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**Autor:** Douglas, Norman  
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grande prudence, furent démasqués par une bavarde, et assez scandaleusement séparés. Le plus blessé des deux s'appliqua, des mois durant, à découvrir une femme qui plût au mari de la bavarde, et il y réussit terriblement.

Abîmé dans son dessin, il s'oubliait lui-même, reléguait sa douleur au second plan étudiait et comparait, suscitait des rencontres, violentait le hasard. S'il se confia à moi, ce fut par fatigue. Il venait me voir sous son aspect inoffensif de jeune lettré, un peu flétri et creusé par le travail ingrat des traductions. Il appuyait sa tête au dossier d'un gros fauteuil imité de l'anglais, affreux et vert. «Je me repose un instant» disait-il. En quoi il mentait, car il fermait politiquement les yeux, comme le prêtre qui confesse, paupières closes, se sépare du pénitent pour voir mieux la figure du péché. — — —

Feindre sans défaillance, longuement, par silences, par sourires, — devenir en apparence une autre personne, voilà qui relègue au loin le petit mensonge bavard. C'est une tâche, j'eus le loisir de m'en apercevoir depuis, qui convient à la seule jeunesse, une manière de sécrétion, comme à l'insecte l'élaboration de l'élyte cornée, du casque et du corselet de dure chitine . . . Le dommage serait que le souvenir en fût perdu. Je le garde. De plus, il m'en reste une facilité à percer, à déjouer le bel artifice qui met en oeuvre l'enfance et l'adolescence. Par là, je goûte, mieux que beaucoup d'adultes, le plaisir défendu de pénétrer ce qui est jeune. Le frais mensonge, l'art barbare et fin ne m'en font pas grief, au contraire. Mon puissant et puéril adversaire aux multiples visages aime le jeu, se livre quand il est découvert, montre en rougissant de joie le point précis où je l'atteins . . .

## On the homosexual problem

*From «Late Harvest» by Norman Douglas, Ed. Lindsay Drummond, London 1946*

1. Here we have a constant and well-marked variety or 'sport' of our species—a variety which has existed from time immemorial among all races of men and in every walk of life—a variety which has given to mankind, caeteris paribus, as much of beauty and of use as has any other section of the community—a variety which, in typical specimens, is as persistive as the blue-winged teal, though not so rare.

2. It has been proposed to 'cure' this variety. To attain this end, their cooperation is required. Do they wish to cooperate? I have questioned some fifteen or twenty of them: would they like to be cured? They derided the suggestion. These were society folk, adults of both sexes, non-neurotic and non-convicted. Convicted persons will clamour for treatment in order to conciliate their entourage; these are no longer representative examples. Neurotics will run to an expert during one of their recurrent fits of despondency; these are equally suspect. Statistics might clarify the issue, if they took account of age and condition. I

should imagine, for instance, that the undergraduate class might yield a fairly high percentage of individuals eager for treatment, always supposing such treatment to be possible, and permanent. Impermanent treatment would be worse than none.

3. Meanwhile, how comes it that the often decorative counterpart of the male homosexual is not included in the ban? Is there any difference in the degree of delinquency involved? None whatever. This looks like a legal anomaly. Sauce for the gander should be sauce for the goose.

4. The heterosexual and the blissfully contented monosexual may take care of themselves; in prescribing for the homosexual a little sanity would not be out of place. And the first step towards sanity is to take over the more reasonable provisions of the Napoleonic Code. If English divorce laws are a disreputable tangle, our enactments on this head are a sinister joke, the source of multiple and unmerited suffering (other correspondents also emphasised this fact.) What calls for treatment is not so much homosexuality as the diseased attitude adopted towards it in non-Latin countries. This attitude is the outcome of Judaeo-Christian teaching, as interpreted by Puritanism.

## A Delicate Problem

But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter:

And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, And said, I pray you brethren, do not so wickedly . . .

Genesis 19:47.

The problem of the homosexual is almost as old as human society. Through history it has been met, or parried, in varying ways. The pagan Greek society in which Plato and Sappho lived regarded homosexual love as an established, honored relationship; while the Christian British society in which Oscar Wilde lived regarded it as a heinous crime. In Wilde's case the punishment was a prison sentence.

Modern society, which sets a premium on free discussion, has tended to meet the problem of the homosexual with considerable frankness. (As a girl sophomore in a leading Eastern coeducational college put it last week: «Of course we have a lot of sex deviants here. They must go somewhere for an education. Here we are sympathetic.») Although homosexual relations between males (sodomy) constitute a criminal offense in 46 of the states, as well as in Great Britain, psychiatric authorities, from Freud down to the present, have argued that the homosexual, although he cannot necessarily be cured, is probably a homosexual through no fault of his own. In his report, Dr. Kinsey estimated that at least 50 per cent of the male population experiences some overt homo-