O WORLD

WORLD that changes under my hand,
O brown world, bitter and bright,
And full of hidden recesses
Of love and light—

O world, what use would there be to me
Of power beyond power
To change, or establish new balance,
To build, or deflower?

O world, what use would there be?
—Had I the Creator's fire,
I could not build you nearer
To my heart's desire!

[99]
HUMORESQUE

To some the fat gods
Give money,
To some love;

But the gods have given me
Money and love:

Not too much money,
Nor quite enough love!

To some the fat gods
Give money,
To some love.

TWO VOICES

There is a country full of wine
And liquor of the sun,
Where sap is running all the year,
And spring is never done,
Where all is good as it is fair,
And love and will are one.
Old age may never come there,
But ever in to-day
The people talk as in a dream
And laugh slow time away.

[100]
**Two Voices**

But would you stay as now you are,  
Or as a year ago?  
Oh, not as then, for then how small  
The wisdom we did owe!  
Or if forever as to-day,  
How little we could know!

Then welcome age, and fear not sorrow;  
To-day's no better than to-morrow,  
Or yesterday that flies.  
By the low light in your eyes,  
By the love that in me lies,  
I know we grow more lovely  
Growing wise.

**LOVE ME AT LAST**

Love me at last, or if you will not,  
Leave me;  
Hard words could never, as these half-words,  
Grieve me:  
Love me at last—or leave me.

Love me at last, or let the last word uttered  
Be but your own;  
Love me, or leave me—as a cloud, a vapor,  
Or a bird flown.  
Love me at last—I am but sliding water  
Over a stone.  

*Alice Corbin.*  

[101]
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POEMS

GRIEF

The darkness steals the forms of all the queens. But oh, the palms of her two black hands are red! —It is Death I fear so much, it is not the dead—not this gray book, but the red and bloody scenes.

The lamps are white like snowdrops in the grass; The town is like a churchyard, all so still And gray, now night is here: nor will Another torn red sunset come to pass.

And so I sit and turn the book of gray, Feeling the shadows like a blind man reading, All fearful lest I find some next word bleeding. —Nay, take my painted missal book away.

MEMORIES

Oh, if I could have put you in my heart, If but I could have wrapped you in myself, How glad I should have been! And now the chart Of your lost face unrolls itself to me— Or dead, or still, or grieved, or glad, or hurt.

[102]
Memories

And oh, that you had never, never been
Some of your selves, my love; I would that some
Of your several faces I had never seen!
For still the night through will they come and go
One after each, and show me what they mean.

And oh, my love, as I rock for you tonight,
And have not any longer any hope
Of sweeping out old sorrows with the bright
Sure love that could have helped you through the fight,
I own that some of me is dead tonight.

WEARINESS

Why does the thin gray strand
Floating up from the forgotten
Cigarette between my fingers—
Why does it trouble me?

Ah, you will understand!
When I carried my mother downstairs,
A few times only, at the beginning
Of her soft-foot malady,

I should find for a reprimand
To my gayety, a long gray hair
On the breast of my coat, and I let it float,
Gray strand, towards the dark chimney.

[103]
SERVICE OF ALL THE DEAD

Between the avenue of cypresses,
All in their scarlet capes and surplices
Of linen, go the chaunting choristers,
The priests in gold and black, the villagers.

And all along the path to the cemetery
The round dark heads of men crowd silently;
And black-scarfed faces of women-folk wistfully
Watch at the banner of death, and the mystery.

And at the foot of a grave a father stands
With sunken head and forgotten, folded hands;
And at the foot of a grave a mother kneels
With pale shut face, nor neither hears nor feels

The coming of the chaunting choristers
Between the avenue of cypresses,
The silence of the many villagers,
The candle-flames beside the surplices.
DON JUAN

It is Isis the mystery
Must be in love with me.

Here this round ball of earth,
Where all the mountains sit
Solemn in groups,
And the bright rivers flit
Round them for girth:

Here the trees and troops
Darken the shining grass;
And many bright people pass
Like plunder from heaven:
Many bright people pass
Plundered from heaven.

But what of the mistresses,
What the beloved seven?
—They were but witnesses,
I was just driven.

Where is there peace for me?
It is Isis the mystery
Must be in love with me.
SONG

Love has crept into her sealed heart
As a field bee, black and amber,
Breaks from the winter-cell, to clamber
Up the warm grass where the sunbeams start.

Love has crept into her summery eyes,
And a glint of colored sunshine brings
Such as his along the folded wings
Of the bee before he flies.

But I with my ruffling, impatient breath
Have loosened the wings of the wild young sprite;
He has opened them out in a reeling flight,
And down her words he hasteneth.

