ONE white hand droops across your knee; you stare
Off into space with shadowy eyes that seem
To watch a lone horizon dark with rain
And cities ruinous and seas forlorn
Of sun and movement.

Like a dead leaf stirs
That listless hand, and then grows still again,
And round your chin, the soft and child-like chin
As delicate as dew, a ghostly sigh
Hovers and then is gone.

Serene and broad
Your white brow is beneath its banded hair;
Serene the bosom that so softly breathes;
Serene the milk-white throat that moves no more
Than marble moves, the gently hollowed cheek;
Serene, too, seems the body grown so still
And drooping like a wing out-wearied by
Too many homing seas.

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Ah, calm it seems,
But at some mystic core a mystic fire
Still burns, the ruby tumult of the blood
Still leaves it perilous, still played upon
By ghostly fingers from forgotten tombs!
Serene you seem to wait, yet round your eyes
So blue with weariness, a trouble lurks;
Behind the honeyed corners of your mouth
Left tremulous with passion, wakes and stirs
A protest. Close about the parted lips,
Rose-red and woman-weak and warm,
Broods something over-tense, a wistfulness
That has not been appeased, a hidden note
Of hunger that has gone unsatisfied,
A question tragical, a startled cry
Unanswered, and a thought that cannot sleep.
Out of the gloom I see your white face yearn
As silence yearns for music, or the sea
For morning waits. A mirrored wonderment,
A far-off glory, from you flashes and shines
And then is gone, as in a casement burns
The sunset gold. And still you scarcely move,
And speak no word, and passive droop the hands
That in their listless movements stirred so like
A little child's, and all the weariness
Of all the world seems weighing on your soul.
Out of the ages gaze your brooding eyes,
And barrier guls of time between us drift,
And shadow-like you face the shadowy night
Above earth’s sleeping hills, and converse hold
With hidden things.

And I watch desolate
Beside you; I, who but an hour ago
Seemed one with you in flesh and spirit, I
Must sit alone and lonely see you mourn,
And feel again still close some iron door
Between your soul and mine. For still you wait
Half-wearily content with discontent,
Still idle with unrest you idly watch.
Calm with a fever that o’er fiercely burns
And saddened with a joy too keen to endure,
You stare off into space and say no word.
But from those unassuaged and shadowy lips
I catch some echo of the timeless quest.
I hear your spirit’s whisper that all life
Is nothing, that from sleep to sleep we move
And know not where we go, that through the dark
Your groping hands seek something not of mist
And moonlight, that amid the endless cold
You crave some keen and momentary warmth,
Some glory more than earthly glory ask,
The wine that reddens ocean foam where far
To straining eyes the darkling waters reach,
The wine that Twilight drinks from paling rose
And leaf, the wine that tender April pours
Across the morning world, the selfsame wine
That sends October singing down the hills
And wakens in the sunburnt breast of youth
The wonder and the lyric ache of love.
For life's last gift of rapture you cry out
And will not be denied, for one great flash
Of splendor through earth's glooms inglorious.
Lone as a lute your pleading voice invokes
Companionship, your luring body calls
For secret consummations, for the kiss
Enkindling, and the tangled joy and grief
Of having given much. You question not
Time's course uncomprehended. Childishly
You yield yourself, and in return demand
Only that you be taken. On the winds
Of fire you make a bed wherein to rest.
Humbled and helpless on man's will you wait,
The appointed vessel, and the lamp ordained,
The hour predestined, and the dream fulfilled.
As women give, you give, accepting naught
But your own bosom's grim necessity
Of being crushed. Across the ghostly years,
Where nothing may endure beyond the grave,
You cry that love must last; you grow content
With soft capitulation. Yet your hour
Of wayward triumph knows the chill of tombs,
Your dusky-lidded eyes are dark with tears,
Your softest words are saddened with the knell
Your own sad heart makes vocal.
A Woman at Dusk

Then you cling
To me and ask if Death could vanquish love,
And cry that I must keep you for all time.
But pitiful it seems; for as you speak
The shadow falls, the rapture melts away,
The light upon the darkling sea-line fails,
And soft as mist between your soul and mine
The solemn wonder widens. So you sit
In astral silence, watching still for that
Which never comes. In utter weariness
You wait, with that last emptiness of soul
Which leaves you shadowy-eyed and bowed with grief,
Yet veiled in wayward beauty, creeping back
And crowning you with wonder.

