

HENRY JAMES ON RUPERT BROOKE

HENRY JAMES on Rupert Brooke! Here is certainly a very wide interval, separated, artist and subject, by the greatest divergence of power, and one may be even amazed at the contrast involved. He is surely, James, in all his elaborateness, trying to square the rose and compute the lily, algebraical advances upon a most simple thesis. Brooke—a nature so obvious, which had no measure at all for what the sum had done to him, and for all that about him, or for those stellar ecstasies which held him bound with fervour as poet, planetary swimmer, and gifted as well with a fine stroke for the sea, and runner of all the beautiful earth places about the great seas' edge.

For me, there is heaviness and over-elaboration paramount in this preface to the Letters from America, excess of byword, a strained relationship with his subject, but that would of course be Jamesian, and very naturally, too. It is hardly, this preface, the tribute of the wise telling of beautiful and "blinding youth", surely more the treatise of the problemist forging his problem, as the sculptor might; something too much of metal or stone, too ponderous, too severe let one say, for its so gracing and brightening theme, something not springing into bloom, as does