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Poetry

A Magazine of Verse

Edited by Harriet Monroe

AUGUST, 1914

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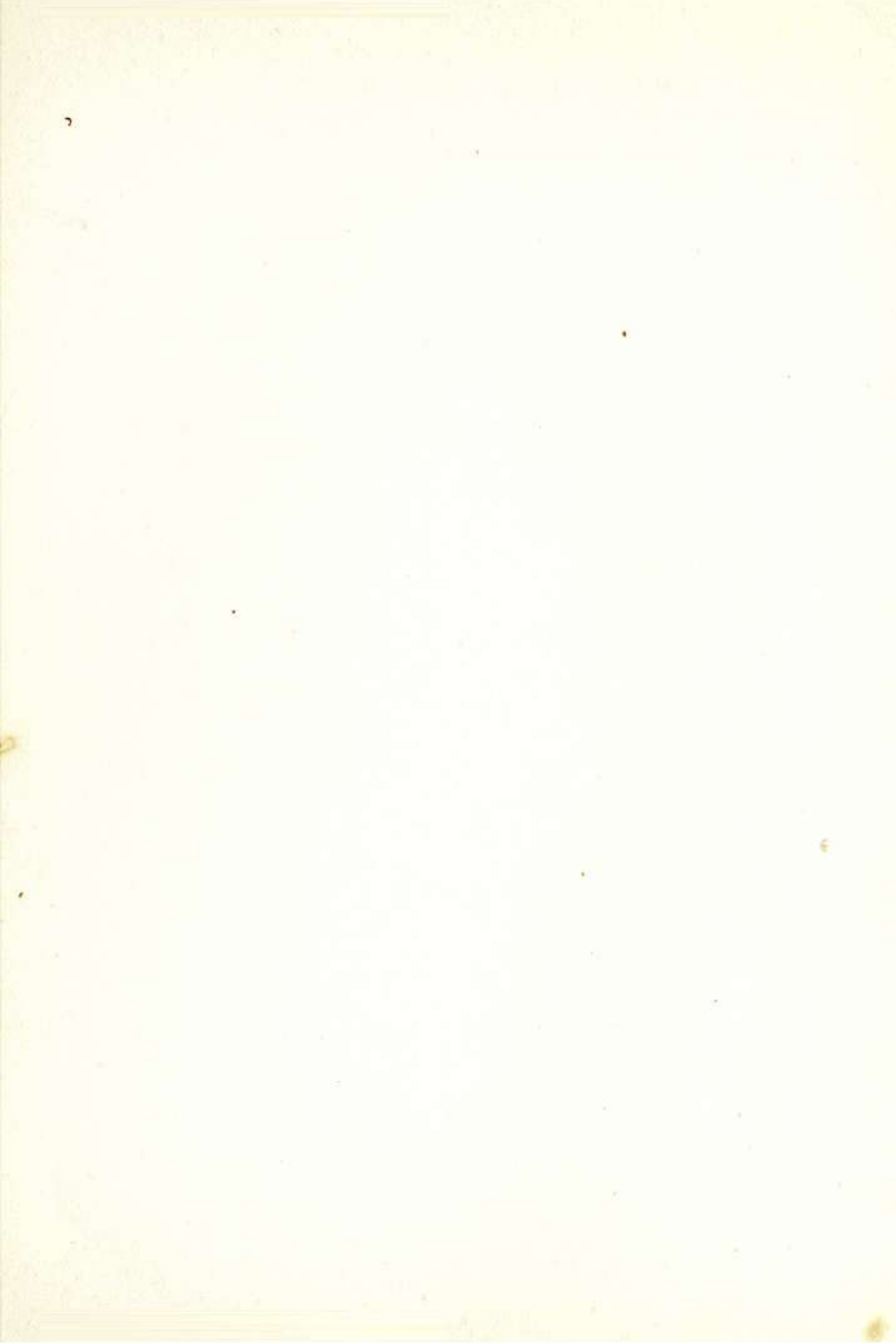
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AUGUST, 1914

POEMS

TO KAAÏON



VEN in my dreams you have denied yourself
to me,
You have sent me only your handmaids.

THE STUDY IN AESTHETICS

The very small children in patched clothing,
Being smitten with an unusual wisdom,
Stopped in their play as she passed them
And cried up from their cobbles:

Guarda! Ahi, Guarda! ch'e b'ea!

But three years after this
I heard the young Dante, whose last name I do not know—
For there are, in Sirmione, twenty-eight young Dantes and
thirty-four Catulli;

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And there had been a great catch of sardines,
And his elders
Were packing them in the great wooden boxes
For the market in Brescia, and he
Leapt about, snatching at the bright fish
And getting in both of their ways;
And in vain they commanded him to *sta fermo!*
And when they would not let him arrange
The fish in the boxes
He stroked those which were already arranged,
Murmuring for his own satisfaction
This identical phrase:
Ch'e b'ea.

And at this I was mildly abashed.

THE BELLAIRES

*Aus meinen grossen Schmerzen
Mach' ich die kleinen Lieder.*

The good Bellaires
Do not understand the conduct of this world's affairs.
In fact they understood them so badly
That they have had to cross the channel.

Nine lawyers, four counsels, five judges and three proctors
of the King,

The Bellaïres

Together with the respective wives, husbands, sisters and
heterogeneous connections of the good Bellaïres,
Met to discuss their affairs;
But the good Bellaïres have so little understood their affairs
That now there is no one at all
Who can understand any affair of theirs. Yet
Fourteen hunters still eat in the stables of
The good Squire Bellaïre;
But these may not suffer attainder,
For they may not belong to the good Squire Bellaïre
But to his wife.
On the contrary, if they do not belong to his wife,
He will plead
A "freedom from attainder"
For twelve horses and also for twelve boarhounds
From Charles the Fourth;
And a further freedom for the remainder
Of horses, from Henry the Fourth.
But the judges,
Being free of mediaeval scholarship,
Will pay no attention to this,
And there will be only the more confusion,
Replevin, estoppel, espavin and what not.