Mystical
You suddenly become, and mystical
The thrice-sealed message and the woman-thirst
That draws you passive to the shores of pain,
That flings you broken from the seas of dream,
And in surrender causes you to reap!
Enriched your body grows with ichors strange
And of the gods you seem, and infinite
You are, because of infinite desires:
A something to be sought of land and sea,
And sheltered tenderly, and sorrowed for,
And made the bearer of the final cruse.
For desolate my soul cries out again
And all your body with its crown of grief

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Wakes with an answering cry, and as you sit
With one white hand across your huddled knees
My lips seek out your lips of mortal rose,
And tremulous you yield, and from the pain
Of utter sacrifice still garner joy.
Then burns the flame anew; then glows once more
The momentary splendor; then the tide
Sings back into its sea, and then the rose
Is full, and all the throats of song are soft!
But soon the voices fail, and soon we know
How keenly fugitive the glimpse, how close
The shadow is, how bitter-sweet the end;
And being mortal, how our mortal love
Only on winds of fire may find relief,
And from the rise and fall of passion’s tides
Still catch at some forlorn tranquillity!

Arthur Stringer.
ELLIS PARK

Little park that I pass through,
I carry off a piece of you
Every morning hurrying down
To my work-day in the town;
Carry you for country there
To make the city ways more fair.
I take your trees,
And your breeze,
Your greenness,
Your cleanness,
Some of your shade, some of your sky,
Some of your calm as I go by;
Your flowers to trim
The pavements grim;
Your space for room in the jostled street
And grass for carpet to my feet.
Your fountains take and sweet bird calls
To sing me from my office walls.
All that I can see
I carry off with me.
But you never miss my theft,
So much treasure you have left.
As I find you, fresh at morning,
So I find you, home returning—
Nothing lacking from your grace.
All your riches wait in place

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For me to borrow
On the morrow.

Do you hear this praise of you,
Little park that I pass through?

_Helen Hoyt._

_TREES_

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

_Joyce Kilmer_
O DRIMIN DHU DEELISH

O Drimin Dhu Deelish, my kind Kerry cow,
As black as the night with one star on her brow,
For Drimin Dhu Deelish, the silk of the kine,
For Drimin Dhu Deelish I mourn and I pine.

As O ru Drimin Dhu, och oru agraw,
As O ru Drimin Dhu, go dhu tu slaun!

For when to the milking I'd call Drimin Dhu,
'Twas then like a deer down the mountain she flew;
And ah, when beneath her the stool I would place,
How oft on my shoulder she rubbed her soft face!

As O ru Drimin Dhu, och oru agraw,
As O ru Drimin Dhu, go dhu tu slaun!

And though sixteen gallon from Drimin would hail,
And under my fingers froth up in the pail,
She ne'er kicked one keeler away o'er the green,
For no cow genteeler than Drimin was seen.

As O ru Drimin Dhu, och oru agraw,
As O ru Drimin Dhu, go dhu tu slaun!

The mountain bog slid and surprised Drimin Dhu,
Though bravely she battled to break her way through;
Till down, down she went, with a drizzen and drone,
Poor Drimin Dhu Deelish, and left us alone.

As O ru Drimin Dhu, och oru agraw,
As O ru Drimin Dhu, go dhu to slaun!

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When other cows ailed in the wet and the cold,
Our Drimin was evermore hearty and bold;
Straight back and firm body and honey-sweet breath,
Mild eyes and grave manners, how could you know death!

As O ru Drimin Dhu, och oru agraw,
As O ru Drimin Dhu, go dhu tu slaun!

O silk of the kine, when amongst us you stood
No milk was as fine and no butter as good,
But oh, ’tis chill water and oh ’tis dry scone,
Since Drimin, since Drimin Dhu Deelish is gone!

As O ru Drimin Dhu, och oru agraw,
As O ru Drimin Dhu, go dhu tu slaun!

THE SEA SINGER

The heaven was star-strewn
Above the new moon;
   Before a faint breeze we were floating;
When out of the distance, still clearer and clearer
And nearer and nearer there sighed
   And there cried
A strange, lonesome song o’er the tide.

We stood still and grave
To watch a far wave,
   That gathered and gathered toward us;
The Sea Singer

Till laughing aboard us there leaped from the billow
With locks long and yellow — a Maid —
    The Sea Maid,
Whose song on our heart-strings had played.

Sweet pain, pleasure sharp,
She poured from her harp;
    Around her we listened in wonder,
The wave warbled under, the stars in heaven's hollow
They all seemed to follow her song,
    Her lone song,
As idly we fleeted along.

