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A Word to Our Readers
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MONOLITHS

THE PRAYER

I HAVE cried aloud, but truly,
There are no Gods in the lowlands:
I will go to the high hills
To seek my God.

I yearn for him . . .

I am eager
As the hawk for the high sun!
For I have cried to Him loudly, and the silence
Was like the cloak of a black dream.

Let them come quickly,
And awake me
With singing, lest I dream no more.
THE RED BRIDGE

The arches of the red bridge
Are stronger than ever:
The arches of the scarlet bridge
Are of rough, bleak stone.

Why should such massive arches be the span
From cloud to tenuous cloud?

Let us not seek omens in the guts
Of newly slain fowls;
Leaving such play to the children,
Let us pluck wild swans
From under the moon;
Or, challenging strong, terrible men,
Let us slay them and seek truth
In their smoking entrails.

Let us fling runners
Across the red bridge,
Deep-lunged runners who will return to us
With tidings of the far countries
And the strange seas!

There be many terrible men
Going out upon the bridge,
Through the little door
That is by the steps from the river.

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THE KING

Seven full-paunched eunuchs came to me,
Bearing before them upon a silver shield
The secrets of my enemy.

As they crossed my threshold to stand,
With stately and hypocritical gesture
In a row before me,
One stumbled.
The dull, incurious eyes of the others
Blazed into no laughter,
Only a haggard malice
At the discomfiture
Of their companion.

Why should such Things have power
Not spoken for in the rules of men?

I would not receive them.
With my head covered I motioned them
To go forth from my presence.

Where shall I find an enemy
Worthy of me as him they defaced?

As they left me,
Bearing with them
Lewd shield and scarlet crown,
One paused upon the threshold,
Insolent,
To sniff a flower.

Even him I permitted to go forth
Safely.

Therefore
I have renounced my kingdom;
In a little bronze boat I have set sail
Out
Upon the sea.

There is no land, and the sea
Is black like the pool of ink
In the palm of a soothsayer,
Is black like the cypresses waiting
At midnight in the place of tombs.

My boat
Fears the white-lipped waves
That snatch at her,
Hungriy,
Furtively,
As they steal past like cats
Into the night:
And beneath me, in their hidden places,
The great fishes talk of me
In a tongue I have forgotten.

Skipwith Cannell.
THE BLUE SYMPHONY

I

The darkness rolls upward.
The thick darkness carries with it
Rain and a ravel of cloud.
The sun comes forth upon earth.

Palely the dawn
Leaves me facing timidly
Old gardens sunken:
And in the gardens is water.

Sombre wreck-autumnal leaves;
Shadowy roofs
In the blue mist,
And a willow-branch that is broken.

O old pagodas of my soul, how you glittered across green
trees!

Blue and cool:
Blue, tremulously,
Blow faint puffs of smoke
Across sombre pools.
The damp green smell of rotted wood;
And a heron that cries from out the water.
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II

Through the upland meadows
I go alone.
For I dreamed of someone last night
Who is waiting for me.

Flower and blossom, tell me do you know of her?
Have the rocks hidden her voice?
They are very blue and still.

Long upward road that is leading me,
Light hearted I quit you,
For the long loose ripples of the meadow-grass
Invite me to dance upon them.

Quivering grass,
Daintily poised
For her foot's tripping.

O blown clouds, could I only race up like you!
Oh the last slopes that are sun-drenched and steep!

Look, the sky!
Across black valleys
Rise blue-white aloft
Jagged unwrinkled mountains, ranges of death.

Solitude. Silence.

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One chuckles by the brook for me:
One rages under the stone.
One makes a spout of his mouth,
One whispers—one is gone.

One over there on the water
Spreads cold ripples
For me
Enticingly.

The vast dark trees
Flow like blue veils
Of tears
Into the water.

Sour sprites,
Moaning and chuckling,
What have you hidden from me?

"In the palace of the blue stone she lies forever
Bound hand and foot."

Was it the wind
That rattled the reeds together?

Dry reeds,
A faint shiver in the grasses.
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IV

On the left hand there is a temple:
And a palace on the right-hand side.
Foot-passengers in scarlet
Pass over the glittering tide.

Under the bridge
The old river flows
Low and monotonous
Day after day.

I have heard and have seen
All the news that has been:
Autumn's gold and Spring's green!

Now in my palace
I see foot-passengers
Crossing the river,
Pilgrims of autumn
In the afternoons.

Lotus pools;
Petals in the water:
Such are my dreams.

For me silks are outspread.
I take my ease, unthinking.
The Blue Symphony

V

And now the lowest pine-branch
Is drawn across the disk of the sun.
Old friends who will forget me soon,
I must go on
Towards those blue death mountains
I have forgot so long.

In the marsh grasses
There lies forever
My last treasure,
With the hope of my heart.

The ice is glazing over;
Torn lanterns flutter,
On the leaves is snow.

In the frosty evening
Toll the old bell for me
Once, in the sleepy temple.
Perhaps my soul will hear.

