have seen her Head taken off by Malbo-
more, at one Stroke of his Scimitar; which, when performed to the Height of Expectation, could have been but a
Pantomime Trick, and beneath the Dignity of a Tragedy; unless you could sup-
pose, the Hero was laced a Butcher. — As
to the Trick, perhaps, some of our tender
heARTed Countrymen, would have said
that Objection, by having her Head cut
off in good Earnest, and so have had the
Pleasure of a new Irene every Night.

A special censure was given to Sir
William Yonge's rather free epilogue
for the play. 'It is its own Satire, and
he that has a mind to Burlesque it, has
nothing to do but to Copy it.'

There still remains the mystery of
the authorship of this pamphlet. One
would like to be able to attribute it to
Fielding, or to some other famous con-
temporary, but there are no specific
cues to warrant such an ascription.
No reference to the review seems to
be known in correspondence or diaries
of the period, and until some such
discovery is made, the critic remains
completely anonymous; and all that
can be claimed for the piece is that it
reflects at least one man's opinion of
Samuel Johnson's only attempt to
write for the London play-going pub-
lic. Johnson had one month earlier
(on 9 January 1749) captivated the
town with his poem, The Vanity of
Human Wishes. Perhaps he was not
too unhappy as he sat in a box at Drury
Lane, in his new scarlet waistcoat and
gold-leaf hat, and heard his twelve-
year-old Irene exposed to the gibes of
the London vixis. He is not known to
have responded publicly to the pres-
ent critic; if he read the pamphlet, it is
probable that he went on feeling, as he
later told Boswell, 'like the Monu-
ment.'

Robert F. Metzler, Jr.

I am indebted to Mr. H. W. Libbie, of
the Yale University Library, for very help-
ful suggestions and criticisms in the pre-
paration of this note.

Nietzsche-Valéry: A Letter

A stroke of mischief and boy-
ish humor in Paul Valéry was
noticeable even in his later
years, when he had become famous—
doubly noticeable in a man of such
centered, detached intelligence.
He never pontificated (and said of
the solemn poets of a great European
nation: 'Comme ils doivent être ennuye-
cux!'). In a late work of his, L'Île
fixe, one hears his voice and the tone
of his conversation. The same is true
of his letters.

His playfulness shows in one of
them, written in the years when he
had withdrawn from almost all liter-
ary activity — a letter addressed to a
man a few years older, a poet and art
critic belonging to the group of the
Mercur de France, André Fontaines
(1865-1948). The two had met as
members of Mallarmé's circle, in the
early nineties, when Valéry first came
to Paris, Fontaines (whose name
here, with an allusion to the German
'von,' is spelt 'Vonelainsse') was pro-
sumably then a functionary of the
Paris theater. He wrote of his friend-
ship with Valéry in De Stéphane
Mallarmé à Paul Valéry (1938). This
letter in all probability dates from
May or June 1899 (Fontaines thought,
Monsieur Fichte n'a pas eu
le temps, grâce à la blancheur de
son regard, mieux de joie de
mein cœur avec l'élégant
d'Adagio ajouté.

Dont j'ai bien fait !

Puisez donc le droit académique
et l'ampule de Piner au plus vite
et bien sûr feriez.

D'un complément s'il est bien fort.

D'abord, ce fut tout, mais pour
que c'était admirable, bien

guiroule et revoilà, bonne fin de

garniture pour se. En cela, Pode,
gestre. Il n'est chancres, et fini chez

vus tous l'Inonzi Royal Montcal

ejection. Association associée.

Hebdomadaire Nous comprende.

C'est un symbole Malcondurale.

Monsieur Fichte, d'hui pour peu que

vous n'ayez eu le plus tard entre

chez donc ici, fasse que nous.

Que par tant, entendez intelligible

Modère, il est merveilleux ! "Ce me

nervez donc chers, cher ! Monsieur

Fichte, ne dit que chez nous

un dyque dans le chaire de ce

pitho de Scholl et de Sappho.

Mais, monsieur Fichte, bien, un

Dyque blessant, charmers d'amoins

téte à se rendre souvent dans

le lieu maudit où je travaille

c'annulation transcendantal che.
20 Mars la galère.

Hier nous avions dûnourrir ou
avoir le choix sans le cri de
Fus demi-Venezuela mais nous
avions la chance de la
commande et la bataille, la
mauvaise porte
qui réunit tout dans l'abîme.

Ainsi que nous avons retrouvé un
droit par M le baron de Launay
Falerie (Mon. havr. 2113, 2501, Matl. 21100)
zou le dauphin de cette barbe, le
bien de cet œil ferme.

Te même, 27 feu, toujours, m'oblige à
ces pas.

La galère n'a rien laissé de l'œsophage
à ce côte à ce côté de la santé
Le royaume de Dieu dans un platine.

Pas le Verre couronnant un ancien, Vagner, et

Bar Milana, qui ne gompred
Compose !

En attendant prochains prix, je

Monsieur Falarie ne donnerait pas un
lire aux deux sur nous et hantables.

Commune grande de l'infirmerie à cette
dable change, pour gérer.

Il me cherche de la boussole
au plus pour les ames de Malouine
vers l'été, au bord de laquelle
que l'hôte, bar messe, gomme
mes généralement, carrement.

Y W

1 C les Vaches mises en main

comme je voyais, dessiné.