To leave us she turned;
Then rashly we burned
    To keep her bright beauty before us.
But when to enring her we strove, the Sea Singer
She wove her white finger around
    And around,
And left us all standing spell-bound.

Alfred Perceval Graves
TRIUMPH OF THE SINGER

I shake my hair in the wind of morning
For the joy within me that knows no bounds.
I echo backward the vibrant beauty
Wherewith heaven's hollow lute resounds.

I shed my song on the feet of all men,
On the feet of all shed out like wine;
On the whole and the hurt I shed my bounty,
The beauty within me that is not mine.

Turn not away from my song, nor scorn me,
Who bear the secret that holds the sky
And the stars together; but know within me
There speaks another more wise than I.

Nor spurn me here from your heart to hate me,
Yet hate me here if you will. Not so
Myself you hate, but the Love within me
That loves you whether you would or no.

Here Love returns with love to the lover
And Beauty unto the heart thereof,
And Hatred unto the heart of the hater,
Whether he would or no, with love!
THE THUNDER-SHOWER

The lightning flashed, and lifted
The lids of heaven apart,
The fiery thunder rolled you
All night long through my heart.

From dreams of you at dawn
I rose to the window ledge:
The storm had passed away,
The lake lapped on the sedge.

The lyre of heaven trembled
Still with the thought of you,
The twilight on the waters,
And all my spirit, too.

SONG

All my love for my sweet
I bared one day to her.
Carelessly she took it
And like a conqueror.
She bowed the neck of my soul
To fit it to her yoke,
And bridled the lips of Song—
Fear within me awoke!

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But Love cried, "Swiftly, swiftly
Bear her along the road;
Beautiful is the goal
And Beauty is the goad."

John Hall Wheelock

I HEARD A FLUTE

I heard a flute that sang unto the dawn,
The dawn dove-grey,
Until it flushed to swift desire the wan
White heart of day:

Until it brimmed the virgin-breasted hills
With golden fire,
And sang through all the azure-veined rills
Love’s wild desire.

O child heart of the Dawn, who lay so mute
On Night’s dark breast,
I saw you quicken to the shepherd flute
Of love’s unrest;

I saw you ravished from your skyey sphere—
Fleet-foot you ran,
Down dryad paths you followed clear
The Flute of Pan.

Ruth Gaines

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TERESINA'S FACE

He saw it last of all before they herded in the steerage,
   Dark against the sunset where he lingered by the hold,
The tear-stained dusk-rose face of her, the little Teresina,
   Sailing out to lands of gold:

Ah, the days were long, long days, still toiling in the vine-
   yard,
   Working for the coins that set him free to go to her,
Where gay it glowed, the flower face of little Teresina,
   Where the joy and riches were:

Hard to find one rose-face where the dark rose-faces
   cluster,
   Where the outland laws are strange and outland voices
   hum,
(Only one lad's hoping, and the word of Teresina,
   Who would wait for him to come!)

...............................................................

God grant he may not find her, since he might not win
   her freedom,
   Nor yet be great enough to love, in such marred, captive wise,
The patient, painted face of her, the little Teresina,
   With its cowed, all-knowing eyes!

Margaret Widdemer

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GLOIRE

Il avait su gagner à lui
Beaucoup d’hommes ensemble,
Avec un cri qu’ils aimaient tous entendre,
Avec un haut fait dont ils se parlaient.

Il y avait un morceau du monde
Où l’on connaissait sa vie,
Ses actes et son visage.

Il se dressait devant la foule,
Et connaissait l’enivrement
De la sentir soumise à sa parole
Comme les blés le sont au vent.

Il la faisait se recueillir;
Il la rendait chaude et heureuse.
Il la faisait hurler et rire
Ou haleter soudain.

Et son bonheur était de croire,
Quand il avait quitté la foule,
Que chacun des hommes l’aimait;
Et que sa présence durait
Innombrable et puissant en eux
Comme en des braises dispersées
Les dons et la marque du feu.
Gloire

Or un jour il en suivit un
Qui retournait chez soi, tout seul;
Et il vit son regard s'éteindre
Dès qu'il fut un peu loin des autres.

Une autre fois il reconnut l'un d'eux,
L'un de ceux qui l'avaient aimé
Avec le cri de toute leur face,
Avec l'élan de tout leur corps
Debout, devant lui, tout un soir;
Il s'approcha, il lui parla;
L'homme connaissait bien son nom,
Mais n'avait rien gardé de lui
Dans son esprit ni dans son coeur.

