shoulders. For my part, I do not believe that Conrad borrowed anything from Balzac. His style and method are the reflection of his own mind.

He had known Guy de Maupassant, but not until his brain had lost its power. And Zola? I might be surprised, he said, to hear that he had an uncommon liking for a work which most place very low indeed, "Potbouille." He admired Zola's "Germinal," and "L'Assommoir," and "La Curée." Nor did he sniff, by any means, at "Rome." He referred to the late Henry James, respectfully, though not, it seemed to me, enthusiastically. I had meant to ask him what he thought of our own Joseph Hergesheimer. But somehow we branched off to other topics. And of a sudden we were chattering about



James Huneker, who had once called on him at his old home near Ashford. He had been very much impressed by that exponent of diabolist mysteries.

Of the English writers of our times whom we discussed, the only ones, I think were John Galsworthy and W. L. George. The author of "Blind Alley" was summed up by Conrad in these words: "A strong writer—a harsh nature." Though it was evident that he admired and liked John Galsworthy, both as a man of letters and a proven friend, he, rather strangely seemed to think of him less as a novelist than as a

ambition to be treated as a dramatist. He seemed more interested in his stage arrangement of "The Secret Agent" than in "The Rescue" or the rest of his novels. He questioned me about the New York theaters, and told me that, to produce just the impression he desired to make with his first play, he would prefer a small house to a larger one. His drama is in four acts, all intimate although extremely tense. The subject of the play, as of the book, is an attempt by certain anarchists to blow up the great Greenwich Observatory.

His mind was running, too, on the idea of having an opera libretto made out of another—and more famous work of his. The distressful failure to make much of "Victory" on the London boards last year had not disheartened him. It was due less to any lack of good material for a drama in the book, than to the way in which the playwright had made use of it.

We went into the green and silent gardens which surrounded the house, and I was charmed to find that, like some other authors who love nature well, my host knew little about trees and shrubs. Those giants yonder might be elms or oaks. Perhaps though, they were beeches, planes or maples. The hedges? Were they box or privet? What did it matter? Surely they were hedges. We glanced at an enchanting old Dutch garden, filled with lovely country flowers of many hues. And then, returning to the house, we had a glimpse of a large, restful room, which but for the bow window at one end, might have been taken for an exquisite French *salon*. The couch, the chairs and curtains, all seemed French. And they were all disposed as such things are in France.

"My wife objects to English drawing rooms," said Conrad. "She chose the furniture. It is her room."

And then he led me, not without some pride, first to his hall, and then up a wide, stately staircase, to his wife's boudoir. There, in the English way, we had our tea, and talked again. We hovered on the skirts of modern opera for a time, and Conrad spoke, as a mere layman, about "Carmen." It seemed a miracle to him that two librettists could have compressed the chief essentials of the novel into the short space allowed them for an opera book. To him such condensation was amazing. But then he knew so very little about opera.

When we returned to his own room again, the conversation turned on Maeterlinck. But not for long. The mystic Belgian had no lure for Conrad.

"There is something in me which repels the mystical," said he. "I am too far deeply interested in humanity as we know it, to care much about the possible afterlife."

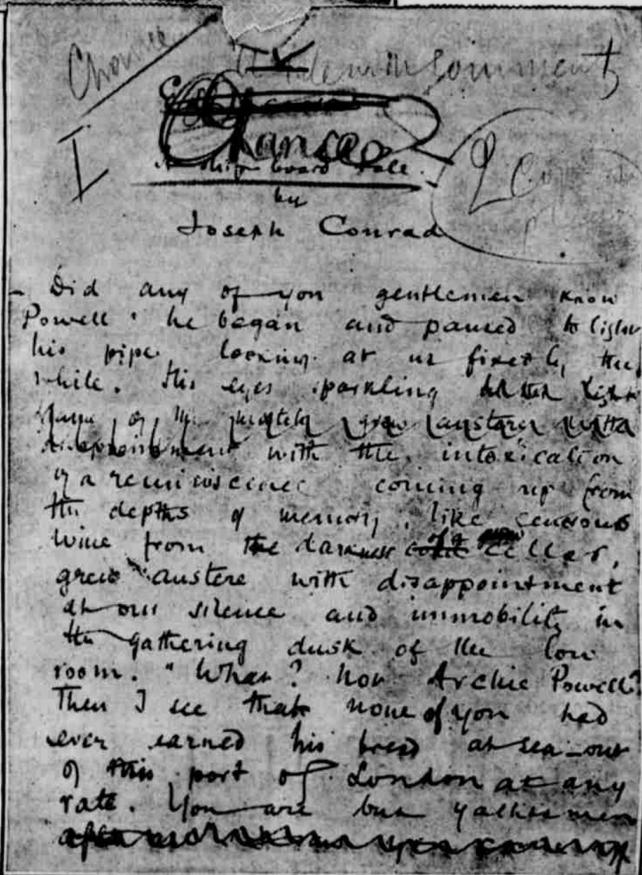
His aim was to express the souls of men—to show them as he had seen and studied them. He sought to paint them in their right environments, with all their human strength and human weaknesses. The subject for a book might flash on him. But he must have the proper characters to make his book. In "Typhoon" for example. He had seen typhoons. The events he had described really happened. But the captain of the ship was not the one he drew. He did not fit the tale. Then all at once he had recalled another captain and he had made of him his model. The story first, including the chief characters. And next the ambient. A story needed living men and women. Once these had been evoked the rest was simple—at least as simple as to him it could be.