Nine lawyers, four counsels, etc.,
Met to discuss their affairs,
But the sole result was bills
From lawyers to whom no one was indebted,

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And even the lawyers
Were uncertain who was supposed to be indebted to them.

Wherefore the good Squire Bellaire
Resides now at Agde and Biaucaire.
To Carcassonne, Pui, and Alais
He fareth from day to day,
Or takes the sea air
Between Marseilles
And Beziers.

And for all this I have considerable regret,
For the good Bellaires
Are very charming people.

SALVATIONISTS

I

Come, my songs, let us speak of perfection—
We shall get ourselves rather disliked.

II

Ah yes, my songs, let us resurrect
The very excellent term *Rusticus*.
Let us apply it in all its opprobrium
To those to whom it applies.

And you may decline to make them immortal,
For we shall consider them and their state
In delicate
Opulent silence.

III

Come, my songs,
Let us take arms against this sea of stupidities—
Beginning with Mumpodorus;
And against this sea of vulgarities—
Beginning with Nimmim;
And against this sea of imbeciles—
All the Bulmenian literati.

AMITIÉS'

Old friends the most.
W. B. Y.

I

To one, on returning certain years after.

You wore the same quite correct clothing,
You took no pleasure at all in my triumphs,
You had the same old air of condescension
Mingled with a curious fear
That I, myself, might have enjoyed them.

Te voila, mon Bourrienne, you also shall be immortal.

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II

To another.

And we say good-bye to you also,
For you seem never to have discovered
That your relationship is wholly parasitic;
Yet to our feasts you bring neither
Wit, nor good spirits, nor the pleasing attitudes
Of discipleship.

III

But you, *bos amic*, we keep on,
For to you we owe a real debt:
In spite of your obvious flaws,
You once discovered a moderate chop-house.

IV

*Iste fuit vir incultus,
Deo laus, quod est sepultus,
Vermes habent eius vultum—
A-a-a—A-men.
Ego autem jovialis
Gaudebo in contubernalis
Cum jocunda femina.*

LADIES

Agathas

Four and forty lovers had Agathas in the old days,
All of whom she refused ;

Ladies

And now she turns to me seeking love,
And her hair also is turning.

Young Lady

I have fed your lar with poppies,
I have adored you for three full years;
And now you grumble because your dress does not fit
And because I happen to say so.

Lesbia Illa

Memnon, Memnon, that lady
Who used to walk about amongst us
With such gracious uncertainty,
Is now wedded
To a British householder.
Lugete, Veneres! Lugete, Cupidinesque!

Passing

Flawless as Aphrodite,
Thoroughly beautiful,
Brainless,
The faint odor of your patchouli,
Faint, almost, as the lines of cruelty about your chin,
Assails me, and concerns me almost as little.

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THE SEEING EYE

The small dogs look at the big dogs;
They observe unwieldly dimensions
And curious imperfections of odor.

Here is a formal male group:
The young men look upon their seniors,
They consider the elderly mind
And observe its inexplicable correlations.

Said Tsin-Tsu:
It is only in small dogs and the young
That we find minute observation.

ABU SALAMMAMM—A SONG OF EMPIRE

*Being the sort of poem I would write if King George V should
have me chained to the fountain before Buckingham Palace,
and should give me all the food and women I wanted.
To my brother in chains Bonga-Bonga.*

Great is King George the Fifth,
for he has chained me to this fountain;
He feeds me with beef-bones and wine.
Great is King George the Fifth—
His palace is white like marble,
His palace has ninety-eight windows,
His palace is like a cube cut in thirds,

Abu Salammamm—A Song of Empire

It is he who has slain the Dragon
and released the maiden Andromeda.
Great is King George the Fifth;
For his army is legion,
His army is a thousand and forty-eight soldiers
with red cloths about their buttocks,
And they have red faces like bricks.
Great is the King of England and greatly to be feared,
For he has chained me to this fountain;
He provides me with women and drinks.
Great is King George the Fifth
and very resplendent is this fountain.
It is adorned with young gods riding upon dolphins
And its waters are white like silk.
Great and Lofty is this fountain;
And seated upon it is the late Queen, Victoria,
The Mother of the great king, in a hoop-skirt,
Like a woman heavy with child.

Oh may the king live forever!
Oh may the king live for a thousand years!
For the young prince is foolish and headstrong;
He plagues me with jibes and sticks,
And when he comes into power
He will undoubtedly chain someone else to this fountain,
And my glory will
Be at an end.

Ezra Pound.

THE COAL PICKER

He perches in the slime, inert,
Bedaubed with iridescent dirt.
The oil upon the puddles dries
To colors like a peacock's eyes,
And half-submerged tomato-cans
Shine scaly, as leviathans
Oosily crawling through the mud.
The ground is here and there bestud
With lumps of only part-burned coal.
His duty is to glean the whole,
To pick them from the filth, each one,
To hoard them for the hidden sun
Which glows within each fiery core
And waits to be made free once more.
Their sharp and glistening edges cut
His stiffened fingers. Through the smut
Gleam red the wounds which will not shut.
Wet through and shivering, he kneels
And digs the slippery coals—like eels
They slide about. His force all spent
He counts his small accomplishment.
A half-a-dozen clinker-coals
Which still have fire in their souls.
Fire! And in his thought there burns
The topaz fire of votive urns.

The Coal Picker

He sees it fling from hill to hill,
And still consumed, is burning still.
Higher and higher leaps the flame,
The smoke an evershifting frame.
He sees a Spanish Castle old,
With silver steps and paths of gold.
From myrtle-bowers comes the plash
Of fountains, and the emerald flash
Of parrots in the orange trees,
Whose blossoms pasture humming bees.
He knows he feeds the urns whose smoke
Bears visions, that his master stroke
Is out of dirt and misery
To light the fire of poesy.
He sees the glory, yet he knows
That others cannot see his shows.
To them his smoke is sightless, black,
His votive vessels but a pack
Of old discarded shards, his fire
A peddler's; still to him the pyre
Is incensed, an enduring goal!
He sighs and grubs another coal.

Amy Lowell.

THE BUBBLING FOUNTAIN

This is a magic cup
That needs no lifting up,
And gushes the cool drink
From an ever flowing brink,
From an ever filling hollow.
As you swallow,
You can feel the water go
Against your lips with tumbling flow
And all its noises hear:
As if you were a deer
Or a wild goat,
Sucking the water into your throat
Where a little brook goes by
Under the trees and the summer sky.
Oh it is fun to drink this way!—
Like a pleasant game to play,
Not like drinking in other places;
And it is fun to watch the faces
That come and bend them at this urn.
Something you can learn
Of each person's secret mind:
Know which is selfish, which is kind:
Those who guard their dignity.
And those whose curiosity
Is turning cold.
Many of the young are old,

The Bubbling Fountain

And think
A drink is nothing but a drink,
Water is water—always the same;
They could not turn it into a game.
Charily, with solemn mien,
They lean—
These incurious of heart—
And hurrying depart.
But the children know it's a gay rare thing
To drink outdoors from a running spring;
And laugh
And quaff,
As if their inquisitive zest
Would challenge to a test
The bounty of this store
Which gives, and still has more.
They drink up all they can:
Wait in turn to drink again.
As I watch the reaching lips
It seems to be my mouth that sips:
I stoop and rise with each one.
But when they are done,
And their faces touched with spray,
They quickly wipe it away.
And this, sometimes, I regret,—
Because their lips look prettier, wet.

Helen Hoyt.

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THE DANCE BEFORE THE ARCH

Windy April night-mist swept the Square;
Lights among the leafage swayed and flashed;
Piquant bosky odors filled the air,
Piquant as a Maenad's flying hair
Late the dripping dogwood buds had lashed.
Then three fared forth together:
A wise old teacher of men,
A poet who laughed with the weather,
And a silent knight of the pen.
They walked in the rain-witched park
While the hours grew small and dark,
And their talk was light as a feather
That Bacchus blows at a mark.

All around, the city-sounds were whist;
All about, where branches laughed and leapt,
Glints of eyes looked out into the mist,
Little, golden, dancing, rainbow-kissed:
Little shapes and shadows flashed and crept.
Then the sage: "O wonderful weather!
Strange, eerie!" Then he of the pen:
"The pixies are out all together:
Valpurgis Nacht—Bacchus—Amen!"
He waved his arms and inclined
His face to the night, joy-blind.

The Dance Before the Arch

Then the poet: "Oh, pluck me a feather
From the stretched gray wing of the wind!"

Over asphalt polished by the rain,
Out of mist-swirls iris-splotched with light,
Loomed a sudden beauty, marble, plain,
Arched and sombre, fronting with disdain
All the springtime turmoil of that night.

Then the sage: "The old Arch, in this weather,
Needs garlands." Then he of the pen:
"The lost Roman thing! All together!
Get branches—we're Romans again!"
So they took each boughs in their hands,
Obeying the ancient commands,
When laurel put forth a green feather
And Proserpine gathered her bands.

They marched in a grave, wild measure,
They waved their boughs;
They were austere-faced for pleasure
In the Spring's house.
The sharp wind gave them glee,
The wind with a tang of the sea;
They drank it deep and at leisure
As a nobly offered rouse.
There were faint lights under their feet,
Each light with a halo of pearl;
There were lights in the night around,

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Each blown-mist-tressed like a girl.
Faster their feet beat,
With a quick, glad sound.
"Io, Bacchus! Honey-sweet!"
"Io, Proserpine!
O golden! O divine!
Loosed again from the ground!"

They lifted arms, they danced
With quick breath;
Below, around, lights glanced
As life from death.
"Io, Proserpine is dead:
But the Spring lives!
Io, Bacchus,—where's he fled?
But the vine thrives!"
"Good hap to Aphrodite
And her doves' red feet:
Redder than new wine
Are the lips of my sweet!"
"Io, Spring!
Young, new!
Fairer for the vast
Passionate old past:
Io, Io, Spring
I sing, I sing!
I am drunk with wine, with wine and the Spring!"

The Dance Before the Arch

They danced, they swayed,
The air sang
Under their boughs;
They laughed, they played
With the mist that stang
Their mid-carouse.
"Io, Spring's blood's on my face
And in my hair!"
"Io, Spring, magical maid,
For me forswear!"
"The vine buds red,
The willow gold,
The lady birch is white
And slim in the night:
Oh, make my bed
With white and gold and red,
Or ever the year grows old
And cold!
Io, Io!
And the tale of the frost is told!"

All around, the city-sounds were whist.
Over asphalt polished by the rain
Loomed the sombre Arch amid the mist;
At its feet some boughs the Spring had kissed
Whispered to the driving wind's refrain.
Then three fared forth together:
A wise old teacher of men,

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A poet who sang with the weather,
And a silent knight of the pen.
They went arm-linked from the park
That none be lost in the dark;
And their hearts were light as a feather
That Bacchus blows at a mark.

Allan Updegraff.

SONG

A few more windy days
Must come and go their ways,
And we will walk
My love and I
Beneath the amber-dripping boughs.

Then on the stars we'll tread,
On purple stars and red,
And wonder why
The while we talk
Men sing so much of broken vows.

Helen Dudley.

SKETCHES

THE INTERNE

Oh the agony of having too much power!
In my passive palm are hundreds of lives.
Strange alchemy!—they drain my blood:
My heart becomes iron; my brain copper; my eyes silver;
my lips brass.
Merely by twitching a supple finger, I twirl lives from me—
strong-winged,
Or fluttering and broken.
They are my children, I am their mother and father.
I watch them live and die.

THE OLD JEW

Not fawn-tinged hospital pajamas could cheat him of his
austerity,
Which tamed even the doctors with its pure fire.
They examined him; made him bow to them:
Massive altars were they, at whose swollen feet grovelled a
worshiper.
Then they laughed, half in scorn of him; and there came a
miracle.
The little man was above them at a bound.
His austerity, like an irresistible sledge-hammer, drove them
lower and lower:
They dwindled while he soared.

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THE MINER

Those on the top say they know you, Earth—they are liars.
You are my father, and the silence I work in is my mother.
Only the son knows his father.

We are alike—sweaty, inarticulate of soul, bending under
thick knowledge.

I drink and shout with my brothers when above you—
Like most children we soon forget the parents of our souls.
But you avidly grip us again—we pay for the little noise of
life we steal.

TO AN ENEMY

I despise my friends more than you.
I would have known myself, but they stood before the mirrors
And painted on them images of the virtues I craved.
You came with sharpest chisel, scraping away the false paint.
Then I knew and detested myself, but not you:
For glimpses of you in the glasses you uncovered
Showed me the virtues whose images you destroyed.

TO A DISCARDED STEEL RAIL

Straight strength pitched into the surliness of the ditch,
A soul you have—strength has always delicate secret reasons.
Your soul is a dull question.
I do not care for your strength, but for your stiff smile at
Time—
A smile which men call rust.

Maxwell Bodenheim.

POEMS

THE WASTE PLACES

I

As a naked man I go
Through the desert sore afraid,
Holding up my head although
I'm as frightened as a maid.

The couching lion there I saw
From barren rocks lift up his eye;
He parts the cactus with his paw,
And stares at me as I go by.

He would follow on my trace
If he knew I was afraid,
If he knew my hardy face
Hides the terrors of a maid.

In the night he rises and
He stretches forth, he snuffs the air;
He roars and leaps along the sand,
He creeps and watches everywhere.

His burning eyes, his eyes of bale,
Through the darkness I can see;

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He lashes fiercely with his tail,
He would love to spring at me.

I am the lion in his lair;
I am the fear that frightens me;
I am the desert of despair
And the nights of agony.

Night or day, whate'er befall,
I must walk that desert land,
Until I can dare to call
The lion out to lick my hand.

II

As a naked man I tread
The gloomy forests, ring on ring,
Where the sun that's overhead
Cannot see what's happening.

There I go: the deepest shade,
The deepest silence pressing me;
And my heart is more afraid
Than a maiden's heart would be.

The Waste Places

Every day I have to run
 Underneath the demon tree,
Where the ancient wrong is done
 While I shrink in agony.

I saw the demon hold a maid
 In his arms, and as she, daft,
Whimpered in fear he bent and laid
 His lips on hers and laughed.

And she beckoned me to run,
 And she called for help to me,
And the ancient wrong was done
 Which is done eternally.

I am the maiden and the fear;
 I am the sunless shade, the strife;
I am the demon lips, the sneer
 Showing under every life.

I must tread that gloomy way
 Until I shall dare to run
And bear the demon with his prey
 From the forest to the sun.

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HAWKS

And as we walked the grass was faintly stirred;
We did not speak—there was no need to speak.
Above our heads there flew a little bird,
A silent one who feared that we might seek
Her hard-hid nest.

Poor little frightened one!
If we had found your nest that sunny day
We would have passed it by; we would have gone
And never looked or frightened you away.

O little bird! there's many have a nest,
A hard-found, open place, with many a foe;
And hunger and despair and little rest,
And more to fear than you can know.

Shield the nests where'er they be,
On the ground or on the tree;
Guard the poor from treachery.

THE LIAR

Did you think, old Grizzly-Face! to frighten me?—
To frighten me who fronted you before
Times out of mind,
When, through that sudden door,
You took and bound and cast me to the sea
Far from my kind,
Far from all friendly hands? Now I
Tremble no longer at your whisper, at your lie.

I go with you, but only till the end
Of one small hour, and when the hour is done
I shall again
Arise and leap and run
From the wind-swept, icy caves: I shall ascend,
I shall attain
To the pearly sky and the open door and the infinite sun.
And find again my comrades with me, every one.

So, once more, here are my hands to wind
Your cords about; here are my feet to tie
Straitly and fast;
And here, on either eye,
Press your strong fingers until I am blind:
Now, at the last,
Heave me upon your shoulder, whispering sly,
As you so oft before have whispered, your dark lie.

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A day dawns surely when you will not dare
 To come to me—then you will hide away
 In your dark lands;
 Then you will pray,
You will snarl and tremble when I seek you there
 To bind your hands,
To whisper truth where you have whispered lies,
To press my mighty fingers down upon your eyes.

DARK WINGS

Sing while you may, O bird upon the tree!
 Although on high, wide-winged above the day,
Chill evening broadens to immensity,
 Sing while you may.

On thee, wide-hovering too, intent to slay,
 The hawk's slant pinion buoys him terribly—
Thus near the end is of thy happy lay.

The day and thee and miserable me
 Dark wings shall cover up and hide away
Where no song stirs of bird or memory:
 Sing while you may.

James Stephens.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

"THE POET'S BREAD AND BUTTER"

It is instructive, in art as in politics, to watch the workings of the public mind. I think it was John Quincy Adams who, nearly a century ago, considered proficiency in the arts unworthy of free and enlightened citizens. Probably the numerical majority of his race, on both sides of the ocean, are still of his opinion, but they no longer utter it with his confidence. Their security has been imperiled, not so much by the effrontery of artists in producing masterpieces, as by the endless talk, the noisy wig-wagging of solemn tongues and pens, which these masterpieces, and their train of lesser works, have excited.

To such a degree has the good citizen's contempt of art been shaken, that he has begun to encourage certain of its manifestations. The arts of painting, sculpture, music and architecture are now heavily endowed in many of our cities. So many prizes, traveling scholarships, rich purchases and other rewards now await the aspiring painter or sculptor that it is scarcely possible for him to maintain any longer that modesty of fortune and demeanor which once seemed necessary to his development. Indeed, the public seems at last quite willing to admit that starvation and other forms of avoidable suffering do not assist a man of genius to paint or carve.

Not yet, however, does the public admit this of the poet. Large prizes and high prices may not injure the painter, million-dollar orders may develop the architect, but any

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such substantial evidence of favor would undermine the precarious vitality of the poet. He is lucky if he gets a mere pittance from editors, insufficient to support him on bread and water in a hermit's cave. He competes for no scholarships, and for no prizes but POETRY's. For him no American Academy at Rome opens its richly gilded doors—though why a poet should not learn more in loafing around Rome than any other artist is a mystery deeper than Lord Dunsyre's.

The poet alone is continually reminded that lack of food and sympathy are good for him. Listen to the New York *Nation's* luminous exposition of the world's duty toward its poets:

Even if he (the poet) shared the limited assistance which endowments give to scientists and scholars, it would sap society's sense of duty toward the arts . . . And he may find various sweet uses in his adversity—a close acquaintance with life, a call to perseverance, and the protection of his art from the soiling hand of money-grubbing.

The *Nation* need not complain that society has not done its full duty by the poet; teaching him "the sweet uses of adversity" not only by protecting him from the soiling hand of money-grubbing, but by turning upon him the deaf ear and lifting against him the stone wall. Is there any third-rate painter in America or Europe who has never received two hundred and fifty dollars for a picture? Yet when *Poetry* offered this amount as a small prize to the most distinguished of living English poets, the world was agape with amazement that a poem could earn so much money. Mr.

“*The Poet's Bread and Butter*”

Sargent is no more famous as a painter than Mr. Yeats is as a poet; yet the labor of a week or two would be repaid, in the one case, by from five to ten thousand dollars, in the other, by little or nothing.

But let us continue with the illuminating *Nation*:

We are not, however, without consolation in watching the discomfort of men like Moody and Thompson, counterparts of many other poets. The necessities of occupation in an unkind environment seldom rob us of anything of the highest value. The commanding figure, under modern conditions that make a Chatterton's fate almost impossible, will be discovered ere the shades of the counting-house close around him. Or if, like Browning, he remains undiscovered, some appreciation lets his generous spirit still work along the plan that pleased his boyish thought.

The beauty of this reasoning is beyond the reach of criticism. Put Shakespeare under “the necessity of occupation in an unkind environment;” in other words, set him to pegging Elizabethan shoes for a living: *Hamlet* is never written, and the *Nation* is not robbed of anything of the highest value, because even so divinatory an editor can not conceive of *Hamlet's* being possible until it HAS BEEN WRITTEN. In the same way he finds a Chatterton's fate impossible under modern conditions—alas, the modern Chatterton is not only possible but numerous, but when his genius is snuffed out by death, poverty, public apathy, or the compulsion to waste his time and brains earning a living, he is lucky if he gets a brief paragraph in a newspaper instead of immortal fame.

How can the *Nation* and its kind hear in their hearts the unsung songs? How can they tell what the world has lost by silencing its poets and crucifying its prophets? A mas-

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terpiece of art is not a miracle of individual genius so much as the expression of a reciprocal relation between the artist and his public. He who must butt his head against a stone wall of apathy cannot long get out of it his best work. Therefore let the *Nation* and its numerous rivals no longer be consoled by various flattering unctions as they "watch the discomfort" of poets, but be up and doing to diminish that discomfort.

"To have great poets there must be great audiences too."

H. M.

REVIEWS

Carducci: A Selection of his Poems, with Verse Translations, Notes, and Three Introductory Essays; by G. L. Bickersteth, M. A. Longmans, Green & Co.

Acknowledged the greatest Italian poet of the second half of the nineteenth century, Carducci has received but scant recognition from England and America. This injustice Mr. Bickersteth has undertaken to correct by means of the present volume, containing selections from the poet's work, verse translations of these selections, and a sheaf of essays. He has done his work exceptionally well: the essays build a broad and sympathetic avenue of approach to the Italian master, and the translations, though they will not be found, and should not be expected, to render at all times the exact shade of the original, show a skilful hand and a loving penetration into Carducci's world.

To recommend a volume of Carducci's verse to American readers is to answer the question—what has the poet to say to the present generation? He was born in 1835, and lived through all those stirring years that transformed Italy into a modern nation. To achieve this end splendid political victories had to be won. But, more important still and more fundamental, a moral change had to be wrought in the character of the whole Italian nation. Enslaved for centuries to foreign powers, the oppressed people had to be taught to walk erect and had to learn afresh the meaning of such sacred words as Liberty and Independence; and because Carducci, more successfully than any other, lit the altar-fires in their hearts they acclaimed him as their *vate*, their inspired seer. But while urging his countrymen to renew their own moral and spiritual beings as the best preparation for freedom and union, he did not fail to direct piercing shafts of hatred and contempt at every enemy of progress, and above all at the Roman Catholic Church. It is astonishing how large a part of his work is permeated with these patriotic themes; if we note in addition that he grew up at a time when the romantic movement was at its palest and its sickliest, and that he shared the strong reaction against its tenets that set in shortly after the middle of the century, we have pretty much the compass of his work till the learned second period of his life.