Plate II
June 9). It is written on mourning stationery. The drawing at the head and the authorization of transmission at the end are in red ink.¹

Without knowing German, Valéry has tried in this letter to render the heavy Teutonic accent (‘tégusdant’ for ‘dégustant’, etc.), as Balcac did with Nucingen, and has amused himself by using a word order quite foreign to the French tongue. And he makes fun of the German love for titles, as in the signature.

Henri Albert (here ‘Alpert’), also one of the writers for the Mercure, spent years on the French translation of Nietzsche (Ainsi parlait Zarathustra, Par delà le bien et le mal, Pages choisies, etc.). Perhaps the rising sun in the drawing at the head of the letter is that of Nietzsche’s Morgenröte (Aurore).

Von Schwartzkoppen, a name appearing just at the right of the drawing, was the German military attaché involved in the Dreyfus affair, then still at its height.

‘L’ingoramlet n’est pas mon fort’ is an ironical reference to the famous first line of Monsieur Teste, ‘La sotise n’est pas mon fort’ — a line which Valéry, not dreaming that he would one day become a member of the Academy, had used a second time in reply to an inquiry from the Mercure: ‘L’Académie n’est pas mon fort.’ ²

Aurélien Scholl, now forgotten, was then a popular Boulevard writer.

The essay ‘Le temps,’ taking H. G. Wells’s Time Machine (1895) as a starting point, speaks of a ‘Géométrie du Temps’ and is one of Valéry’s three Méthodes: the abbreviations stand for ‘Méthodes. Réduction du Mercure.’ The essay was published in May 1899, in the same number as Fontaine’s novel L’amour éternel de la solitude.

Much of the atmosphere of those years and of the life of that generation is in these lines. There are the attacks on Mallarmé the ‘obscure,’ and the pride and scorn with which the young poets received them: see the sentences preceding the stanza quoted from Mallarmé’s sonnet ‘La chevelure vol d’une flamme.’

And there is Nietzsche, long since insane (he died a year later), living with his sister, who had already founded the Nietzsche-Archiv. Valéry, who was not a methodical reader, but who had looked through Albert’s volumes, was disquieted and attracted. Much later he said: ‘J’y remarquais je ne sais quelle intime alliance du lyrique et de l’analytique que mal encore n’avait pas délibérément accompli ... Mais il me choquait par d’autres endroits.’ ³

And in his preface to Sénard’s (1917) he called Nietzsche ‘ce poète nerveux, slave de langue allemande, à qui l’énergie plaira comme un toxique.’

There is not only amusement that speaks in this letter to Fontaine’s. The shadow of the Superman falls across its lines, and the threatening shadow of Germany. Valéry sensed things far ahead; he had warned of that danger in ‘La conquête allemande,’ published in 1897 in W. E. Henley’s New Review.

Still, the letter arose no doubt simply as a reply to a remark on Nietzsche, or it may have been written.

¹ Quatre lettres de Paul Valéry au sujet de Nietzsche, 1927.

² Quatre lettres de Paul Valéry au sujet de Nietzsche, 1927.

³ Quatre lettres de Paul Valéry au sujet de Nietzsche, 1927.
primarily to postpone a dinner engagement. Since the writing is very legible, it has been thought that facsimile reproduction (see Plates I and II) would serve the reader, without transcription. A straightforward rendering in English, with no attempt to transfer to another language the idiosyncrasies of pronunciation or word order, might run as follows:

Sir!

Mr Falerié has told me that you did not enjoy all the expected pleasure in savoring my selection of my work in the excellent translation by Albert. So much the worse for you!!!

You should read the whole of Zarathustra and before that the Good and Evil and then you'll see. The incomplete is not my strong point. However, I have complete confidence in the good taste, so characteristic of your nation, that you show in understanding and loving, Thou art Poet, just as I am superman, and you are in the Paris Octroi Service just as I am in the Imperial-Royalmental Alienation-associated-association.

We surely can understand each other. A simple misapprehension. Mr Falerié, moreover, has been good enough to promise me that he himself would do his best as far as you are concerned. I wish very keenly that My Works may be the Ornament of Your Solitude. Do you see, do you feel how spirited-intelligent I am this Morning? It's wonderful. I feel so light, so light! Mr Falerié tells me that I am sort of a hybrid between Scholl and Sappho. But Mr Falerié is a joking fellow, never serious. I often meet him in the bad places where I work at transcendental amusement at 30 marks a volume.

As for us Germans we love joy and critique. As for you French you like obscure and decadent poetry, metaphysics and Art. You're too frivolous. Thus I did not understand one single word in Mr Falerié's article (Merc. Franc. n° 113. XXXI . . . Math. Rech.1) on time. It's not clear, it's not Latin, it's really French.

Likewise, could you explain these verses for me:

La chevelure vol d'une flamme à l'extrême
Occident de désirs pour la toute déployer
Se pose (je dirais mourir un diadème)
Vers le front couronné son ancien foyer etc.

By Minerva! I don't understand a thing!

Meanwhile, believe me truly yours,

F. Nietzsche

Mr Falerié will not be able to dine with you on Monday; but he asks your gracious permission to invoice himself to your table Thursday — about 7 o'clock?

He charges me to present his best regards to Madame Vondausse at whose feet I on my own account place my superhuman compliments.

Dr F. N.
1st class Superman-Major
of Leipzig-University —

Approved:
Good for transmittal
for The Physician-in-chief;
and by authorization:
J. Foolkeeper . . .

Herbert Steiner

'Valery writes 'Sure.'
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