Love flies delighted in her voice:
The hum of his glittering, drunken wings
Sets quivering with music the little things
That she says, and her simple words rejoice.

D. H. Lawrence.
MY SORROW

My sorrow that I am not by the little dun,
By the lake of the starlings at Rosses under the hill—
And the larks there, singing over the fields of dew,
Or evening there, and the sedges still!
For plain I see now the length of the yellow sand,
And Lissadell far off and its leafy ways,
And the holy mountain whose mighty heart
Gathers into it all the colored days.
My sorrow that I am not by the little dun,
By the lake of the starlings at evening when all is still—
And still in whispering sedges the herons stand.
'Tis there I would nestle at rest till the quivering moon
Uprose in the golden quiet over the hill.

SPLENDID AND TERRIBLE

Splendid and terrible your love.
The searing pinions of its flight
Flamed but a moment's space above
The place where ancient memories keep
Their quiet; and the dreaming deep
Moved inly with a troubled light,
And that old passion woke and stirred
Out of its sleep.
Splendid and terrible your love.
I hold it to me like a flame;
I hold it like a flame above
The empty anguish of my breast.
There let it stay, there let it rest—
Deep in the heart whereto it came
Of old as some wind-wearied bird
Drops to its nest.

THE OTHERS

From our hidden places,
By a secret path,
We come in the moonlight
To the side of the green rath.

There the night through
We take our pleasure,
Dancing to such a measure
As earth never knew.

To dance and lilt
And song without a name,
So sweetly chanted
'Twould put a bird to shame.
The Others

And many a maiden
Is there, of mortal birth,
Her young eyes laden
With dreams of earth.

Music so piercing wild
And forest-sweet would bring
Silence on blackbirds singing
Their best in the ear of spring.

And many a youth entrancèd
Moves slow in the dreamy round,
His brave lost feet enchanted
With the rhythm of faery sound.

Oh, many a thrush and blackbird
Would fall to the dewy ground,
And pine away in silence
For envy of such a sound.

So the night through,
In our sad pleasure,
We dance to many a measure
That earth never knew.

Seumas O'Sullivan

[109]
CHRISTMAS AT SAINT LUKE'S HOSPITAL

Here in this house of mystery and death,
This challenge flung at God, who has set pain
And heart-ache and slow torture in his world,
Dawns Christmas Day.

We have outwatched the night.
Vainly, in tight-lipped silence, we have wrung
From creeping death a piteous hour or two.
Now it is day. The long white corridors,
Naked and empty in the winds of dawn,
Stir in the light, and grow alive again
With flitting nurses and internes in white,
Who talk and laugh together—as they must.

They wish us "Merry Christmas," and we try
To cover our soul's nakedness, and smile.
And as we wait, dumb with long agony,
A jingling of loud bells breaks the white calm
Absurdly. A man enters, dressed in red,
Tricked out in furs, white-bearded for the saint
Of rapturous childhood, and his deep eyes wear
A haunting, wistful mask of gaiety.
He laughs and capers, jingles bells and jokes
With mad abandon, speaks a word to us—
A frothy nothing; then, still jingling, goes,
And the white calm returns.

[110]
Christmas at Saint Luke's Hospital

A tiny flame
Set in the vastness of the night he is,
A thin small sound that impishly disturbs
The silence of the spheres, a childish joy
Futile and beautiful, the soul of man
That cries to heaven, "Bring on your thunderbolts—
I still defy!"

He passes, and we wrap the human warmth
About our shivering souls, and turn us back
To face the darkness of another day.

Eunice Tietgens
CHARWOMEN

They might be the grim Parcae of old Greece,
The three worn women whom I oft behold
Pass my warm window in the biting cold
Across the square decent with falling fleece.
Sometimes, as now, when the arc-lights increase,
The wrinkled faces suddenly unfold
A revelation those taut lips withold
From utterance. O Time, wilt thou ne'er cease
To chisel thus thy bitter, cruel sway
Upon the yielding masks of these thy slaves?
How better far they never saw the sun,
But in Pentelic womb all dreaming lay,
Safe from thy wasteful, groping hand that graves
A million souls to shape one Parthenon!

Philip Becker Goetz
I WALKED IN THE OPEN

I walked in the open, seeking God,
And came where men had builded them a church with windows of multi-colored glass to balk the sunlight.
And there had they fashioned them an altar of mysterious recesses and many steps, of gradations and curtained sanctities wherein dwelt silence and a sense of fear.
I looked upon a cross of beaten gold, and candles flaming dully through the dark,
And all the corners in the church were dim, and all the aisles mysterious with strange shadows.
A priest held high a crucifix, and my soul seemed listening to the voice of his soul:
"God is in there. We've shut Him up. He's back of that veil.
"See how the candles blink. It's God's breath makes them do that.
"Here's our creed. We've shut God up in that too—
"Say it over and over and you'll come to believe it.
"Then shall you save your soul alive;
"Then shall you creep on your knees into the marble chancel, and you may see a corner of the veil that covers the Sanctus Sanctissimus.
"The veil hides the face of God; it screens the awful majesty of the Most High.
"That's as near as you may hope to come to seeing God.
"You would be stricken blind if you were to look upon Him. "But He's in there. We've shut Him up."

