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Vol. 6



# DE PROFUNDIS

BY

OSCAR WILDE

METHUEN AND CO

36 ESSEX STREET, STRAND

LONDON

[388]

*Facsimile of title-page*



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E/VV



*De Profundis*

design by Charles Ricketts representing a bird escaping through prison bars.

Published February 23, 1905. [10,000 copies.]

See also No. 418.

[389]

The same.

Two hundred copies on English hand-made paper (9 $\frac{1}{4}$  by 6 in.), watermarked *Unbleached Arnold*, top edges gilt, sides uncut; price 21s. net.

Collation as in the ordinary edition, except that on reverse of half-title is: *This Edition on Handmade Paper is limited | to 200 copies.* | and the catalogue of publishers' announcements is omitted at the end of the book.

White buckram boards, gilt, with lettering and designs by Charles Ricketts. Along the back is *Oscar Wilde De Profundis* with three small leaf-designs, all in one line. On the front side, at the top, is *De Profundis | By Oscar Wilde |* in similar lettering with a design within a circle on either side: on the left side is the design used in the ordinary edition, and on the right side a similar design showing the dove flying free. At the foot is a third design representing a star in the sky above the "great waters," as described in the concluding paragraph of *De Profundis*.

[390]

The same.

Fifty copies on Japanese vellum (9 by 5 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.), top edges gilt, sides uncut; price 42s. net.

Collation as in the hand-made paper edition described above, except that the particulars of the issue [p. ii] read: *This Edition on Japanese vellum is limited | to 50 copies.*

In this edition there are three additional blank leaves at each end of the book, including in both cases the fly-leaf to the end-paper.

Covers of limp vellum, gilt, with overlapping fore-edges, the lettering and designs being the same as in the hand-made paper edition.

Before the English version was issued, an authorised translation in German by Dr. Max Meyerfeld appeared





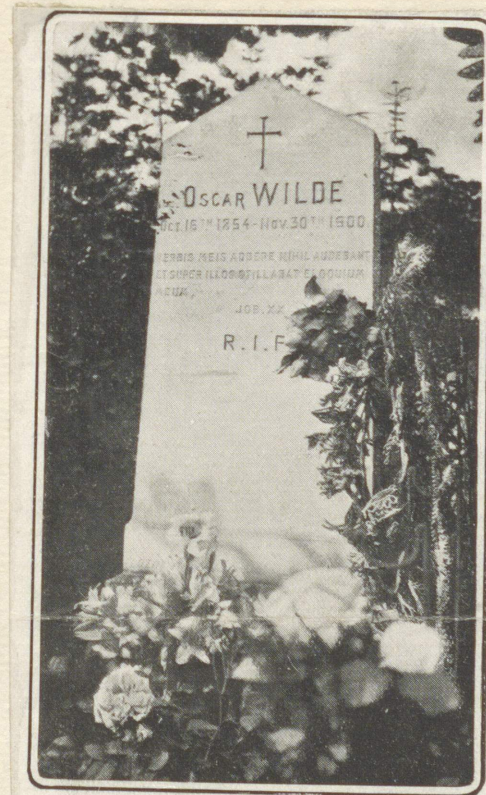






JULY 19, 1905.

The Tatler.



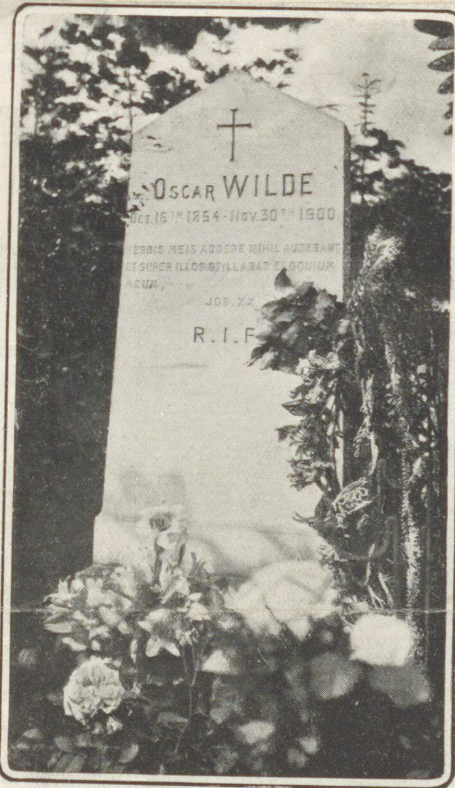
THE GRAVE OF MR. OSCAR WILDE

An American newspaper has started the suggestion that Mr. Oscar Wilde is still alive and that he is in a monastery in Europe. The fact that Mr. Robert Sherard, one of his friends, sends me the above interesting picture of his tomb in a Parisian cemetery, would be very little demonstration one way or the other were there not very abundant evidence that Mr. Wilde did actually die in Paris as has been stated in many quarters and by more than one friend who saw him when he died. This kind of rumour has frequently surrounded men concerning whom there was an element of mystery. There are many people in Ireland who still believe that Mr. Parnell is living; and similar opinions were long held in France by those who loved the great Napoleon.



