

A ZOLA "MANUSCRIPT"

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IN the April 1900 number of the *North American Review* there appeared a contribution entitled "War" by Emile Zola. The original French version of this article, apparently not hitherto placed on record for researchers, belongs to the Douglass College Library, to which it was given by Theodore Stanton some time before his death in 1925.

Stanton graduated from Cornell in 1874 and lived in Paris for over fifty years, where he represented the Associated Press for some time. He edited a number of books, among them lives of Rosa Bonheur, and of his mother Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the woman suffrage leader. He produced a manual of American literature for Tauchnitz and for ten years conducted a department in the *Mercure de France* devoted to American literature.

In an article on Zola published in the *Nation* of October 9, 1902, Stanton himself told the story of how "War" came to be written. He asked Zola, when the latter returned from England much in need of funds, to write some long-promised essays. Zola objected that he was already busy on a novel, but when Stanton proposed that he might dictate to a stenographer who would then provide a transcript for translation, through curiosity, Zola agreed. They both thought that no revision would be necessary. However when the transcript arrived, Zola asked to see the copy, and, in Stanton's words, "two days later, the manuscript came back to me so black with corrections, additions and erasures, that a clean copy had to be made before it could be sent to the translator. Zola never again tried dictating."

The manuscript owned by Douglass College is the one which Zola corrected, and is signed by him. The translation which is recorded in Thieme's *Bibliographie de la littérature française de 1800 à 1930*, incorporates Zola's corrections. It omits however his final paragraph, in which he warns that a new civilization may never be brought about at all, for if mankind ignores his warning it will ruin itself.

In June 1899 Zola returned to Paris, after his flight to England to avoid imprisonment as a result of his "J'accuse" letter. While there he had already started work on the novel to which Stanton referred.

It was of course *Travail*. Incidentally much of the idealism expressed in "War" can be found in the book. Zola, in fact, to use a term more in vogue now than in his own day, and contrary to his earlier theories, by this time had fully espoused the cause of *la littérature engagée*. Nevertheless he failed to see in "War," as in *Travail*, that the Fourieristic ideas, the adoption of which would create a new society, could never be implemented, and that Marxism would take the lead in the immediate future, in the minds of men like Jaurès, in place of the theories advocated by Proudhon and Fourier.

In the article Zola attacks the increasing wave of militarism then so evident everywhere and advocates disarmament, failing which, he said, the resulting carnage would be so terrible that after it war would surely cease to exist. He castigates England's conduct in South Africa and notes that even the United States seems to have become a victim of the war fever. He calls on France to take the lead in a great socialist movement, a reorganization of labor, which will transform the world. Since then two great wars and a new French Republic have brought us no nearer to adopting the phalansteries of Fourier.

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