It is this learned second period which, according to the present reviewer at least, spells disaster. Not unnaturally, a man whose wholesome vigor and simple sense of the reali-

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ties of life turned him in his youth against the current romantic flabbiness, felt his heart go out more and more strongly to the great and self-contained literature of Greece and Rome. But misfortune would have it that to earn a livelihood the poet accepted a professorship in the University of Bologna, and in a few years alas! the transformation had been wrought and his winged Pegasus was hardly distinguishable from the average academic cart-horse. Carducci took to imitating classical forms, he peopled his verse with a forgotten mythology, and although he was too great a man ever to become insincere, the stream of his inspiration grew too thin to sweep along the heavy litter of superimposed scholarship. There are many who, far from sharing this opinion, date the real Carducci from the *Odi Barbare*; but, if fire and passion are the just prerogatives of verse, the reviewer submits that such early pieces as the hymn *To Satan*, celebrating the triumph of Reason over Superstition, and *Per Giuseppe Monti e Gaetano Tognetti*, which blasts the Vatican into "a nameless shame," are worth more than several volumes of nobly reserved Alcaic and Sapphic stanzas. In any case the patriotic verse of the youthful Carducci has the feel of molten metal, and when, in what we will call his professorial period, his poetry acquires a sudden glow, the occasion is usually supplied by a return to the old theme of freedom and Italy.

Because the American reader is sure to feel himself nearer to the red-blooded young Carducci than to the high-minded, excessively Olympian, old man, it is to be regretted

that so many of the editor-translator's selections confess the classical spirit. But even here Carducci is far from negligible, being from first to last an oak-hearted son of the Italian mother-earth, of whom it may be said—and of how many poets besides?—that he never penned a line that did not express an absolute conviction. F. S.

The Ride Home, by Florence Wilkinson Evans. Houghton-Mifflin Co.

Mrs. Evans is a painter poet, for the best of her poems are pictures, and the best of her pictures are those in which the artist follows her fancy most freely. She paints in rainbow colors, like Childe Hassam, and, like him also, she catches the glamour, the *aura* around the figure or landscape she is studying, expresses something of the whimsical, the magical, in whatever attracts her keen interpretive glance. For her gaze is not straitly serious, nor yet roundly humorous—when she is most herself, that is—but a bit sidelong; shrewd or tender, gay or pitying, according to the emotion of the moment.

The book, with its nearly four hundred pages and a third as many titles, is far too long, of course; indeed, it is a flagrant case of excess, for less than half its bulk would give room enough for the poet, and would banish the moralist and the Tennysonian dramatist. Mrs. Evans' passionate pity for the oppressed becomes poetry in *The Milliner's Apprentice*, *The Flower Factory*, and that series of pictures from POETRY, *Our Lady of Idleness*, but it is mere

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preaching in *Children of the Belated Lands*, *The Music Hall, Fifth Avenue*, and others.

Even without its failures and half-successes, the book has more variety of mood and subject than most of its contemporaries.

I can be whatever I choose beneath the sun—

A beast or a mountain spring or an arrogant emperor—

thus the poet sings in *Self*, and though one may question her power wholly to escape her own personality and sex, yet she has a far-roaming fancy, and a woman's intuition for feeling and character, lifting now and then into high motion.

Inheritors of an undreamed element,

Transfigured, glowing, near together

we went,

Ourselves grown mystic and magnificent.

Mrs. Evans is at her best in such self-studies as *Self* and *Motherhood*—the latter a really fresh treatment of a hackneyed subject; in emotional and descriptive poems like *The Ride Home*, *A Roman Garden*, *The Stranger in the House*, and the very beautiful *Memorial Tablet*; in character studies like *The Outcast*, *Pedro at the Spring*, *The Baker's Boy*, *The Innocent*; in such half-told tales as *White Azenor*; and in vivid little pictures like *The Nightingale*, *Fireflies*, *Waterfalls*, *Ecstasies*.

Any of these might be quoted as typical, but no one or two of them would be adequate. Here is one stanza from *Motherhood*:

The shimmer of poplars by still streams of France;
All rapture stored

In the blue shadow of a jacinth bank;
Ruins of towers, an army's glittering rank;
Pale effigies of lady and of lord;
Cathedral dusks—all these shalt thou inherit,
For these have I adored.

And *The Music at Saint Sulpice* is a perfect bit of imagery:

It streams from nowhere,
Fills the air;
Booms like the thunder of a sea
That washes up invisibly,
Having no shore;
As if the pillars and the gloom,
The spaces vast,
The height, the strength, the jeweled bloom,
Made themselves audible at last.

H. M.

Challenge, by Louis Untermeyer. The Century Co.

One need not object to a poet's philosophy if he can "get it across;" if, in other words, his expression of it is poetry. Mr. Untermeyer feels

A myriad urges in one rushing wave,
and calls us *To Arms* in the following strenuous lines:

Who can be listless in these stirring hours,
When, with athletic courage, we engage
To storm, with fierce abandon, sterner powers,
And meet indifference with a joyful rage!

But the more he sets his "arrogant and stubborn will" upon these labors of Mars, firing his impetuously "arrogant spirit" and "braggart blood" to

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—assail, with raging mirth,
The scornful and untroubled skies,
The cold complacency of earth—

the more eagerly do Apollo and the muses take to their heels, leaving their deserted votary to the conventional trappings and claptrap utterances of the god of war.