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Dec. 14th. 1904.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter we beg to say that at present we have no prospectus of "De Profundis" but that we shall issue one very shortly. The book will be published in February 1905 in two editions, viz. 5/- net and a special large paper demy edition limited to 200 copies at £1. 1. 0. net. The latter edition has already been largely subscribed for and will probably be sold before publication. We would therefore suggest your ordering a copy either through your bookseller or through us immediately. We take the opportunity of enclosing our latest lists.

Yours faithfully,

*Methuen*  
g.  
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C. S. Millard, Esq., M.A.

56, High Street.

Oxford.



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Jan. 20th. 1908.  
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Yours faithfully,  
U. S. Millar, Esq.,  
11, Bedford Square,  
London, W. 1.

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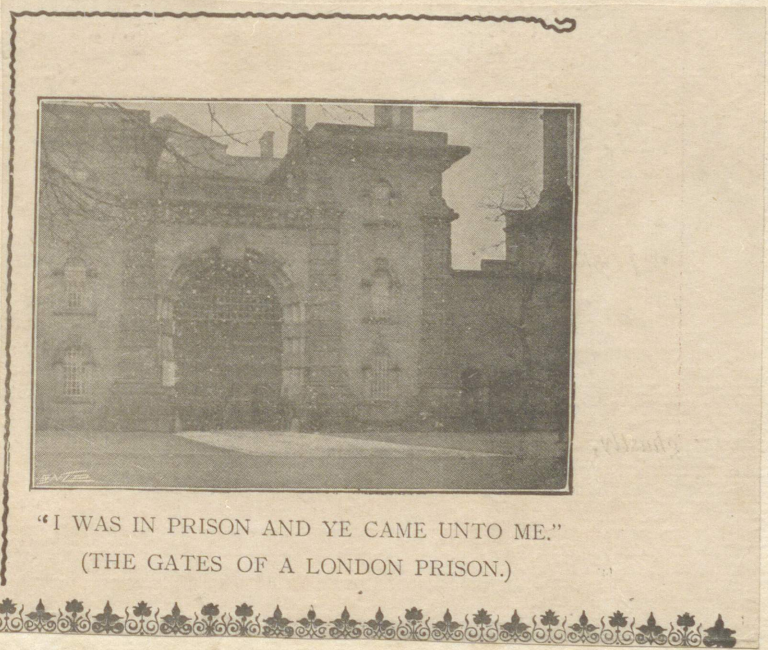
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[Specimen Page]

DE PROFUNDIS 25

them to be without meaning. Now I find hidden somewhere away in my nature something that tells me that nothing in the whole world is meaningless, and suffering least of all. That something hidden away in my nature, like a treasure in a field, is Humility.

It is the last thing left in me, and the best: the ultimate discovery at which I have arrived, the starting point for a fresh development. It has come to me right out of myself, so I know that it has come at the proper time. It could not have come before, nor later. Had any one told me of it, I would have rejected it. Had it been brought to me, I would have refused it. As I found it, I want to keep it. I must

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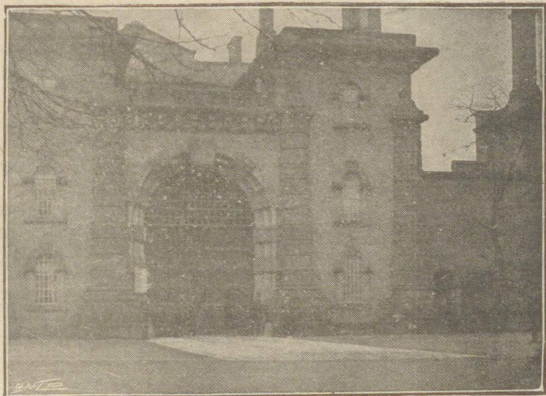
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## LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE

Contents for January, 1912

Vol. LXXXIX, No. 529

TO T. R.

ON REREADING THE "DE PROFUNDIS" OF OSCAR WILDE

BY FLORENCE EARLE COATES

HE stood alone, despairing and forsaken:  
Alone he stood, in desolation bare;  
From him avenging powers e'en hope had taken:  
He looked,—and thou wast there!

Why hadst thou come? Not profit, no: nor pleasure,  
Nor any faint desire of selfish gain,  
Had moved thee, giving of thy heart's pure treasure,  
To share a culprit's pain.

In that dear place, as thou hadst lonely waited  
To greet with noble friendship one who came  
Handcuffed from prison, pointed at and hated,  
Bowed low in mortal shame.

No thought hadst thou of any special merit,  
So simple, natural, seemed that action fine  
Which kept alive, in a despairing spirit,  
The spark of the divine,

And taught a dying soul that love is deathless,  
Even as when its holiest accents fell  
Upon a woman's heart who listened, breathless,  
By a Samaritan well.

## PUBLISHERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE.

On Feb. 23 will be published a book of the greatest interest and charm. It was written in prison by the author, and is entitled

## DE PROFUNDIS

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All the large paper copies are sold, and early application should be made for the ordinary edition.

Feb. 22.

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"Among all the most intimate, most moving records of the growth of a soul, I know none that lies nearer to the source of tears than this. . . . Never in anything he wrote did Wilde frame more exquisite phrases than we find here. 'De Profundis' reveals the man himself more than anything else he ever wrote, and it will, I think, be read longer than anything else he ever wrote. As a piece of literature it is worthy to stand beside Bunyan's 'Grace Abounding' and the 'Confessions' of Rousseau."—Daily Mail.

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FEBRUARY 23, 1905.

Daily Telegraph

1

DAILY TELEGRAPH

A POSTHUMOUS BOOK BY  
OSCAR WILDE.

“DE PROFUNDIS.”

By W. L. COURTNEY.

This is a curious and interesting work, written, so the publishers, Messrs. Methuen, announce, in the last few months of his prison life by the late Mr. Oscar Wilde. It is, indeed, more than curious and interesting; it is extraordinary. There is no necessity nowadays to recount how one of the most brilliant of contemporary writers lost fame, position, life, by an appalling trial and an appalling condemnation. Oscar Wilde was incontestably one of the best of modern dramatists, a man who seemed to be about to revive for the English stage that social comedy which we identify with the author of “The School for Scandal” and “The Rivals.” As a poet Mr. Wilde was an English equivalent to the French school of “decadents,” and as a prose writer he composed essays which, with all their obvious perversity and their love of paradox, will still remain as some of the most considerable achievements in a kind of literature of which many of us have lost the secret. As we all know, Mr. Oscar Wilde was a petulant, extravagant child of genius, a witty paradoxical creature, who wrote epigrams which everyone quoted, and who also was capable of saying things full of illuminating subtlety, not always true, but always brilliant and amusing. He was also a spoilt child of genius, not a little vain, a dramatic author who did not hesitate to come before the footlights with a jaunty air of indifference and a cigarette in his mouth. It is advisable to recall these things, because in “De Profundis” we are presented with a very different man. As we all knew him at the zenith of his prosperity he was the original of Mr. Robert Hichens’s clever book, “The Green Carnation”; but in the work before us he has learnt certain lessons, and has become master of certain phrases which come strangely enough from his mouth—phrases admirably composed, but breathing an entirely different moral from all that he had given us before.

Naturally this is the first point that interests us in this strange work, written apparently before “The Ballad of Reading Gaol,” and before the time of his release. Now and again we get sentences which remind us of the Oscar Wilde of the older time. He describes himself, for instance, as a “lord of language.” He says that he always stood “in symbolic relations to the art and the culture of his time.” He adds:



## DAILY TELEGRAPH

A POSTHUMOUS BOOK BY  
OSCAR WILDE.

## "DE PROFUNDIS."

By W. L. COURTNEY.

This is a curious and interesting work, written, so the publishers, Messrs. Methuen, announce, in the last few months of his prison life by the late Mr. Oscar Wilde. It is, indeed, more than curious and interesting; it is extraordinary. There is no necessity nowadays to recount how one of the most brilliant of contemporary writers lost fame, position, life, by an appalling trial and an appalling condemnation. Oscar Wilde was incontestably one of the best of modern dramatists, a man who seemed to be about to revive for the English stage that social comedy which we identify with the author of "The School for Scandal" and "The Rivals." As a poet Mr. Wilde was an English equivalent to the French school of "decadents," and as a prose writer he composed essays which, with all their obvious perversity and their love of paradox, will still remain as some of the most considerable achievements in a kind of literature of which many of us have lost the secret. As we all know, Mr. Oscar Wilde was a petulant, extravagant child of genius, a witty paradoxical creature, who wrote epigrams which everyone quoted, and who also was capable of saying things full of illuminating subtlety, not always true, but always brilliant and amusing. He was also a spoilt child of genius, not a little vain, a dramatic author who did not hesitate to come before the footlights with a jaunty air of indifference and a cigarette in his mouth. It is advisable to recall these things, because in "De Profundis" we are presented with a very different man. As we all knew him at the zenith of his prosperity he was the original of Mr. Robert Hichens's clever book, "The Green Carnation"; but in the work before us he has learnt certain lessons, and has become master of certain phrases which come strangely enough from his mouth—phrases admirably composed, but breathing an entirely different moral from all that he had given us before.

Naturally this is the first point that interests us in this strange work, written apparently before "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," and before the time of his release. Now and again we get sentences which remind us of the Oscar Wilde of the older time. He describes himself, for instance, "a child of the time." He says that he always stood "in symbolic relations to the art and the culture of his time." He adds: