Poetry. A Magazine of Verse
Edited by Harriet Monroe

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Poetry's Banquet—Reviews—Notes.

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POEMS.

THE CYCLISTS.

SPREAD on the roadway,
With open-blown jackets
Like black, soaring pinions,
They swoop down the hill-side,
The Cyclists.

Seeming dark-plumaged
Birds, after carrion,
Careening and circling,
Over the dying
Of England.

She lies with her bosom
Beneath them, no longer
The Dominant Mother,
The Virile—but rotting
Before time.

[ 1 ]
The smell of her, tainted,
Has bitten their nostrils.
Exultant they hover,
And shadow the sun with
Foreboding.

THE FOREIGNER

Have at you, you Devils!
My back's to this tree,
For you're nothing so nice
That the hind-side of me
Would escape your assault.
Come on now, all three!

Here's a dandified gentleman,
Rapier at point,
And a wrist which whirls round
Like a circular joint.
A spatter of blood, man!
That's just to anoint

And make supple your limbs.
'Tis a pity the silk
Of your waistcoat is stained.
Why! Your heart's full of milk,
And so full, it spills over!
I'm not of your ilk.

[2]
The Foreigner

You said so, and laughed
   At my old-fashioned hose,
At the cut of my hair,
   At the length of my nose.
To carve it to pattern
   I think you propose.

Your pardon, young Sir,
   But my nose and my sword
Are proving themselves
   In quite perfect accord.
I grieve to have spotted
   Your shirt. On my word!

And hullo! You Bully!
   That blade’s not a stick
To slash right and left,
   And my skull is too thick
To be cleft with such cuffs
   Of a sword. Now a lick

Down the side of your face,
   What a pretty, red line!
Tell the taverns that scar
   Was an honor. Don’t whine
That a stranger has marked you.

The tree’s there, You Swine!

[3]
Did you think to get in
    At the back, while your friends
Made a little diversion
    In front? So it ends,
With your sword clattering down
    On the ground. 'Tis amends

I make for your courteous
    Reception of me,
A foreigner, landed
    From over the sea.
Your welcome was fervent,
    I think you'll agree.

My shoes are not buckled
    With gold, nor my hair
Oiled and scented; my jacket's
    Not satin, I wear
Corded breeches, wide hats,
    And I make people stare!

So I do, but my heart
    Is the heart of a man,
And my thoughts cannot twirl
    In the limited span
'Twixt my head and my heels,
    As some other men's can.
The Foreigner

I have business more strange,
    Than the shape of my boots,
And my interests range
    From the sky, to the roots
Of this dung-hill you live in,
    You half-rotted shoots

Of a mouldering tree!
    Here's at you, once more.
You Apes! You Jack-fools!
    You can show me the door,
And jeer at my ways,
    But you're pinked to the core.

And before I have done,
    I will prick my name in
With the front of my steel,
    And your lily-white skin
Shall be printed with me.
    For I've come here to win!
A LADY

You are beautiful and faded,
Like an old opera tune
Played upon a harpsichord;
Or like the sun-flooded silks
Of an eighteenth century boudoir.
In your eyes
Smoulder the fallen roses of outlived minutes,
And the perfume of your soul
Is vague and suffusing,
With the pungence of sealed spice jars.
Your half-tones delight me,
And I grow mad with gazing
At your blent colours.

My vigor is a new-minted penny,
Which I cast at your feet.
Gather it up from the dust,
That its sparkle may amuse you.

MUSIC

The neighbor sits in his window and plays the flute.
From my bed I can hear him,
And the round notes flutter and tap about the room,
And hit against each other,
Blurring to unexpected chords.
Music

It is very beautiful,
With the little flute-notes all about me,
In the darkness.

In the daytime
The neighbor eats bread and onions with one hand
And copies music with the other.
He is fat and has a bald head,
So I do not look at him,
But run quickly past his window.
There is always the sky to look at,
Or the water in the well!

But when night comes and he plays his flute,
I think of him as a young man,
With gold seals hanging from his watch,
And a blue coat with silver buttons.
As I lie in my bed
The flute-notes push against my ears and lips,
And I go to sleep, dreaming.

THE BUNGLER

You glow in my heart
Like the flames of uncounted candles.
But when I go to warm my hands,
My clumsiness overturns the light,
And then I stumble
Against the tables and chairs.

[7]
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ANTICIPATION

I have been temperate always,
But I am like to be very drunk
With your coming.
There have been times
I feared to walk down the street
Lest I should reel with the wine of you,
And jerk against my neighbors
As they go by.
I am parched now, and my tongue is horrible in my mouth,
But my brain is noisy
With the clash and gurgle of filling wine-cups.

A GIFT

See! I give myself to you, Beloved!
My words are little jars
For you to take and put upon a shelf.
Their shapes are quaint and beautiful,
And they have many pleasant colors and lustres
To recommend them.
Also the scent from them fills the room
With sweetness of flowers and crushed grasses.

When I shall have given you the last one
You will have the whole of me,
But I shall be dead.
THE FORSAKEN

Holy Mother of God, merciful Mary. Hear me! I am very weary. I have come from a village miles away, all day I have been coming, and I ache for such far roaming. I cannot walk as light as I used, and my thoughts grow confused. I am heavier than I was. Mary Mother, you know the cause!

Beautiful Holy Lady, take my shame away from me! Let this fear be only seeming, let it be that I am dreaming. For months I have hoped it was so, now I am afraid I know. Lady, why should this be shame, just because I haven't got his name? He loved me, yes, Lady, he did, and he couldn't keep it hid. We meant to marry. Why did he die?

That day when they told me he had gone down in the avalanche, and could not be found until the snow melted in Spring, I did nothing. I could not cry. Why should he die? Why should he die and his child live? His little child alive in me, for my comfort. No, Good God, for my misery! I cannot face the shame, to be a mother, and not married, and the poor child to be reviled for having no father. Merciful Mother, Holy Virgin, take away this sin I did. Let the baby not be. Only take the stigma off of me!

I have told no one but you, Holy Mary. My mother would call me "whore," and spit upon me; the priest would have me repent, and have the rest of my life spent in a convent. I am no "whore," no bad woman, he loved me, and
we were to be married. I carried him always in my heart, what did it matter if I gave him the least part of me too? You were a virgin, Holy Mother, but you had a son; you know there are times when a woman must give all. There is some call to give and hold back nothing. I swear I obeyed God then, and this child who lives in me is the sign. What am I saying? He is dead, my beautiful, strong man! I shall never feel him caress me again. This is the only baby I shall have. Oh, Holy Virgin, protect my little baby! My little, helpless baby!

He will look like his father, and he will be as fast a runner and as good a shot. Not that he shall be no scholar neither. He shall go to school in winter, and learn to read and write, and my father will teach him to carve, so that he can make the little horses, and cows, and chamois, out of white wood. Oh, no! no! no! How can I think such things!—I am not good. My father will have nothing to do with my boy, I shall be an outcast thing. Oh, Mother of our Lord God, be merciful, take away my shame! Let my body be as it was before he came. No little baby for me to keep underneath my heart for those long months. To live for and to get comfort from. I cannot go home and tell my mother. She is so hard and righteous. She never loved my father, and we were born for duty, not for love. I cannot face it. Holy Mother, take my baby away! Take away my little baby! I don’t want it, I can’t bear it!
The Forsaken

And I shall have nothing, nothing! Just be known as a good girl. Have other men want to marry me, whom I could not touch, after having known my man. Known the length and breadth of his beautiful white body, and the depth of his love, on the high Summer Alp, with the moon above, and the pine needles all shiny in the light of it. He is gone, my man; I shall never hear him or feel him again, but I could not touch another. I would rather lie under the snow with my own man in my arms!

So I shall live on and on. Just a good woman. With nothing to warm my heart where he lay, and where he left his baby for me to care for. I shall not be quite human, I think. Merely a stone-dead creature. They will respect me. What do I care for respect! You didn’t care for people’s tongues when you were carrying our Lord Jesus. God had my man give me my baby, when he knew he was going to take him away. His lips will comfort me, his hands will soothe me. All day I will work at my lace making, and all night I will keep him warm by my side and pray the blessed Angels to cover him with their wings. Dear Mother, what is it that sings? I hear voices singing, and lovely silver trumpets through it all. They seem just on the other side of the wall. Let me keep my baby, Holy Mother. He is only a poor lace-maker’s baby, with a stain upon him, but give me strength to bring him up to be a man.

Amy Lowell
ALADDIN AND THE JINN

"'Bring me soft song,' said Aladdin;
'This tailor-shop sings not at all.
Chant me a word of the twilight,
Of roses that mourn in the fall.
Bring me a song like hashish
That will comfort the stale and the sad,
For I would be mending my spirit,
Forgetting these days that are bad:
Forgetting companions too shallow,
Their quarrels and arguments thin;
Forgetting the shouting muezzin."
"I am your slave," said the Jinn.

"Bring me old wines," said Aladdin,
"I have been a starved pauper too long.
Serve them in vessels of jade and of shell,
Serve them with fruit and with song:
Wines of pre-Adamite Sultans
Digged from beneath the black seas,
New-gathered dew from the heavens
Dripped down from Heaven's sweet trees,
Cups from the angels' pale tables
That will make me both handsome and wise;
For I have beheld her, the Princess—
Firelight and starlight her eyes!
Pauper I am—I would woo her.
Aladdin and the Jinn

And ... let me drink wine to begin,
Though the Koran expressly forbids it."
"I am your slave," said the Jinn.

"Plan me a dome," said Aladdin,
"That is drawn like the dawn of the moon,
When the sphere seems to rest on the mountains
Half-hidden, yet full-risen soon.
Build me a dome," said Aladdin,
"That shall cause all young lovers to sigh—
The fulness of Life and of Beauty,
Peace beyond peace to the eye.
A palace of foam and of opal—
Pure moonlight without and within,
Where I may enthrone my sweet lady."
"I am your slave," said the Jinn.

Nicholas Vachel Lindsay.

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EASTER

The air is like a butterfly
With frail blue wings.
The happy earth looks at the sky
And sings.

Joyce Kilmer

THE NIGHT SKY

O mystic, delicate chalice of the world,
Jeweled with pallid moons! Exquisite arch
Of the quiet sky; carven 'twixt dusk and dusk
Of smoky Indian jade, a summer night,
By God the Artist, God the deaf and blind,
Who fashions masterpiece on masterpiece,
And through the Window of the Universe
Hurls them forever and forever.
Pale cup, wherein all tears and mirth of men
Distil, that men may drink of thee and live.
Thrice-precious Grail, that holds the Wine of Earth!

John Reed
LYRA VERNALIS

Oft have I seen you, lovely as of old
Though Winter still forbade your birds to sing,
Steal by the silent houses barred to cold,
Around a sunlit corner vanishing.
With hooded face and mantle gray, few know
How in these peopled days you pass
With hesitant comings, hastenings away,
Through every street, by every stretch of grass,
From wood to distant wood, where'er you go,
To gaze upon some frozen spot
And bid the frost depart,
Of many a gentle thing to feel the heart,
Judging the days before that pulse shall leap
Fresh out of sleep,
Sudden awake
To glow and merrymake
In tune with the gay measure of its lot.

So have I waited long today, for sure
This happy sun, this wealth of southern air,
This desolation made by sleep more pure,
This emptiness, will tempt you forth to fare
And earth will wake once more.
Now is the first sweet respite of the year;
Too long, too long have you been stranger here—
Too long you tarry now—so soon before

[ 15 ]
New storms with freshened force will rage;  
O Spring, what keeps you now!
When every tree, when every naked bough  
Needs your assurance, when all spent things wait
In fear which but your coming would assuage:—  
Spring, Spring—be not too late!
The trodden soil conceals no trace of you  
Whose footprint I could tell in any place.
And yet, methought that maid with raiment blue  
Who fled so fast, had a familiar face—
Some look of youth the Winter failed to heed  
Perhaps; and now yon sapling is more green.
What laughter is it, from what source unseen
Came that low mocking shout? Behold a steed
Leaps as if happy to be driven  
Along the winged way!
Oh, am I mad or did his driver gay
Lean from that dirty cart to wave farewell—
A finger to her lips as warning given
Lest I her secret tell?

Across wet meadows where the wild thyme sleeps,
Where lonely pools are forming in the sedge,
I fain would track you past the ice-hung steeps
Along the sinuous river's melting edge,
To where alone there is a little hollow.
A slender streamlet trickles from the ground,
And stooping over it you gaze around
Lyra Vernalis

To see what charmed thing perchance may follow.
   There kneeling on the early mud
At last, O Spring, at last,
Would I might come upon you silently!—
   My arm about your shivering shoulders passed,
My hand beneath the head thrown back for me,
   For me the breast a-flower in every bud,—
The eyes of ecstasy!

   Why must your journey in such desperate haste
Without another curious glance behind?
   There is a promise in this barren waste,
And from that southern way you went the wind
   Brings an old fragrance back to things bereft
Of all old fragrances. Alas, too soon
   Fall the long shadows of the afternoon.
With fingers deft
   Dusk lights the stars in heaven's pale gulf of blue.
   Where, where are you
   Who should on earth make the sky's vision true?
Now, even, have you sought that couch you left,
   Where, when clouds ominously rise,
   Dreaming, you may forget
   How late will bloom the timid violet?
Or on some quiet height, perhaps, you stand—
   To view afar, with passion-laden eyes,
The desolated land.

Arthur Johnson
THE HOUSE OF TAKUMI

POEM-SEQUENCE FROM THE JAPANESE

Hidden Builders
I built for myself an abode that was planned of materials only,
Carefully choosing each hollow bamboo;
But spirit-things also wove themselves into it, twining like tendrils through lattices,
Distilling their atmospheres finer than air, not fashioned for breathing;
Unseen and unguessed by the workmen, they too were the builders and weavers,
Endlessly weaving.

Hoarded Love
House I have loved with a love like that of a man for a woman,
Love like an ether now clasps you and folds you!
House I have blessed with a blessing like that of father for daughter,
Back from your walls, as I gazed open-eyed at the midnight,
Blessings returned like the voices persistent of temple bells ringing,
Clearer than silver!
The House of Takumi

**Love Reflected**
The Buddha blessed the bread before he brake the loaf
And gave to his disciples;
For soulless things are sensitive to love;
They gather, hoard, and then in kind return,
They thrill with gathered and reflected love,
Vibrating bell-like.

**Heredity**
I dreamed a dream about a living house,
Pulsing and throbbing.
Perplexed I climbed its ancient way of stairs
To find within its teeming haunted brain
All moving shapes that there had lived or died,
Endlessly living.

**Coming Generations**
Before the dawn-birds sang, uncertain little feet
Frequently pattered
On floors that claimed no echo from the listening walls.
The sleepers on their white beds stirred and thrilled,
But did not hear the childish phantom feet
Beating their music.

**Desire for Children**
The morning birds had ceased their first light-greeting song
And flown for food and water
Before I knew I dreamed of children never born.
O little feet so musical upon the stairs!
O little voices speaking in the inner ear
Foolishly dreaming!

_Waters of Bitterness_
I think my heart will smother me,
Beating against my side;
For within the room above,
Surrounded by those who can not help,
Languishes one I love;
Patiently suffering.

_Passing Generations_
The wind sings in the chimney,
Breathing where it will.
Doors stand open and close again silently;
A great peace broods under the many roofs;
The walls, listening vainly for footsteps,
Seem to be waiting.

_The Flow of Time_
Long have I waited for the spring,
Praying for time to pass.
Now the cherry trees are white like snow
And violets are blue in the fields;
But well I know that they who made it spring
Are not returning.
The House of Takumi

The House of Quietness
The wind sings in the chimney,
Rising and dying.
The stillness of the empty house is a persistent voice.
I hear its sibilant whisper like the waters of a sea.
For hours I lie and listen to the waves of silence,
Ceaselessly breaking.

Opened Windows
Have mind and heart like children been deceived,
Grasping at shadows?
For still they whisper that they infinitely love
And feel that they are infinitely loved;
And this they always knew yet never comprehended
Until the voice of the essential silence
Whispered its secret.

The Time of Blossom
And the unplanted vines have grown and spread,
Filling the lattices;
The living walls are gay with crowded bloom,
The little footsteps patter down the walks
And little voices fill the fragrant halls,
Laughing and loving.

A. J. Russell

[21]
TO CELIA

I—CONSUMMATION

There was a strangeness on your lips,
   Lips that had been so sure;
You still were mine but in eclipse,
   Beside me but obscure.

There was a cloud upon your heart;
   For, Celia, where you lay,
Death, come to break your life apart,
   Had led your love away.

Through the cold distance of your eyes
   You could no longer see.
But when you died, you heard me rise
   And followed suddenly.

And close beside me, looking down
   As I did on the dead,
You made of time a wedding-gown,
   Of space a marriage-bed.

I took, in you, death for a wife,
   You married death in me,
Singing, "There is no other life,
   No other God than we!"

[ 22 ]
To Celia

II—DURING A CHORALE BY CESAR FRANCK

In an old chamber softly lit
    We heard the Chorale played,
And where you sat, an exquisite
Image of Life and lover of it,
   Death sang a serenade.

I know now, Celia, what you heard,
   And why you turned and smiled.
It was the white wings of a bird
Offering flight, and you were stirred
   Like an adventurous child.

Death sang: "O lie upon your bier,
    Uplift your countenance!"
Death bade me be your cavalier,
Called me to march and shed no tear
   But sing to you and dance.

And when you followed, lured and led
    By those mysterious wings,
And when I heard that you were dead,
I could not weep. I sang instead,
   As a true lover sings.

Today a room is softly lit;
   I hear the Chorale played.
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And where you come, an exquisite
Image of death and lover of it,
Life sings a serenade.

III—SONGS ASCENDING

Love has been sung a thousand ways—
So let it be;
The songs ascending in your praise
Through all my days
Are three.

Your cloud-white body first I sing;
Your love was heaven’s blue,
And I, a bird, flew carolling
In ring on ring
Of you.

Your nearness is the second song;
When God began to be,
And bound you strongly, right or wrong,
With his own thong,
To me.

But oh, the song, eternal, high,
That tops these two!—
You live forever, you who die,
I am not I
But you.

Witter Bynner
T the dinner given in honor of Mr. William Butler Yeats by the guarantors, contributors and editors of Poetry, in the rooms of the Cliff-Dwellers, Chicago, on the evening of March first, the Irish poet took occasion to warn his confreres in America against a number of besetting sins. He said, in part:

Twenty-five years ago a celebrated writer from South Africa said she lived in the East End of London because only there could she see the faces of people without a mask. To this Oscar Wilde replied that he lived in the West End because nothing interested him but the mask. After a week of lecturing I am too tired to assume a mask, so I will address my remarks especially to a fellow craftsman. For since coming to Chicago I have read several times a poem by Mr. Lindsay, one which will be in the anthologies, General Booth Enters Into Heaven. This poem is stripped bare of ornament; it has an earnest simplicity, a strange beauty, and you know Bacon said, "There is no excellent beauty without strangeness." 

I have lived a good many years and have read many writers. When I was younger than Mr. Lindsay, and was beginning to write in Ireland, there was all around me the rhetorical poetry of the Irish politicians. We young writers rebelled against that rhetoric; there was too much of it and to a great extent it was meaningless. When I went to London I found a group of young lyric writers who were also against rhetoric. We formed the Rhymers' Club; we used to meet and read our poems to one another, and we tried to rid them of rhetoric.

But now, when I open the ordinary American magazine, I find that all we rebelled against in those early days— the sentimentality, the rhetoric, the "moral uplift"—still exist here. Not be-
cause you are too far from England, but because you are too far from Paris.

It is from Paris that nearly all the great influences in art and literature have come, from the time of Chaucer until now. Today the metrical experiments of French poets are overwhelming in their variety and delicacy. The best English writing is dominated by French criticism; in France is the great critical mind.

The Victorian forgot this; also, they forgot the austerity of art and began to preach. When I saw Paul Verlaine in Paris, he told me that he could not translate Tennyson because he was "too Anglais, too noble"—"when he should be broken-hearted he has too many reminiscences."

We in England, our little group of rhymers, were weary of all this. We wanted to get rid not only of rhetoric but of poetic diction. We tried to strip away everything that was artificial, to get a style like speech, as simple as the simplest prose, like a cry of the heart.

Real enjoyment of a beautiful thing is not achieved when a poet tries to teach. It is not the business of a poet to instruct his age. He should be too humble to instruct his age. His business is merely to express himself, whatever that self may be. I would have all American poets keep in mind the example of Francois Villon.

So you who are readers should encourage American poets to strive to become very simple, very humble. Your poet must put the fervor of his life into his work, giving you his emotions before the world, the evil with the good, not thinking whether he is a good man or a bad man, or whether he is teaching you. A poet does not know whether he is a good man. If he is a good man, he probably thinks he is a bad man.

Poetry that is naturally simple, that might exist as the simplest prose, should have instantaneousness of effect, provided it finds the right audience. You may have to wait years for that audience, but when it is found that instantaneousness of effect is produced.

To illustrate his points, Mr. Yeats read a few poems. Of An Epitaph, by Mr. Walter De La Mare, he said, "There is not an original sentence in this short poem, yet it will live for centuries." He spoke of Mr. T. Sturge Moore as "one
Comments and Reviews

of the most exquisite poets writing in England; his poetry is
a glorification of instinct.” Our Lady, by Miss Mary E.
Coleridge, he read as an example of “poetry as simple as
daily speech.” Continuing, he said:

We rebelled against rhetoric, and now there is a group of
younger poets who dare to call us rhetorical. When I returned
to London from Ireland, I had a young man go over all my work
with me to eliminate the abstract. This was an American poet,
Ezra Pound. Much of his work is experimental; his work will
come slowly, he will make many an experiment before he comes
into his own. I should like to read to you two poems of perma­
nent value, The Ballad of the Goodly Fere and The Return.
This last is, I think, the most beautiful poem that has been writ­
ten in the free form, one of the few in which I find real organic
rhythm. A great many poets use vers libre because they think
it is easier to write than rhymed verse, but it is much more dif­
ficult.

The whole movement of poetry is toward pictures, sensuous
images, away from rhetoric, from the abstract, toward humility.
But I fear I am now becoming rhetorical. I have been driven
into Irish public life—how can I avoid rhetoric?

Mr. Yeats then read a few poems from a group which will
be printed next month in Poetry. Mr. Nicholas Vachel
Lindsay followed with his powerful poem, The Congo, an
interpretation of the African race, which will soon appear
in the Metropolitan Magazine; also, by request, General
Booth Enters into Heaven.

A few brief remarks preceded the talk of Mr. Yeats. The
editor of Poetry, in welcoming the distinguished guest, said,
“We honor a great art by honoring its greatest living artist;”
and expressed the hope that the magazine might help prepare
an audience for the poet who will come: “If we may do for
him what Mr. Yeats did for Synge, our efforts will not be
without reward.”
Mr. Charles L. Hutchinson, one of the magazine's guarantors, and Mr. Charles H. Hamill, of the Administrative Committee, urged the value of the movement for more appreciative recognition of the art. Mr. Richard Henry Little philosophized about symbolism. A poem of salutation and regret was read from Miss Edith Wyatt, whom an engagement of long standing had called to Bryn Mawr. Mr. Roy McWilliams was toastmaster.

To Mr. Arthur Davison Ficke was accorded the honor of introducing Mr. Yeats with the following poem:

In days when we were twenty,
From over-seas there came
Horns of a silver music,
Words of a singing flame—
As on a wind far-blowing
From hills of faery name.

Strange, cadencing, soft, grave,
It took our hearts in keep.
We heard the Red Hound coursing
Through the pale mists of the deep.
We saw Edain and Deictora—
Beautiful, deathless, asleep.

Now days have flickered by us,
Not silencing that strain,
The red wrath of Cuchulain
Shouts through the hills again;
And every April wakes in the world
Deirdre's immortal pain.

Tonight these breathe and eddy
Dimly around the board,
Robbing our lips of greeting
Worthy the heart that poured
That song of the white arms of desire,
And terror and the sword.
What greeting can we offer him
Whom the gods have loved so long—
Whom the Old-World gods have chosen
Their singer to the throng?
The New World can but bring him now
The love of men for his song.

The song outlasts the singer,
Whose breath in the song shall live.
The lighted dreams of man remain
Though man is fugitive.
One thing the gods withheld from the world—
Beauty—for man to give.

This book belongs in any studio that affects the Japanese print. It is forty-seven pages of Baedeker for the man who would travel toward Fuji San. It is inspired verse. It is good criticism. It is sound aesthetics. I do not see how any one who cares for prints can read it indifferently.
Mr. Ficke's particular faculty is flawlessness—from the mosaic standpoint: one inevitable little word after another. His hold on me depends upon the fact that in his best pieces this self-command never fails. One might say that by mere polish he moves the heart. His longer, more diffuse works have never moved me. His type of concentration seems, so far, impossible for him to achieve in art units that require more than three pages of print to each unit.
After going through this particular book of seventeen poems, with every person in Springfield with whom I dare
to read verse, I found the following pieces kept their first lustre every evening, and the last seemed even to increase in luminosity: *Koriusai Speaks*, *Festival Scene* by Kiyonaga, *The Two Women* by Kitao Masanobu, and the *Portrait of a Woman* by Yeishi.

And this is not to reflect on the rest. The book burns on each page with the “gem-like flame,” at least it does to me. The first consideration is the self-controlled art of Japan, the second consideration is life; yet the work is so crystal-line that Life lives a second life within the book. When I plan the future of some hypothetical poet west of the Mississippi, I insist that he be corn-fed and ramping, and write for the farmer, and go shouting along. Or else severe, astringent, plain, like St. Gaudens’ Lincoln or Sherman, long-boned and oak-hearted.

But I must set aside theory here, if I am to speak my mind. This work of Mr. Ficke’s brings again dead days, when I was one of a group of fanatical art-students, holding consultations over the embossed brocaded prints of Japan, in the Lenox Library, New York, when the kingdoms of the world were a set of picture-books and Hokusai was the king, the emperor.

*The Lonely Dancer, and Other Poems*, by Richard Le Gallienne. John Lane Co.

Again, in this new book, Mr. Le Gallienne shows himself the true lyric singer. His book shimmers with moonlight, and with the fresh, scented nights of spring, for Mr. Le
Gallienne is the poet laureate of April. One of his old poems, not in this book, begins:

Oh, climb with me this April night,  
The silver ladder of the moon,

and so soon as spring comes round again these lines come singing into my head. That little lyric, two stanzas long, has been my constant companion for years.

Mr. Le Gallienne has lost nothing of his magical interpretation of nature in her more charming moods, in this last volume. Such poems as To a Bird at Dawn, May Is Building Her House, and Shadow are very beautiful. On page 66 there is a poem, without a title, of which this is the first stanza:

I crossed the orchard, walking home,  
The rising moon was at my back,  
The apples and the moonlight fell  
Together on the railroad track.

How still and spangled that is, and how full of the soft wind of an early autumn evening!

Again, in his love poems, such as The Afternoon is Lonely for Your Face, is a charming fancy, weaving pretty thoughts out of an attractive landscape.

Perhaps that same weaving of pretty thoughts is at once both Mr. Le Gallienne's forte and his danger. Or, perhaps, in this age of the world, we have not so great an appetite for "conceits." Certainly an occasional dissonance would be a welcome change, for the sweetness and prettiness has a tendency to become cloying; and when Mr. Le Gallienne deals
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with so great and elemental a subject as Death, the fancies with which he entwines it seem impertinent and shallow:

Her eyes are bluebells now, her voice a bird,  
And the long sighing grass her elegy;  
She who a woman was is now a star  
In the high heaven shining down on me.

It is too much literature, too little feeling. Even when, as in *An Easter Hymn*, Mr. Le Gallienne tries to be serious and simple, the gift of charm betrays him, and he weakens his theme by the following characteristic lines:

When 'mid the sobbing of the rain,  
The heart of April beats again.

But if a man does one thing well, we should not quarrel with him because he does others less well. Mr. Le Gallienne has a lyric talent of great beauty, and we are thankful for what he has to give us.


It is a pleasure to come across a book so full of new and fresh ideas. Mr. Benét has a most vigorous and delightful imagination, and his sense of rhyme is quite extraordinary, forced a little at times, perhaps, but when the result is so pleasing, what does it matter? *The Bird Fancier* is by far the most interesting poem in the book, and a very unusual poem it is, full of color and sound, and with the weird note becoming more and more insistent until it grows to horror.
Comments and Reviews

How excellent is the line:

On the Fancier's arm the feathers assembled
taken in its context and with the rhyme. The last stanza
is so fine, it ought to be quoted, but it would lose too much
divorced from the rest of the poem.

Lack of space forbids more than mention of The Marvel-
ous Munchausen, Merchants of Cathay, The Iconoclast,
and Remarks to the Back of a Pew.

In his more serious poems, Mr. Benét is not so happy
They are too derivative, and too obviously didactic, but Mr.
Benét has so much artistic sense that he will doubtless cor-
rect this fault with time. A. L.

NOTES.

Of the poets represented in this number, five have
already appeared in POETRY. These are: Miss Amy Lowell,
of Brookline, Mass., author of A Dome of Many-Colored
Glass, whose second book of poems will soon be published
by Macmillan; Mr. Nicholas Vachel Lindsay, of Springfield,
Ill., author of Rhymes to be Traded for Bread, whose first
formally published book of poems, General William Booth
Enters Into Heaven (Kennerley), was reviewed in our Feb-
uary number; Mr. John Reed, the young New York poet
and journalist who, after serving on the editorial staff of
The Masses, has recently gone to Mexico; his Sangar, a
modern-medieval ballad, was printed in POETRY for Decem-

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ber, 1912; Mr. Joyce Kilmer, of New Jersey, author of Summer of Love (Doubleday, Page & Co.); and Mr. Witter Bynner, of Cornish, N. H., author of An Immigrant.

Mr. Arthur Johnson, a young Boston poet, and Mr. A. J. Russell, who is on the editorial staff of the Minneapolis Journal, have published little verse as yet. Mr. Russell's poem is not a translation.

BOOKS RECEIVED


The People's Hour, by George Howard Gibson. Privately printed.


Chitra, A Play in One Act, by Rabindra Nath Tagore. The Macmillan Company.


Later Poems, by Emily Hickey. Grant Richards.
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Prominent among numbers for the year 1914 are *Des Imagistes*, an anthology of the Imagists' movement in England, including Pound, Hueffer, Aldington, Flint and others; essays by Ellen Key; a play by Frank Wedekind; collects and prose pieces by Horace Traubel; and *The Doina*, translations by Maurice Aisen of Roumanian folk-songs. The main purpose of the GLEBE is to bring to light the really fine work of unknown men. These will appear throughout the year.

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