Mr. Untermeyer has been too devoted a student and critic of poetry to ask us to forgive such worn or tawdry phrases as those above quoted; or others like "vigorous discontent," "torpid ease," "visions girt with beauty," "the deathless urge shall stir me always," "Go struggling upward, passionate and proud," "revelment;" or details of these quatrains:

Make way for Her,
For the fervor of Life,
For the passions that stir,
For the courage of Strife—

My eager faith would keep me set
Against despair and careless hate,
Knowing this smoke and sweat
Is forging something violent—and great.

This sort of thing may be valor, but all the zeal of ten thousand reformers could not make it poetry. It would be negligible if it were not symptomatic of a red-blood disease which impels certain of our poets to sing with the good right arm instead of the voice. Muscle is not magic, and art may not be achieved by brawn alone.

But occasionally, when Mr. Untermeyer takes his mission more lightly or forgets it altogether, his shy muse comes

back and gives him a poem. Only twice does she fall in with his civic ardor—once, rather reluctantly, in *A Voice from the Sweatshops*, and again, more eagerly, in the light irony of *Battlecries*. The bitterness of *Irony* is rather in conflict with the poet's militancy, usually defiant even of death itself; but it becomes more poetic.

In *The Subway* and *How Much of Godhood* Mr. Untermeyer succeeds in suggesting phases of the prodigious poetry of modern science. *Feuerzauber* is a vivid picture, also *Haunted*, except for the last stanza, and *In the Streets* and *Folk-song* are tender and lyrical. But the finest poem in the book is probably *The Shell to the Pearl*, or rather the following first half thereof, for the second half becomes almost melodrama:

Grow not so fast, glow not so warm;
Thy hidden fires burn too wild—
Too perfect is thy rounded form;
Cling close, my child.

Be yet my babe, rest quiet when
The great sea-urges beat and call;
Too soon wilt thou be ripe for men,
The world and all.

Thy shining skin, thy silken sheath,
These will undo thee all too soon;
And men will fight for thee beneath
Some paler moon.

Aye, thou my own, my undefiled,
Shalt make the lewd world dream and start,
When they have seized and torn thee, child,
Out of my heart.

H. M.

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NOTES

Mr. James Stephens, now a resident of Paris, is a well-known Irish writer of tales and poems. His books of verse are *Insurrections* and *A Hill of Vision*; and a new collection will soon be published by the Macmillan Company.

Mr. Allan Updegraff, of Edgewater, New Jersey, has contributed verse to various magazines.

The Misses Amy Lowell of Boston, Helen Dudley of Chicago, and Helen Hoyt, now of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, have been represented before in *Poetry*, Miss Dudley in the first number of the magazine.

Mr. Maxwell Bodenheim, a young Chicago poet, makes his first appearance in this issue.

BOOKS RECEIVED

- Le Prisonnier des Mondes*, poèmes, par Jean le Roy. Mansi & Cie, Paris.
- Idylls of Greece*, (Third Series), by Howard V. Sutherland. Desmond Fitzgerald, Inc., New York.
- Verba et Voces*, Pensées cueillies par M. Gil Robin dans les livres de M. Jean de Bonnefon. Privately printed.
- Contemplations*, poems, by William de la Caumont-Force. Constable & Co. Ltd., London.
- The Thresher's Wife*, by Harry Kemp. Albert & Charles Boni, New York.
- The Man You Love*, a play, by Robert A. Kasper. Richard G. Badger, Boston.
- Songs of the Underworld*, by Clem Yore. Chas. C. Thompson Co., Chicago.