Afterglow:
Before the stars peep
I shall creep into the darkness.

John Gould Fletcher.
The seringa casts its petals across the slanting rays of the sun.
There are shadows in the grass where they lie;
I gather them up in my hand,
And their perfume distends my nostrils and closes my eyes.
I crush their sweetness in my palm
And scatter them back to the grass.
But in the night a wind will come,
And the petals whirl hither and thither,
And the perfume be no more.

Oh, I will fashion your beauty into a measure,
To fling it over the housetops
And cast it into the meadows.
Lo, in my heart
The song of a bird that liveth not in memory,
And in the shell of a rose
A hundred years of Athens or of Rome.
Though my song die with my breath,
(Yes, though I am dust,
Though Rome become as Babylon),
It shall vibrate on a harp that ceaseth not,
That gathereth all music into itself
As the seas all streams.

Yet, for my joy, and for thy beauty's sake,
Linger, sweet perfume, till the sun be set!

John Alford.
CALLE MEMO O Loredan

We were staying (that night) in a very old palace—
Very dark, very large, and sheer to the water below.
The rooms were silent and strange, and you were frightened,
   Alice:
The silver lamp gave a feeble, flickering glow.

And the bed had a high dark tester, and carved black posts,
   And behind our heads was a glimmer of old brocade.
Do you remember?—you thought the shadows were full of
ghosts,
   And the sound of the lapping water made you afraid.

Ah! and your face shone pale, in the gleam of that quivering
flame,
   And your bosom was rich with the round pearls, row on
row;
And you looked proud, and jeweled, and passionate without
shame—
   Like some princess who stooped to her lover, a long while
ago.
I remember so well how the table looked that night;
The shaded candle-flames were gentle and bright,
Caressing the wine and silver. Jewels glowed,
And bosom and wrist moved softly; light words flowed,
And the surface chatter of dinner ran charmingly on.

Then you told me of your dream cities, that Venice was one;
And looking up quickly, at eyes now gray now blue
(For Venice belongs to me, as well as to you),
I thought, for a moment, I saw your soul shine through!

Is it odd for an hour’s companion to think such things?
Swift? But, dear, see—how Love and the Soul have wings!

Douglas Goldring.
I ate at Ostendorff's, and saw a dame
   With eager golden eyes, paired with a red,
Bald, chilled, old man.  Piercing the clatter came
   Keen Traümerei.  On the sound he bowed his head,
Covered his eyes, and looked on things long sped.
Her white fierce fingers strained, but could not stir
His close-locked hands, nor bring him back to her.

Let him alone, bright lady; for he clips
   A fairer lass than you, with all your fire:
Let him alone; he touches sweeter lips
   Than yours he hired, as others yet shall hire:
Leave him the quickening pang of clean desire,
Even though vain: nor taint those spring winds blown
From banks of perished bloom: let him alone.

Bitter-sweet melody, that call'st to tryst
   Love from the hostile dark, would God thy breath
Might break upon him now through thickening mist,
   The trumpet-summons of imperial Death;
That now, with fire-clean lips where quivereth
Atoning sorrow, he shall seek the eyes
Long turned towards earth from fields of paradise.

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In vain: By virtue of a far-off smile,
    Men may be deaf a space to gross behests
Of nearer voices; for some little while
    Sharp pains of youth may burn in old men’s breasts;
    But—men must eat, though angels be their guests:
The waiter brought spaghetti; he looked up,
Hemmed, blinked, and fiddled with his coffee-cup.

ASCRIPITION

Well, wed him, then; and though there ne’er be folded
    A son in your long arms, you shall not be
A barren woman, having made and molded
    Whatever marrow of manhood lies in me.

William Laird.
THE STEAM SHOVEL

Beneath my window in a city street
A monster lairs, a creature huge and grim
And only half believed: the strength of him—
Steel-strung and fit to meet
The strength of earth—
Is mighty as men's dreams that conquer force.
Steam belches from him. He is the new birth
Of old Behemoth, late-sprung from the source
Whence Grendel sprang, and all the monster clan
Dead for an age, now born again of man.

The iron head,
Set on a monstrous, jointed neck,
Glides here and there, lifts, settles on the red
Moist floor, with nose dropped in the dirt, at beck
Of some incredible control.
He snorts, and pauses couchant for a space,
Then slowly lifts, and tears the gaping hole
Yet deeper in earth's flank. A sudden race
Of loosened earth and pebbles trickles there
Like blood-drops in a wound.
But he, the monster, swings his load around—
Weightless it seems as air.
His mammoth jaw
Drops widely open with a rasping sound,
And all the red earth vomits from his maw.

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O thwarted monster, born at man's decree,
A lap-dog dragon, eating from his hand
And doomed to fetch and carry at command,
Have you no longing ever to be free?
In warm, electric days to run a-muck,
Ranging like some mad dinosaur,
Your fiery heart at war
With this strange world, the city's restless ruck,
Where all drab things that toil, save you alone,
Have life;
And you the semblance only, and the strife?
Do you not yearn to rip the roots of stone
Of these great piles men build,
And hurl them down with shriek of shattered steel,
Scorning your own sure doom, so you may feel,
You too, the lust with which your fathers killed?
Or is your soul in very deed so tame,
The blood of Grendel watered to a gruel,
That you are well content
With heart of flame
Thus placidly to chew your cud of fuel
And toil in peace for man's aggrandizement?
Poor helpless creature of a half-grown god,
Blind of yourself and impotent!
At night,
When your forerunners, sprung from quicker sod,
Would range through primal woods, hot on the scent,
Or wake the stars with amorous delight,
You stand, a soiled, unwieldy mass of steel,
Black in the arc-light, modern as your name,
Dead and unsouled and trite;
Till I must feel
A quicker creator's pity for your shame:
That man, who made you and who gave so much,
Yet cannot give the last transforming touch;
That with the work he cannot give the wage—
For day, no joy of night,
For toil, no ecstasy of primal rage.

_Eunice Tietjens._
THE OCEAN LINER

They went down to the sea in ships,
In ships they went down to the sea.
In barks hewn of oak-tree strips,
In galleys with skin-sewn sails,
In triremes, caravels, brigs—
Frail flimsily rolling rigs—
They went down where the huge wave rips,
Where the black storm lashes and hales.
They went down to the sea in ships,
To the sounding sorrowing sea.

They go down to the sea—oh me!—
What ships that outbrave the sea,
What ships that outrun the gale,
With a feather of steam for a sail
And a whirling shaft for an oar,
Are the ships that my brothers build
To carry me over the sea,
That my hand, with treasures filled,
May knock at the morrow’s door!

Steel hulls, impenetrable
To the waves that tease and pull,
Bright engines that answer the beat
Of their foam-slippered dancing feet,
Hot fires that shudder and drive,
Close-tended, untiring, sure—
Like queen-bees deep in the hive
Who labor and serve and endure—
All these are down below
Far under the slippery water,
While the babe sleeps soft in his bed,
And the banquet table is spread,
And my neighbor's laughing daughter
Trims her hair with a rose-red bow.

They went down to the sea in ships,
In ships they went down to the sea.
And the sea had a million lips,
And she laughed in her gorge for glee.
And the floor of the sea is strewn
With tempest trophies dread,
And the deep-sea currents croon
As they wash through the bones of the dead.
But the ships that my brothers build—
Ah, they mock at the bleak storm's rage;
And their fiery hearts are thrilled
When he throws them his battle gauge.
On the sea-foam they lean for a pillow;
They drive without paddle or sail

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Straight over the mountainous billow,
Straight on through the blustering gale!
Oh, they shake out gay flags as they run,
Flags that flutter and gleam in the sun!
From the tip of their turrets above
They send word of the storm to the shore;
And they hear from afar through the roar,
Down the cloud-built aisles of the sky,
Some land-bound lady's cry
To her ocean-wandering love.

They go down to the sea in ships,
In ships they go down to the sea.
And my brothers, the masterful, free,
Fear no more the white foam of her lips,
The sweet wild kiss of the sea!
They have won her, she harks to their wooing,
The love of ten thousand years,
The suing, the wild undoing,
The faith unto death, the tears.
Oh, their glory her song shall be,
Soft, soft is the kiss of her lips!
They go down to the sea in ships,
In ships they go down to the sea.
A GARDEN IN THE DESERT

So light and soft the days fall—
  Like petals one by one
Down from yon tree whose flowers all
  Must vanish in the sun.

Like almond-petals down, dear,
  Odorous, rosy-white,
Falling to our green world here
  Off the thick boughs of night.

One like another still lies—
  Tomorrow is today.
Always the buzzing bee flies,
  Who never flies away.

Ever the same blue sky rounds
  Its chalice for the sun.
The mountains at the world’s bounds
  Their purple chorals run.

And ever you and I, friend,
  Free of this mortal scheme,
Look out beyond desire’s end
  And dream the spacious dream.
THE GIANT CACTUS OF ARIZONA

The cactus in the desert stands
Like time’s inviolate sentinel,
Watching the sun-washed waste of sands
Lest they their ancient secrets tell.
And the lost love of mournful lands
It knows alone and guards too well.

Wiser than Sphynx or pyramid,
It points a stark hand at the sky,
And all the stars alight or hid
It counts as they go rolling by;
And mysteries the gods forbid
Darken its heavy memory.

I asked how old the world was—yea,
And why yon ruddy mountain grew
Out of hell’s fire. By night nor day
It answered not, though all it knew,
But lifted, as it stopped my way,
Its wrinkled fingers toward the blue.

Inscrutable and stern and still
It waits the everlasting doom.
Races and years may do their will—
Lo, it will rise above their tomb,
Till the drugged earth has drunk her fill
Of sun, and falls asleep in gloom.

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Poems of Travel

IN THE LOUVRE

Queen Karomana, slim you stand,
   In bronze with little flecks of gold—
     Queen Karomana.
O royal lady, lift your hand,
   Shatter the stone museum cold,
     Queen Karomana.

The wide Nile sleeps, the desert stings
   With color. Shake your tresses free,
     Queen Karomana!
The sleepy lotus shines and swings—
   Loose your bound limbs and sail with me
   In a smooth shallop to the sea,
     Queen Karomana!

Queen Karomana, still so mute,
   So delicate, yet cold as snow,
     Queen Karomana!
An ice-wind, boldly resolute,
   Rippled your thin robe long ago,
   And froze you into bronze—I know—
But left your garment's flecks of gold
And the slim grace men loved of old,
     Queen Karomana.
He built a tower for all to see
With sun-washed gardens planted wide;
And there, with pomp of pageantry,
With men-at-arms and minstrelsy
And moon-beam ladies fair and free,
He reveled in his pride.
And there, with soft prayers muttered slow,
And wind-blown candles burning low,
And hooded mourners row on row,
In pomp of peace he died.

Now time forgets how many a sun
Above the waste has risen and run
Since all the feasts were over and done;
Yet still from rusty pinnacle,
From cobwebbed pane and broken bell,
A wind-voice murmurs: Here am I—
'Twas good to live and die;
And good to rear these carved stones well
'Twixt laboring earth and dreaming sky.
And now 'tis good to watch and wait
While the slow centuries pass in state,
And make old time my glory tell
To you who wander by.
O mother of that heap of clay, so passive on your breast,
Now do you stare at death, woman, who yesterday were blest?
Now do you long to fare afar, and guide him on the way
Where he must wander all alone, his little feet astray?
   But I now, but I now—
   Sons of me seven and seven
   The high God seals upon the brow,
   And summons from his heaven.

Blest as a bride were you, woman, that time of years agone,
When love, giver of life, came close and led you to his throne.
And blest were you—have you forgot?—when through the moons of pain
The life love-given tugged at your heart and bound you with its chain.
   But I now, but I now—
   Seared by the high God’s scorn—
   Lives that will never come to birth
   Body of me has borne.

And when the hour was come, woman, your dark and perilous hour,
When the twin spirits, Death and Life, clutched you with jealous power,
Rent by their war, you lay half lost, until a baby's cry
Summoned you forth past world on world to sit with God on high.

But I now, but I now—
Never my baby's voice
Has called me forth from vales of woe
With seraphs to rejoice.

You in your arms have clasped him, woman, and fed him at your breast.
You sang him little songs at night, and lulled him to his rest.
The ages gone were yours then, and yours the years to be.
You gave him of your hope and saw the light no eye shall see.

But I now, but I now—
Sons of me born in dream
Cry out for robes of flesh; I see
Their wistful eyes agleam.

O mother of that heap of clay so passive on your breast—
Now do you stare at death, woman?—nay, peace, for you are blest.
Blest are you in your joy, woman, blest are you in your pain—
Once more he calls you past the worlds to sit with God again.

But I now, but I now—
Sons of me nine and nine,
That looked on life and death with me,
Are neither God's nor mine.

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Poems of Travel

THE WONDER OF IT

How wild, how witch-like weird that life should be!
That the insensate rock dared dream of me,
And take to bursting out and burgeoning—
    Oh long ago—yo ho!—
And wearing green! How stark and strange a thing
That life should be!

Oh mystic mad, a rigadoon of glee,
That dust should rise, and leap alive, and flee
A-foot, a-wing, and shake the deeps with cries—
    Oh far away—yo-hay!
What moony masque, what arrogant disguise
That life should be!

Harriet Monroe.
EDITORIAL COMMENT

POETRY AND CRITICISM

Samuel Butler is nowhere wittier than in his characterization of our peculiar Anglo-Saxon smugness in criticism. "For me," observes Miss Skinner, daughter of the great Dr. Skinner, during a call of Ernest Pontifex, "a simple chord of Beethoven is enough."

Perhaps nobody exists who would dream of asserting his enjoyment of a painting or a statue in this ridiculous manner, nor of looking at a canvas or a modeled figure inch by inch, instead of regarding its whole movement and structure.

But if one turns to printed comment on poetry, one may find Miss Skinners in plenty. Those critics appear rather few who enjoy a poem as a distinct entity, and as one enjoys a special cordial, or a particular piece of fruit-cake, or the revelation and fresh breath of some green living scene, or one's pleasure in the individuality of an acquaintance. Many people regard a poem not at all as a unified piece of expression fused and animated by one musical design and spirit, but as a collection of separate lines: and look at the poet's canvas only through an inch-by-inch reading glass.

This sort of critic is always wondering why Shakespeare said,

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles—

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thus violating the rules of somebody or other's college rhetoric, rules about mixing metaphores. The lay-reader and the play-goer, who are harking to the full and perturbed motion of the act and the verse and Hamlet's mental state, will find the phrase merely fitting and expressive, in the natural course of the play and of the mood it evokes in the hearer: and will not regard the line in isolation from its context more than the observer of Saint-Gaudens' statue of Lincoln will focus his gaze on some single unfastened button on the emancipator's coat, and find the work of art difficult to understand because the sculptor did not place the button in its corresponding button-hole.

By such sharp, disconcerting pounces on detail college professors have done much to render all poetic text unintelligible, and to hypnotize the nation into a sincere, nervous ignorance of poetry, and highly reasonable aversion from it.

These sharp pounces on detail are inspired by a prevalent American "literary" conception that the instinctive mental action of the reader of a poem is not so much to understand, still less to like or enjoy a poem—as one may understand and enjoy a song one hears pouring out of the window of a stranger's house on one's way down the street of one's own life—as to estimate the poem and "put it in its place" among the metrical productions of the whole world as arranged in one's own mind.

This is partly a heritage from our Protestant habit, not to say vice, of judgment. We arrange our known poets, or our known poems, competitively, according to their distance...
from some arbitrary goal—often one they had never heard of, and certainly had no ambition to reach. Our poetical criticism is greatly given over to such statements as that Shelley’s *Sky-Lark* is the third greatest lyrical poem since Herrick’s *Bid me to live*; or that Keats’ *Hyperion* ranks second or sixth or seventh among the seven heroic poems in classic diction since Milton’s *Lycidas*.

This making of lists, this putting of poets and of poems in their places, may be continued almost indefinitely. The critic who likes to pursue this strange pastime lives in a hallucination in whose haze he supposes that he has actually read all the books in the world: or rather that the books he has read constitute all the books there are. As no one on earth has ever read all the books there are, he could not have a more secure mania, sheltered as it is by everyone’s vast if more modest ignorance. By a mere act of will he may assert, and none will gainsay, his authority that *Since there’s no help, come let us kiss and part*—is the third or nineteenth or forty-third greatest sonnet of passion. Nobody has read all the world’s sonnets: still less has he observed which of these were unconscious nominees for the office of the first sonnet of passion; nor marked his ballot for them; nor heard which of them seemed to be the most successful candidate. At first glance it appears a dreary circumstance that anyone should prefer the attempt to arrange sonnets of passion in fixed places among the metrical productions of the universe, instead of knowing each creation as a piece of human life and expression. But, considered more philosoph-
ically, the phenomenon appears a wise compensation for an irremediable loss.

Who loves his friend according to that friend's standing and place in the world? Certainly none but the unfortunate person who has never experienced the profound charm of any real friendship. In the same way it may be said that no one has ever had the happiness of really reading poetry unless he has cared for a poem shee·rly for the truth and beauty of its own enriching presence.

E. W.

THE POETRY OF WAR

Poets have made more wars than kings, and war will not cease until they remove its glamour from the imaginations of men.

What is the fundamental, the essential and psychological cause of war? The feeling in men's hearts that it is beautiful. And who have created this feeling? Partly, it is true, kings and their "armies with banners"; but, far more, poets with their war-songs and epics, sculptors with their statues—the assembled arts which have taken their orders from kings, their inspiration from battles. Kings and artists have united to give to war its glamour, to transmute into sounds and colors and forms of beauty its savagery and horror, to give heroic appeal to its unreason, a heroic excuse to its rage and lust.

All this is of the past. The race is beginning to suspect those old ideals, to give valor a wider range than war affords, to seek danger not at the cannon's mouth but in less noisy labors and adventures. When Nicholas of Russia and William of Germany, in solemn state the other day, invoked the blessing of God upon their armies, the emotion that went
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round the world was not the old thrill, but a new sardonic laughter.

As Cervantes smiled Spain's chivalry away, so some poet of the new era may strip the glamour from war. Tolstoi's "War and Peace" and many lesser books are chapters of the new revelation, and modern science, modern invention, have aided the race in its half-conscious effort to unveil the bitter hideousness of the war-god's visage. But the final word has not been said; the feeling that war is beautiful still lingers in men's hearts, a feeling founded on world-old savageries—love of power, of torture, of murder, love of big stakes in a big game. This feeling must be destroyed, as it was created, through the imagination. It is work for a poet.

There will be a new poetry of war. Now and then one hears, if not the coming Cervantes' authentic message, yet a loud word or two of grim protest against the glamour. This, from Mr. Carl Sandburg, is significant in its huge contempt:

**READY TO KILL**

Ten minutes now I have been looking at this.
I have gone by here before and wondered about it.
This is a bronze memorial of a famous general
Riding horseback with a flag and a sword and a revolver on him.
I want to smash the whole thing into a pile of junk to be hauled away to the scrap yard.
I put it straight to you,
After the farmer, the miner, the shop man, the factory hand, the fireman and the teamster,
Have all been remembered with bronze memorials,
Shaping them on the job of getting all of us
Something to eat and something to wear,
When they stack a few silhouettes
Against the sky
Here in the park,
And show the real huskies that are doing the work of the world, and feeding people instead of butchering them,

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Then maybe I will stand here
And look easy at this general of the army holding a flag in the air,
And riding like hell on horseback
Ready to kill anybody that gets in his way,
Ready to run the red blood and slush the bowels of men all over
the sweet new grass of the prairie.

War will be over when such feeling as this possesses the
imaginations of men.  

H. M.

SYNGE'S MAGIC


Synge's family, his boy life, his education, his wander years, and his final sweep into fame are a romantic chapter in literary history. M. Bourgeois writes with thoroughness and sympathy, and no lover of Synge but will be grateful for this account of a life dedicated to a great purpose, which had a strange fulfilling.

We have also a study of his continental culture, which gave him facility in manipulating the material that awaited him in Ireland. With this may be classed Synge's sources, so fully revealed in his note-books, and further elucidated by M. Bourgeois, who makes much of the poet's knowledge of folk drama in other countries, and of his predilection for Pierre Loti's fisher stories. Synge's style is demonstrated to be due to his first-hand knowledge of Gaelic. All these he brought to the Abbey Theater, whose history is once again given in complete detail.

M. Bourgeois' critic-data are plentiful and well organized, but his subject suffers from a method which, though
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scholarly, is diffuse. Too many minor matters are in the way of real clues, which, if the author had valiantly followed them, would have led to the essential Synge. His affinity to George Borrow, touched upon in this critique, is less than to a more splendid company of wanderers who express people happily, or unhappily, inarticulate.

Synge's Irish countryside is another version of Wordsworth's Northumberland, Whitman's Manhattan, Thoreau's Cape Cod, Turgenev's rural Russia, and Gorky's tramp world. Once established in this group, Synge's place in it has a peculiar distinction. His outcast *milieu* is his whole inspiration. He made Teniers pictures of some of it; spirited plays of the rest; and of the whole a body of poetry magical in its enchantment. M. Bourgeois takes issue with critics who make poetry Synge's supreme gift. But Synge is a poet above all. Poetry is his power, and M. Bourgeois, in emphasizing the dramatic in Synge and studying each play apart from its poetry, weakens his criticism. Only at times do we feel that he is alive to the beauty of the plays, noticeably in the chapter on *Riders to the Sea*. Merely mentioning the love scene in *The Playboy* as beautiful does not satisfy one. It is so beautiful that it adds a fresh rapture to English poetry.

All of Synge's plays do this. Open *The Well of the Saints* casually and you come upon such clauses as:

— to make the blind see clear as the gray hawks do be high up on a still day sailing the sky—

— the Splendor of the Spirit of God you'll see an odd time
Synge's Magic

shining out through the big hills, and steep streams falling to
the sea—
—youth won't let down the width of your two feet, and not be
crushing fine flowers and making sweet smells in the air.

Much of the play is an eclogue. M. Bourgeois' study of
this dramatic lyric is typical. He is concerned with every­
thing but the poetry, yet we have not had such rich out-of­
door feeling in English poetry since Spenser. There is some
recognition of Synge's passion for nature, but its quality, that
which makes it compelling, must be studied organically with
the plays. M. Bourgeois slights the beauty of the Dierdre
play, which is a play only in form; in substance it is an elegy;
its theme is the grave.

M. Bourgeois comes close at times to the secret of Synge,
to his paganisn, his tragic mood. Had he studied these inte­
grally with the plays, he would have seen how Synge disturbs
to the very core by his passionate thrusts at life. He loosed
tragedy from a new source. His mater dolorosa, his lonely,
broken people, young and old, and Synge himself, as lonely
and broken as any, are the voice of Ireland's silent centuries.

Ellen Fitzgerald.

THE POETRY OF GERARD HOPKINS

That Gerard Hopkins is today little known, even among
rhymers, is an inevitable result of his manner of life and
work. He was a priest of the Catholic Church and a mem­
ber of the Society of Jesus. His faith was the source of his
poetry, but his arduous labors in its service left him little
time for celebrating it in verse, and made him so indifferent to applause that he never published. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch put his *The Starlight Night* in the *Oxford Book of Victorian Verse*, and he is represented in Orby Shipley's *Carmina Mariana* and H. C. Beeching's *Lyra Sacra*. Several of his poems are included in Volume VIII of *Poets and Poetry of the Century* with a critique by his friend Robert Bridges, and Miss Katherine Brégy has made him the subject of an illuminative essay in her admirable book *The Poet's Chantry*. A scant bibliography indeed for a genuinely inspired poet, the most scrupulous word-artist of the nineteenth century!

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out like shining from shook foil.

These opening lines of a sonnet illustrate clearly Gerard Hopkins' spirit and method. Like that other Jesuit, Robert Southwell, he was a Catholic poet: for him to write a poem on a secular theme was difficult, almost impossible. He sang "the grandeur of God," and for his song he used a language which in its curious perfection is exclusively his own.

One may search his writings in vain for a figure that is not novel and true. He took from his own experience those comparisons that are the material of poetry, and rejected, it seems, such of them as already bore marks of use. For him, the grandeur of God flames out from the world not like light from stars, but like "shining from shook foil." He writes not of soft hands, not of velvety hands, but of "feel-of-prime-rose hands." He writes not that thrush's eggs are blue as

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the sky, but that they “look little low heavens.” The starry skies of a winter night are “the dim woods quick with diamond wells,” or “the gray lawns cold where quaking gold-dew lies.” In Spring “the blue is all in a rush with richness,” and Summer “plashes amid the billowy apple-trees his lusty hands.”

Now, it may be that these exquisite figures would not entitle their maker to high praise if they were isolated bits of splendor, if (like the economical verse-makers of our own day) he had made each one the excuse for a poem. But they come in bewildering profusion. Gerard Hopkins’ poems are successions of lovely images, each a poem in itself.

This statement may give its reader the idea that of Gerard Hopkins’ poetry may be said, as Charles Ricketts said of Charles Conder’s pictures, “There are too many roses.” No one who reads his poems, however, will make this criticism. The roses are there of right—all of them. They are, it may be said, necessary roses. They are the cunningly placed elements of an elaborate pattern, a pattern of which roses are the appropriate material. And the red and white of their petals come from the blood and tears that nourished their roots.

It is the overwhelming greatness of his theme that justifies the lavishness of his method. The word “mystic” is nowadays applied so wantonly to every gossiper about things supernatural that it is to most people meaningless. For the benefit of those who know the difference between Saint Theresa and Miss Evelyn Underhill, however, it may be
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stated that Gerard Hopkins was more nearly a true mystic than either Francis Thompson or Lionel Johnson. The desire, at any rate, for the mystical union with God is evident in every line he wrote, and even more than his friend Coventry Patmore he knew the "dark night of the soul."

This being the case, his theme being God and his writing being an act of adoration, it is profitless to criticise him, as Mr. Robert Bridges has done, for "sacrificing simplicity" and violating those mysterious things, the "canons of taste."

A sane editor of a popular magazine would reject everything he wrote. A verse-writer who does not know that *The Habit of Perfection* is true poetry is not a poet. Here it is:

Elected Silence, sing to me
   And beat upon my whorlèd ear;
Pipe me to pastures still, and be
   The music that I care to hear.

Shape nothing, lips; be lovely-dumb:
   It is the shut, the curfew sent
From there where all surrenders come
   Which only makes you eloquent.

Be shellèd, eyes, with double dark,
   And find the uncreated light:
This ruck and reel which you remark
   Coils, keeps, and teases simple sight.

Palate, the hutch of tasty lust,
   Desire not to be rinsed with wine:
The can must be so sweet, the crust
   So fresh that come in fasts divine!

Nostrils, your careless breath that spend
   Upon the stir and keep of pride,
What relish shall the censers send
   Along the sanctuary side!
The Poetry of Gerard Hopkins

O feel-of-primrose hands, O feet
    That want the yield of plushy sward,
But you shall walk the golden street,
    And you unhouse and house the Lord.

And, Poverty, be thou the bride
    And now the marriage feast begun,
And lily-colored clothes provide
    Your spouse, not labored-at, nor spun.

Walter Pater, Gerard Hopkins' tutor at Balliol, had no keener sensitivity to the color and music of language. Gerard Hopkins' purpose—a purpose impossible of fulfilment but not therefore less worth the effort—was "to arrange words like so many separate gems to compose a whole expression of thought, in which the force of grammar and the beauty of rhythm absolutely correspond."

There will always be those who dislike the wealth of imagery which characterizes Gerard Hopkins' poetry, because they do not understand his mental and spiritual attitude. Perhaps for some critics an altar cloth may be too richly embroidered and a chalice too golden. Ointment of spikenard is "very costly."  

Joyce Kilmer.

A WORD TO OUR READERS

With this number Poetry completes its fourth volume and its second year. Two-fifths of the period for which we are endowed having passed, it is time, perhaps, for a confidential talk.

Are you convinced of the value of our unique experiment for the support and encouragement of a universal and
indispensable art? Do you wish the magazine to continue beyond the five years for which it is subsidized? Do you wish its policy to be one of increasing liberality toward the poets and their public, working always toward more just appreciation and recompense for the former, and for the latter a presentation of the best the art has to offer?

The permanence of the magazine lies not with us, but with you. Given life and health, we can pledge to its support our best service, and—under the usual limitations of human error—increasing knowledge and efficiency; for there is much education in such work as this. But our labor will not avail for permanence unless we can reach the public for poetry which must exist in this vast country, and in the wide provinces of the English-speaking world. And we can not find that public unless you help us.

We must be advertised by our friends. Other advertising, in these days of enormously expensive displays of it, is costly and often futile. We have preferred to reserve our endowment fund for our contributors—the poets, in order to increase the intrinsic value of the magazine. The direct advertisement of recommendation is the only possible means of increasing its scope and influence.

Thus you, and you alone, can give us really effective aid toward reaching a circulation large enough to enable us to stand alone. You can help us in any or all of the following ways:

First, send or renew your own subscription.
A Word to Our Readers

Second, persuade one or more of your friends and neighbors to subscribe.

Third, see that your social and literary clubs subscribe.

Fourth, see that the public library in your town carries one or more subscriptions.

Fifth, talk about the magazine; either praise or blame will indicate your interest.

To those who wish to give more to the magazine than the dollar-and-a-half a year of their subscription, we extend a cordial invitation to join our body of guarantors. In that list are now one hundred and thirty-two names of men and women who have promised us from five to one hundred dollars a year for five years. Full guarantors pay fifty dollars, or, in a few instances, one hundred. Others pay twenty-five, ten, or five dollars. All receive the magazine each month, and full reports once a year. Our guarantors, like members of art institutes, and of operatic, dramatic and orchestral societies, like donors of prizes and scholarships in schools and exhibitions of painting, sculpture, architecture and music: like these, our guarantors are patrons of a great art, one which, equally with the other arts, needs public encouragement, and even endowment, if it is to achieve its triumphs. By encouraging the art, by staking something on their faith in those who practice it, they increase their own enjoyment of it, and receive perhaps more than they give, so that the adventure is of mutual benefit.

Another way of contributing largely is to offer a prize. This way is recommended especially to clubs, whose commit-
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tees may wish to select prize-winners among the poems contributed to the magazine. Givers of prizes, if they prefer, may make their own conditions, subject merely to the editor's agreement. We should like to give as many prizes annually as the Carnegie Institute of Pittsburgh ($1,500, $1,000, $500) or the Art Institute of Chicago ($1,000, $500, $300, and many smaller sums, besides annual and traveling scholarships).

In this art an especially urgent need is for the endowment of scholarships, especially traveling scholarships. The modern world—modern thought and art—is cosmopolitan. A young poet, even more than a young aspirant in the other arts, needs a certain amount of cosmopolitan training and experience. For the lack of it he may develop narrowly, remaining provincial and laggard-minded. It is an incredible and inexcusable omission that the expensively endowed American Academy at Rome does not include poets among the young artists it subsidizes; indeed, they are precisely the ones who would perhaps benefit the most by a few years' residence in Rome. The editor has in mind now three or four promising young poets to whom a scholarship would be of incalculable benefit.

Many inspiring words encouraged me while I was explaining the project of the magazine to possible guarantors. One of these, a Chicago lawyer, said, "Of course put me down—I don't know any better way to pay my debt to Shelley." What do you owe, you who read this article, to Shelley? to Coleridge, Milton, Shakespeare? to Molière,
Dante, Sappho, Homer? to all the great poets whose immortal singing has incalculably enriched life, become an integral part of the mind of the race? Have you ever felt a possible obligation to pay a little of that immeasurable debt? Is there any other way to pay your debt to the great dead poets than by supporting and encouraging the poets now alive? Among them may be the founders of a renaissance, among them may be an immortal. In a sense not only actual and immediate, but permanent, mystic and profound, their fate is in your hands.

H. M.

NOTES

Three of this month's contributors appear in POETRY for the first time. Mr. John Alford is an English poet of the group represented in Georgian Verse. He has written a good deal for POETRY AND DRAMA and other magazines.

Mr. Douglas Goldring, also a young English poet, has published a number of novels and books of travel, and two books of verse, Streets (Max Goschen) and A Country Boy and Other Poems (Andrew Melrose.)

Mrs. Eunice Tietjens is a young Chicago poet whose work has appeared in various magazines.

Mr. Skipwith Cannell and Mr. John Gould Fletcher are young American poets resident abroad. Both have appeared before in POETRY. A book of Mr. Cannell's poems, Monoliths, will soon be published. Five small books of verse by Mr. Fletcher have been published by Max Goschen.

"William Laird" is a pseudonym. The name has appeared before in POETRY.
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The poems by Miss Harriet Monroe, in this and other numbers of POETRY, will be included in a volume, You and I, soon to be published by the Macmillan Co.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Life Harmonics, by Benjamin Fisher. The Franklin Co., Canton, Ohio.


At the Shrine, and Other Poems, by George Herbert Clarke. Stewart & Kidd Co.

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Errata:
Page 9, before last line insert the line:

hate me repent, and have the rest of my life spent in a con-

(Binders please note that this error was corrected by the insertion of
a new leaf—pages 9 and 10—among the advertising pages of the May
number.)

Page 41, line 5 from bottom—for *cricket* read *pricket*.

Page 45 line 4 from bottom—for *faith* read *faint*.

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The editor of POETRY records with deep sorrow the death of another of the magazine's guarantors, Franklin H. Head, whose long life was one of loyal devotion to the arts, and of generous hospitality to those who practised them.
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To have great poets there must be great audiences too.

—Whitman.