Et même il vit une foule,
Une foule comme les siennes,
Qui se pressait, ivre et séduite,
Autour d'un autre
Habile à faire des grimaces.

Alors il connut qu'il avait conquis trop,
Et trop peu . . .

Que pour faire une âme de foule
Chaque homme ne prête un instant
Que la surface de son âme.

Il avait régné sur un peuple,
Mais comme un reflet sur de l'eau;
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Mais comme une flamme d'alcool,
Qui ne sait pas ou s'attacher,
Et qui brûle ce qu'elle frôle
Sans le réchauffer.

Et c’est alors qu’il s’appliqua, comme à vivre
À connaître le plus d’êtres qu’il put,
À les connaître lentement et un à un,
En demeurant et devisant avec chacun
Quand ils étaient bien eux, quand ils étaient bien seuls.

Son secret fut de posséder
Quelque chose avec chacun d’eux,
Quelqu’humble trésor qui leur fût bien cher.

Son bonheur fut de posséder,
En commun avec chacun d’eux,
Le souvenir secret d’un seul instant
Mais d’un instant élargi d’une telle joie
Qu’ils en pouvaient vivre bien des soirs.

Et tous ceux qu’ils connut ainsi
Conservèrent tout isolée
En leur pudeur
Certaine image d’eux-mêmes
Où ils aimaient se reconnaître,
Et qu’ils ne pouvaient regarder
Sans retrouver ses traits parmi les leurs.

Charles Vildrac

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POEMS IN PROSE AND VERSE
A SEQUENCE

I. INVOCATION

O Pearl in the Lotus,
O Krishna of the Jade Flute,
O Christ upon the Triple Cross,
Hear me, I pray you,
And give heed to my prayer,
For faintly
And in my sleep
I have heard distant singing.

II. THE EAGLE

For an hundred years I have soared
Under the sky,
Grayed is my breast by the storms
Round distant peaks;
Still gaze my golden eyes
Fiercely at the sun.

III. PRELUDE

Beloved, if you would but gaze
Into those dark pools,
'Tis your own face you will see,
Your face and the far-off hills,
That you might have seen long since
By the turning of your head.

IV. ENIGMA

There is dust upon your feet,
Dust and blood,
And upon your hands there is blood;
And with dust and sweat
Matted is your hair:
Dark are your eyes and empty
Like the lost pools in that garden
Which is unremembered of God.

V. THE MOUNTAINS

The mountains
Were sunk in the sea,
But now they are risen
High and more high:
I will climb my mountains,
I will rest in their winds;
At night . . . I will descend . . .
Wearied . . . to the valleys . . .
In the warmth of my valleys
I will sleep till the dawn.
Poems in Prose and Verse

NOCTURNE IN PASTELS

One face I saw shining from a sea of faces, as the brightness of a star shines from beneath dead water. One face only did I see, and the soul that looked from her eyes was veiled as with a dark veil.

Like a strange bird in an old snare, like a strange fish in an old net, so my heart snared her beauty and holds it. She was like the shadow of a plum-blossom on a stagnant pool, like a dying pearl in the depths of the sea, like the lonely singer who sings forever beneath one casement.

Therefore, in praise of her, I touch fire to delicate incense, to incense in a bowl of bronze graven with the shadow of an ancient love. The smoke of it coils upward, and my thoughts of her live in its coiling shadows: hers their fragrance and the unreality. As perfumes hover about the garments of the dead, so clings her fragrance to my cloak of dreams; as the memory of last year's plum-blossom lives like a dream, so clings unreality to the hem of my cloak.

I wait beneath the window of my Beloved, and the window is opened to me; I wait beneath the window of my Beloved, and it remains closed: I stand in a cloudy night asking the moon to smile. I am one who, flashed upon by a pale gleaming face, a pale star buried under dead water, seeks and waits and watches beneath a darkened sun.

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NOCTURNE TRISTE

The iridescence of sunrise over the ocean gleams on the wings of a fly; and on the cheeks of a girl blooms the delicate flush of a peach: but the fly hovers above the refuse of the world, and at the heart of the peach gnaws a worm.

The night wind is cold like the fingers of death, the sky purple like a cup of Tyrian poison, the gleam of the moon white like the flesh of a leper, and the sea dark like the wings of a bat.

My Beloved looks at me, and her eyes are hard and cold, her slender fingers cold and limp, and her parted lips turning from mine bring forth no word.

NOCTURNES

I.

Thy feet,  
That are like little, silver birds,  
Thou hast set upon pleasant ways.  
Therefore I will follow thee,  
Thou Dove o' the Golden Eyes,  
Upon any path will I follow thee,  
For the light of thy beauty  
Shines before me like a torch.
Poems in Prose and Verse

II.

Thy feet are white
Upon the foam of the sea;
Hold me fast, thou bright Swan,
Lest I stumble,
And into deep waters.

III.

Long have I been the Singer beneath
thy Casement,
And now I am weary.
I am sick with longing,
O my Beloved;
Therefore bear me with thee
Swiftly upon—
Upon our road.

IV.

With the net of thy hair
Thou hast fished in the sea,
And a strange fish
Hast thou caught in thy net;
For thy hair,
Beloved,
Holdeth my heart
Within its web of gold.

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v.

I am weary with love, and thy lips
Are as night-born poppies.
Give me therefore thy lips
That I may know sleep.

vi.

I am weary with longing,
I am faint with love;
For upon my head the moonlight
Has fallen
As a sword.

Skipwith Cannell
WITH regard to the actual production of verse, to the making of its form or even the evolutions of its rhythms, who would dare be exact? But, with prose, that conscious and workable medium, it is a very different matter. One finds a subject somewhere; immediately the mind gets to work upon the "form," blocks out patches of matter, of dialogue, of description.

If the function of the subject be to grow into a short story, one will start with a short, sharp, definite sentence so as to set the pace: "Mr. Lamotte," one will write, "returned from fishing. His eyes were red, the ends of his collar pressed open, because he had hung down his head in the depth of his reflection . . . ."

Or, if it is to be a long short story, we shall qualify the sharpness of the opening sentence and damp it down, as thus: "When, on a late afternoon of July, Mr. Lamotte walked up from the river with his rod in his hand . . . ."

Or again, if the subject seems one for a novel, we begin: "Mr. Lamotte had resided at the Brown House for sixteen years. The property consisted of six hundred and twenty acres, of which one hundred and forty were park-land intersected by the river Torridge," and so on. We shall proceed to "get in" Mr. Lamotte and his property and his ancestry and his landscape and his society.
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We shall think about these things for a long time and with an absolute certainty of aim; we shall know what we want to do and, to the measure of the light vouchsafed, we shall do it.

But, with verse I just do not know: I do not know anything at all. As far as I am concerned, it just comes. I hear in my head a vague rhythm. . . . I know that I would very willingly cut off my right hand to have written the Wallfahrt nach Kevelaer of Heine, or Im Moos by Annette von Dreste. I would give almost anything to have written almost any modern German lyric, or some of the ballads of my friend Levin Schücking . . . These fellows, you know . . . they sit at their high windows in German lodgings; they lean out; it is raining steadily. Opposite them is a shop where herring salad, onions and oranges are sold. A woman with a red petticoat and a black and grey check shawl goes into the shop and buys three onions, four oranges and half a kilo of herring salad . . . And there is a poem! Hang it all—there is a poem!

But this is England — this is Campden Hill and we have a literary jargon in which we must write. We must write in it or every word will “swear” . . .

Denn nach Köln am Rheine
Geht die Procession . . . .

“For the procession is going to Cologne on the Rhine.” You could not use the word procession in an English poem. It would not be literary. Yet when those lines
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are recited in Germany people weep over them. I have seen fat Frankfurt bankers weeping when the Wallfahrt was recited in a red plush theatre with gilt cherubs all over the place . . .

I may really say that, for a quarter of a century, I have kept before me one unflinching aim — to register my own times in terms of my own time, and still more to urge those who are better poets and better prosewriters than myself to have the same aim. I suppose I have been pretty well ignored; I find no signs of my being taken seriously. It is certain that my conviction would gain immensely as soon as another soul could be found to share it. But for a man mad about writing this is a solitary world, and writing — you cannot write about writing without using foreign words — is a métier de chien. . . .

It is somewhat a matter of diction. In France, upon the whole, a poet — and even a quite literary poet — can write in a language that, roughly speaking, any hatter can use. In Germany, the poet writes exactly as he speaks. And these facts do so much towards influencing the poet's mind. If we cannot use the word procession we are apt to be precluded from thinking about processions. Now processions (to use no other example) are very interesting and suggestive things, and things that are very much part of the gnat-dance that modern life is. Because, if a people has sufficient interest in public matters to join in huge processions it has reached a certain stage of folk-consciousness. If it will not or cannot

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do these things it is in yet other stages. Heine's procession was, for instance, not what we should call a procession at all. With us there are definite types: there is the king's procession at Ascot; there are processions in support of women's suffrage or against it; those in support of Welsh disestablishment or against it. But the procession of Köln was a pilgrimage . . .

Organized state functions, popular expressions of desire, are one symptom; pilgrimage another; but the poet who ignores them all three is to my thinking lost; since, in one way or another, they embrace the whole of humanity and are mysterious, hazy and tangible . . . A poet of a sardonic turn of mind will find sport in describing how, in a low pot-house, an emissary of a skilful government will bribe thirty ruffians at five shillings a head to break up and so discredit a procession in favor of votes for women; yet another poet may describe how a lady in an omnibus, with a certain turn for rhetoric, will persuade the greater number of the other passengers to promise to join the procession for the saving of a church; another will become emotionalised at the sight of the Sword of Mercy borne by a peer after the Cap of Maintenance borne by yet another . . . And believe me to be perfectly sincere when I say that a poetry whose day cannot find poets for all these things is a poetry that is lacking in some of its members.

So at least, I see it. Modern life is so extraordinary, so hazy, so tenuous, with still such definite and concrete

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Impressionism—Some Speculations

spots in it, that I am forever on the look-out for some poet who shall render it with all its values. I do not think that there was ever, as the saying is, such a chance for a poet; I am breathless, I am agitated at the thought of having it to begin upon. And yet I am aware that I can do nothing, since with me the writing of verse is not a conscious art. It is the expression of an emotion, and I can so often not put my emotions into any verse . . .

I should say, to put a personal confession on record, that the very strongest emotion, at any rate of this class, that I have ever had was when I first went to the Shepherd's Bush Exhibition and came out on a great square of white buildings all outlined with lights. There was such a lot of light — and I think that what I hope for in Heaven is an infinite clear radiance of pure light! There were crowds and crowds of people — or no, there was, spread out beneath the lights, an infinite moving mass of black, with white faces turned up to the light, moving slowly, quickly, not moving at all, being obscured, reappearing. . .

I know that the immediate reflection will come to almost any reader that this is nonsense or an affectation. "How," he will say, "is any emotion to be roused by the mere first night of a Shepherd's Bush exhibition? Poetry is written about love; about country lanes; about the singing of birds" . . . I think it is not — not now-a-days. We are too far from these things. What we are in, that which is all around us, is the Crowd — the Crowd blindly looking for joy or for that most pathetic
of all things, the good time. I think that that is why I felt so profound an emotion on that occasion. It must have been the feeling—not the thought—of all these good, kind, nice people, this immense Crowd suddenly let loose upon a sort of Tom Tiddler’s ground to pick up the glittering splinters of glass that are Romance; hesitant but certain of vistas of adventure, if no more than the adventures of their own souls; like cattle in a herd suddenly let into a very rich field and hesitant before the enamel of daisies, the long herbage, the rushes fringing the stream at the end.

I think pathos and poetry are to be found beneath those lights and in those sounds—in the larking of the anaemic girls, in the shoulders of the women in evening dress, in the idealism of a pickpocket slanting through a shadow and imagining himself a hero whose end will be wealth and permanent apartments in the Savoy Hotel. For such dreamers of dreams there are.

That indeed appears to me—and I am writing as seriously as I can—the real stuff of the poetry of our day. Love in country lanes, the song of birds, moonlight—these the poet, playing for safety, and the critic trying to find something safe to praise, will deem the sure cards of the poetic pack. They seem the safe things to sentimentalise over, and it is taken for granted that sentimentalising is the business of poetry. It is not, of course. Upon the face of it the comfrey under the hedge may seem a safer card to play, for the purposes of poetry, than the
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portable zinc dustbin left at dawn for the dustman to take.

But it is not really; for the business of poetry is not sentimentalism so much as the putting of certain realities in certain aspects. The comfrey under the hedge, judged by these standards, is just a plant; but the ash-bucket at dawn is a symbol of poor humanity, of its aspirations, its romance, its ageing and its death. The ashes represent the sociable fires, the god of the hearth of the slumbering dawn populations; the orange peels with their bright colors represent all that is left of a little party of the night before, when an alliance between families may have failed to be cemented or, being accomplished, may prove a disillusionment or a temporary paradise. The empty tin of infant’s food stands for birth; the torn scrap of a doctor’s prescription for death. Yes, even if you wish to sentimentalise, the dustbin is a much safer card to play than the comfrey plant. And, similarly, the anaemic shop-girl at the exhibition, with her bad teeth and her cheap black frock, is safer than Isolde. She is more down to the ground and much more touching.

Or, again, there are the symbols of the great fine things that remain to us. Many of us might confess to being unable to pass Buckingham Palace when the Royal Standard is flying on the flagstaff without a very recognizable emotion equivalent to the journalist’s phrase, a “catching at the throat.” For there are symbols of aspiration everywhere. The preposterous white
papier-maché fountain is a symbol, so are the preposterous
gilded gates, so are the geraniums and the purplish-grey
pencil of Westminster Cathedral tower that overhangs
the palace. There are, upon the standard, three leopards
passant which are ancient and suggestive things; there
is the lion rampant which is pretentious, and a harp
which is a silly sort of thing to have upon a flag. But it
is rich spot; a patch of colour that is left to us. As the
ugly marquis said of the handsome footman: "Mon
dieu, comme nous les faisons — et comme ils nous font!"

For, papier-maché and passant leopards and all, these
symbols are what the Crowd desires, and what they
stand for made the Crowd what it is. And the absurd,
beloved traditions continue. The excellent father of a
family in jack-boots, white breeches, sword, helmet
strap, gauntlets, views the preparation of his accoutre-
ments, and the flag that he carries before his regiment, as
something as much a part of his sacred profession as, to a
good butler, is the family plate. That is an odd, mysteri-
ous human thing, the stuff for poetry.

We might confess again to having had emotions at
the time of the beginning of the South African war —
we were, say, in the gallery at Drury Lane and the
audience were all on fire. We might confess to having had
emotions in the Tivoli Music Hall when, just after a low
comedian had "taken off" Henry VIII, it was announced
that Edward VII was dying, and the whole audience
stood up and sang God Save the King — as a genuine
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hymn, that time. We may have had similar emotions at seeing the little Prince of Wales standing unsteadily on a blue foot-stool at the coronation, a young boy in his Garter robes—or at a Secret Consistory at the Vatican when the Holy Father ceremonially whispered to one Cardinal or another . . .

War-like emotions, tears at the passing of a sovereign, being touched at the sight of a young prince or a sovereignly pontifical prisoner of the Vatican—this is perhaps the merest digging out of fossils from the bed of soft clay that the Crowd is. God knows we may "just despise" democracy or the writing of Laureate's odes; but the putting of the one thing in juxtaposition with the other, that seems to me to be much more the business of the poet of today than setting down on paper what he thinks about the fate of Brangaene, not because any particular "lesson" may be learned, but because such juxtapositions suggest emotions.

For myself, I have been unable to do it; I am too old perhaps or was born too late—anything you like. But there it is—I would rather read a picture in verse of the emotions and environment of a Googe Street anarchist than recapture what songs the syrens sang. That after all was what François Villon was doing for the life of his day, and I should feel that our day was doing its duty by posterity much more surely if it were doing something of the sort.
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Can it then be done? In prose of course it can. But, in poetry? Is there something about the mere framing of verse, the mere sound of it in the ear, that it must at once throw its practitioner or its devotee into an artificial frame of mind? Verse presumably quickens the perceptions of its writer as does hashish or ether. But must it necessarily quicken them to the perception only of the sentimental, the false, the hackneyed aspects of life? Must it make us, because we live in cities, babble incessantly of green fields; or because we live in the twentieth century must we deem nothing poetically good that did not take place before the year 1603?

This is not saying that one should not soak oneself with the Greek traditions; study every fragment of Sappho; delve ages long in the works of Bertran de Born; translate for years like the minnelieder of Walther von der Vogelweide; or that we should forget the bardic chants of Patric of the Seven Kingdoms . . . Let us do anything in the world that will widen our perceptions. We are the heirs of all the ages. But, in the end, I feel fairly assured that the purpose of all these pleasant travails is the right appreciation of such facets of our own day as God will let us perceive.

I remember seeing in a house in Hertford an American cartoon representing a dog pursuing a cat out of the door of a particularly hideous tenement house and beneath this picture was inscribed the words: “This is life — one damn thing after another.” Now I think it would be
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better to be able to put that sentiment into lyric verse than to remake a ballad of the sorrows of Cuchulain or to paraphrase the Book of Job. I do not mean to say that Job is not picturesque; I do not mean to say that it is not a good thing to have the Book of the Seven Sorrows of whom you will in the background of your mind or even coloring your outlook. But it is better to see Life in terms of one damn thing after another, vulgar as is the phraseology or even the attitude, than to render it in terms of withering gourds and other poetic paraphernalia. It is, in fact, better to be vulgar than affected, at any rate if you practice poetry.