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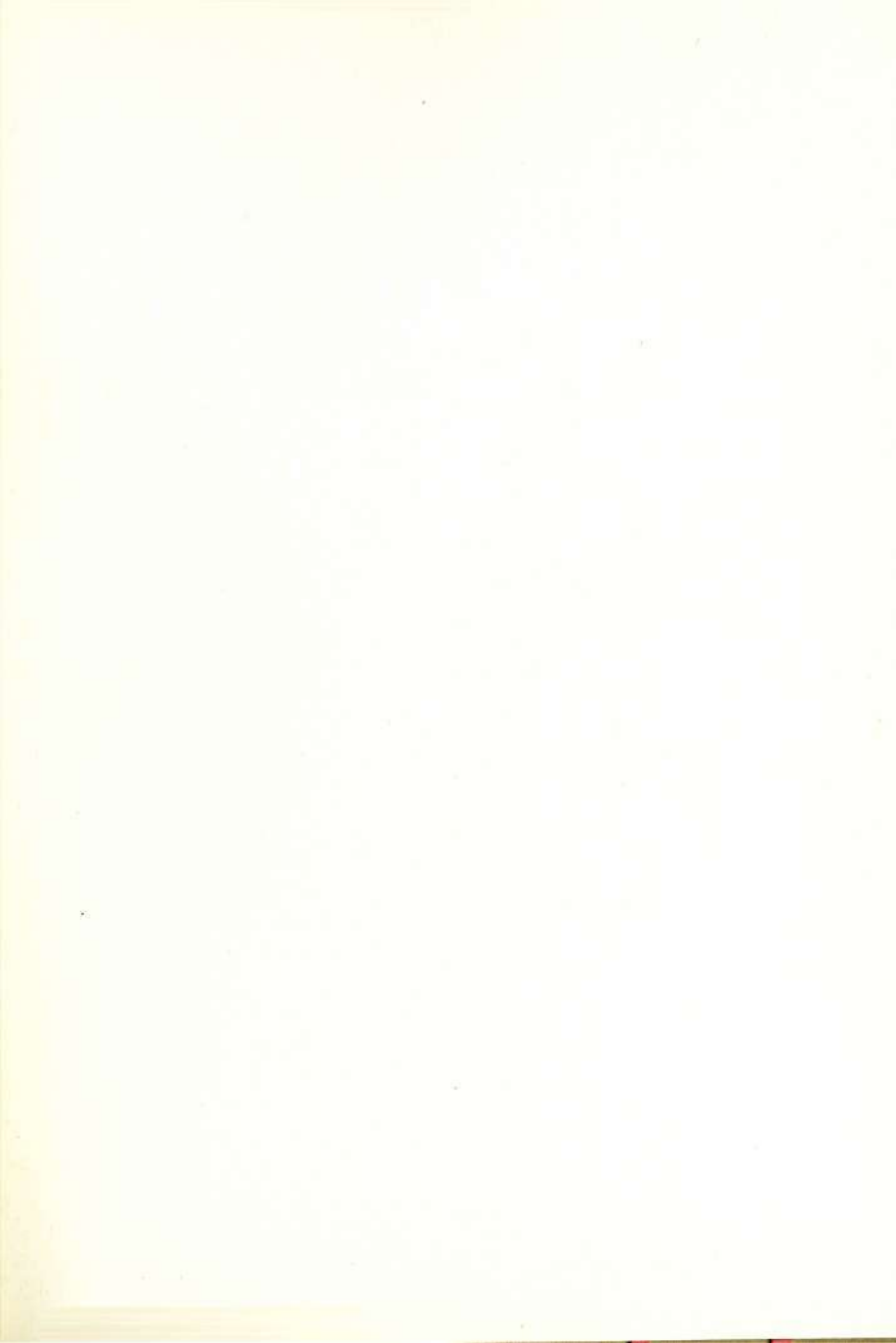
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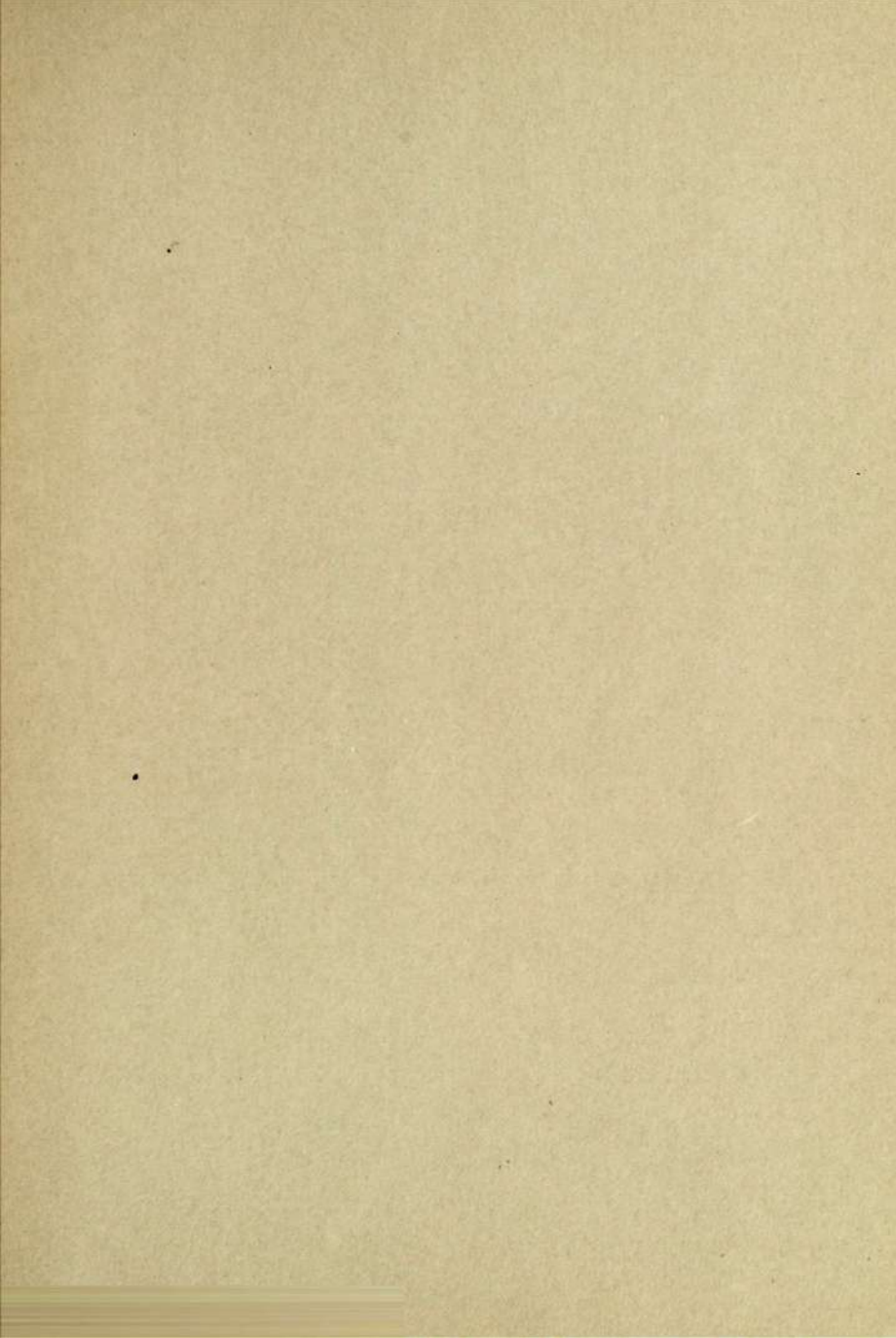
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