I irked him, when, without any thought of flattery, I told what his books had meant to me.

"Please don't say things like that. They make me uncomfortable," was his response to my first eulogy.

He led me gently back to "Rome" and Zola, and listened, with unfeigned and boyish interest to what I told him of a meeting I had had, in the dim past, with the great Pope whom Zola drew with such fidelity. Though he is not a Catholic (at all events in practice), and though not a mystic, he must have been uncommonly impressed by Leo XIII at some time in his life.

But I had gone upon my pilgrimage to Bishopsbourne to talk, not of myself but of the writer who for a few fleeting hours, had been my host. So, with regret, I turned my face away from "Oswald's."



Above—Author of "The Rescue" with his wife and son takes tea in the library of his Bishopsbourne Home. Below—First page of the original manuscript of Joseph Conrad's "Chance."

Did any of you gentlemen know Powell? he began and paused to light his pipe, looking at us fixedly, the while. His eyes sparkling with light, and his mouth slightly open, with the intonation of a reminiscence coming up from the depths of memory, like curious wine from the darkest cellar, great austere with disappointment at our silence and immobility in the gathering dusk of the low room. "When? how Archie Powell? Then I see that none of you had ever earned his bread at sea—our rate. You are but yachtsmen after all."

dramatist. And bit by bit, at last it dawned on me, that, very possibly, it was rather as a dramatist than as a writer of stories Galsworthy fancied himself. But this I gathered chiefly, if not wholly, from the stress that Conrad laid upon his plays. Perhaps this may be due to the mere fact that Conrad also just now has the

United States Constitution on Money—By FREDERICK R. BURCH

THE subject of money is disposed of by the United States Constitution with extreme brevity. It is as follows:

Article 1, Section 8. Sub-Div. 5. The Congress shall have power to coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coins.

These provisions give to Congress the exclusive right to do three things. First, to coin money; second, to regulate the value of money; third, to regulate the value of foreign coins. These rights are each of equal importance.

The right of Congress to coin money and a denial of that right to the states or to individuals is unquestioned.

The right of Congress to regulate the value of domestic and foreign money and a denial of that right to the states or to individuals is equally beyond question.

A proper construction of these provisions of the Constitution turns on the true meaning of the words to regulate the value. Thus far Congress has accepted the narrow and erroneous construction that to regulate the value of money means to establish the number of grains of gold in a dollar (see U. S. R. S., Section 3511).

If establishing the number of grains of gold in a dollar regulates the value thereof, Congress could regulate the value of brass by establishing the number of ounces of copper it should contain to the pound. This would regulate the value of brass and the law of supply and demand could be thrown in the discard.

Although Congress believes that establishing the number of grains of gold in a dollar regulates the value thereof the representatives realized the impossibility of regulating the value of foreign coins the

same way, so, to their minds, the following act would accomplish the desired effect:

Tariff Act of August 27, 1894, ch. 349, Section 5: "That the value of foreign coin as expressed in the money of account of the United States shall be that of the pure metal of such coin of standard value. Provided, that the Secretary of the Treasury may order the reliquidation of any entry at a different value whenever satisfactory evidence shall be produced to him," and so on.

This statute fixes a value of foreign coins, but does not regulate the value. To the contrary the proviso leaves foreign coins to regulate the value of the Secretary of the Treasury.

Although the Constitution empowers the Congress to regulate the value of money Congress thus far has failed to do so.

Money is not a commodity, that is, wealth produced by individuals for barter and trade, but it is, however, a governmental factor of commerce, which, in common with true commodities, is subject to the law of supply and demand.

No one can successfully deny that a supply of money in excess of the requirements of exchange means money of lesser value while requirements of exchange in excess of the supply of money means money of greater value.

Money is therefore directly amenable to the law of supply and demand and whoever regulates the supply of money, that is, the amount permitted to circulate at any given time, will be the parties who regulate the value thereof.

That money has a very fluctuating value after coinage is patent; and that Congress should regulate this

value is evident. This it fails to do. Contrary thereto, it delegates this important constitutional function to the bankers and money lenders, and they regulate the value of money at will with a reckless disregard of the rights and interests of the people.

They, the bankers and money lenders, have thus become a co-ordinate branch of the government, self constituted and answerable to naught but their own interests.

The value of money can be, and is, regulated solely by control of the volume in circulation, and this control is, and rightly so, placed in the Congress by the Constitution.

To enforce this right the government must retain control of the volume of money in circulation; and the method by which this is to be accomplished is to establish government banks, thereby taking the control of money out of the hands of private individuals.

This change will cause no confusion whatever. Business will be conducted in the same manner as at present. The government will make a charge for the use of the money, just as the bankers do today, but this charge will not be interest as now understood. It will be an indirect tax on the people to defray governmental expenses.

This tax thus levied by the government will be paid back to the people, while under the present system it is to be loaned back only, thus to become a constant and consuming debt, and for no value received.

Money is the blood of commerce. Its red corpuscles, gold, and its white corpuscles, silver, could and would, if unrestricted, circulate through the industrial body, insuring good health thereto, just as that vital fluid maintains equilibrium in a living body.