Ford Madox Hueffer


Monsieur Romains is one of the most interesting of Parisian poets, well acclaimed. The Mouvement Unanimiste?—it is Romains. The movement would seem to be, primarily, philosophic, or, as Romains himself proclaims it, "religious." It is the adoration of the group unit or something of that sort. The Japanese state religion is perhaps its closest prototype, but these good orientals do not allow this to infect their art. If it be permitted a foreigner to decry what the French have themselves accepted, I should say, with all respect, that the poetry actually produced by the Unanimistes has at least one blemish, from the point of view of the craftsman. As a
philosophic movement it may affect the bases of aesthetics, it is a manifestation of unquestionable energy, and it therefore concerns us, who are concerned with the art; but Romains' much lauded Ode to the Crowd here Present is rhetoric; it is very fine and intoxicating rhetoric, no doubt, but as poetry it harks back to the pre-Victorian era, when Shelley set out to propagandize the world. It is of the time of Leopardi. If Romains had lived earlier he would have written Night thoughts on Death and Immortality or on The Grave; now-a-days the craze is for social theory or crowd psychology. This work is symptomatic. It is post-Whitman with a vengeance.

It is the same with Verhaeren's City. It is good rhetoric, very good. If we had found the passage in a prose work we should have thought it rather fine. Perhaps it gains a little by being in verse, I am not sure; but it is not to be confused with true Helicon. It belongs to that sort of "imaginative reason" wherefrom William Blake was divinely sent to deliver us. Verhaeren is not so much Whitman as a sort of lesser Wordsworth, with a sense of Flamand country and of people of labour. In "Les Pauvres" he is as far above our objections or our praise as is Wordsworth at his best from the usual charge of dulness.

As for Romains, we state against him that the art is too high a thing to be hitched to any single propaganda, however noble, and even this objection might be narrowed to almost a quibble. Romains is a man with his work
before him, and he will have little care, and no need whatever of caring, for either praise or stricture. As for his language, “strict, chaste, severe,” we join the little weight of our praise to that of the intelligent critic M. Georges Duhamel, and give thanks for Romains and his vigorous production.

If this review seem lacking in due warmth, it is only that I speak of a man in the mid-flow of acclamation, an acclamation which seems to me at times a little heedless of the possible dangers being courted by its object.

Ezra Pound

NOTES

Of the poets represented in this number all are American except Mr. Graves and Monsieur Vildrac. Mr. Graves, who was born in Dublin, has been prominent in the Gaelic literary renaissance, editing various anthologies and publishing original verse. Irish Poems (Maunsel) and Welch Poetry Old and New in English Verse (Longmans, Green & Co.) are his latest publications.

Mr. Charles Vildrac, of Paris, is, says Mr. Pound, “one of the little band who are really set to the revival of poetry as an efficient art.” He has achieved one masterpiece of narration, Visite, “which is distinctly his own and like nothing else,” and has published, since 1905, three books of verse and one of prose, besides Notes sur la Technique Poétique, in collaboration with George Duhamel. We are fortunate in presenting one of his most recent poems.

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Mr. Arthur Stringer, born in 1874, formerly a resident of this country and now of Canada, is well known as the author of The Woman in the Rain (Little), Irish Poems (Kennerley), and other books of verse and prose.

Mr. John Hall Wheelock, born in Long Island in 1886, passed from Harvard to certain German universities, returning to New York in 1911. His publications are: The Human Fantasy and The Beloved Adventure (Sherman, French & Co.). Love and Liberation will appear in October.

Mr. Skipwith Cannell, born in Philadelphia in 1887, a graduate of the University of Virginia, has been studying his art abroad during the past two years, and these poems are the first he has published.

Mr. Joyce Kilmer, born in New Jersey in 1886 and a Columbia graduate, has published one volume, Summer of Love (Doubleday, Page & Co.).

Miss Margaret Widdemer, of Philadelphia, has already appeared in Poetry, as well as other magazines. Miss Helen Hoyt, formerly of New York and now of Chicago; and Miss Ruth Gaines, of New York, have published little as yet.

BOOKS RECEIVED

The Inner Garden, by Horace Holley. Sherman, French & Co.
Helen of Troy and Other Poems, by Sara Teasdale. G. P. Putnam's Sons.
Reminiscent Rhymes and Other Verse, by John Byers Wilson. Jennings & Graham.
Cease to War, by J. C. Hayden. Richard G. Badger.
A White Song and a Black One, by Joseph S. Cotter. The Bradley & Gilbert Co.
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