And all the while God and I stood outside in His blessed sunlight and laughed.

Francis Howard Williams
LYRICS

AFTER THE MARTYRDOM

They threw a stone, you threw a stone,
I threw a stone that day.
Although their sharpness bruised his flesh
He had no word to say.

But for the moan he did not make
To-day I make my moan;
And for the stone I threw at him
My heart must bear a stone.

LAMENT

Lady, your heart has turned to dust,
Your wall is taken by the sea.
The wind is knocking at my heart,
And will not let me be.

Your moaning smites me in my dreams,
And I must sorrow till I die.
And I shall rove, and I shall weep,
Till in the grave I lie.

[115]
THE MAD WOMAN

Oh blame me not that his lips were red,
Or that my eyes on his eyes went blind,
A leaf am I in a ruthless wind—
I'll dig me a grave and rest me, dead.

Wolf-winds, a pack,
I dragged by the back
And loosened them at his door.
Asp of despair,
Crawl into his lair
And eat his heart to the core.

For the baby he gave to me
The moon fell into the sea.
The white leopards of foam
Said, "Carry it home!"
So I put it into a sack,
And carried it home on my back.

I lit the lantern of the sun,
And stole the blue cloth of the sky—
A cover for my little one.
I made his crib. Is that his cry?
Let me run, let me run,
My eyes grow sad for my son.
The Mad Woman

Spear of the world's scorn in my side,
The grave is deep where a maid may bide,
Ever and ever satisfied.

EARLY NIGHTFALL

The pale day drowses on the western steep;
The toiler faints along the marge of sleep.
Within the sunset-press, incarnadine,
The sun, a peasant, tramples out his wine.

Ah, scattered gold rests on the twilight streams;
The poppy opes her scarlet purse of dreams.
Night with the sickle-moon engarners wheat,
And binds the sheaves of stars beneath her feet.

Rest, weary heart, and every flight-worn bird!
The brooklet of the meadow lies unstirred.
Sleep, every soul, against a comrade breast!
God grant you peace, and guard you in your rest!

Scharmel Iris.
THE TREASURE DRAWER

Often in memory to a drawer I turn
Wherein my mother kept such queer, strange things,
For which with a child's fancy I would yearn:
An ivory fan, emerald and opal rings,
Attar of roses in a bottle tall
With traceries of Arabesque design,
A pair of velvet slippers, dainty, small—
I doubted Cinderella's were so fine—
Made up the treasures: and a mother-o'-pearl
And lacquer box, tight locked, of which the key
Had long been lost—since she was quite a girl,
She said. Years passed, and then the mystery
Was solved: three little feathers, golden bright,
Lay side by side, labelled in childish hand
As "Piccadilly's Feathers." How my sight
Grew dim, for I at last could understand
The loneliness a pet canary filled.
Ah, I could wish at times those memories,
Like Piccadilly's songs, might all be stilled—
Or locked in some pearl casket from these eyes!

Antoinette De Coursey Patterson
LONDON NIGHT

In the Strand

Desperately and disdainfully showed his wares....

Stupid things... laces, studs....

I bought... his look... and... this verse.

Introduction

Still the void turns
And creaks,
And spatters me
With spume of gaunt fatuity...
And again turns
Unceasingly
Till the quiet burns.

The night is full, with laughter in its wings,
And faint wan faces ouchèd in yearning sky,
Laughter that weals the face of night
And stings. The anguished soul drifts by.

I will not go...

Still the void turns...
And sickening thuds...
Creaking.

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Still the quiet burns...
With flame that floods
The secret inner sky,
And yearns to the sound
And the laughter.

I am called,
Hesitant.
Still the void turns.

*In the bus*
Hum of the town!
Splashes of faces
In garish places
Drive ever down.

*In the park*
The gaunt trees grope to the night...
The distant magic...
They touch the sky.
The faces linger to the light,
And endlessly drift by,
With shuffle of far feet,
Like leaves that strike
And flicker on the way
With little ripples of dry sound.
London Night

The band
Noise of the band . . . and the wind asleep.
Over the wind I mount on wings,
And swing and gleam and sheer and float.

How chill it is grown . . . and how remote the faces. . .
And thin and very faint . . . and the wind sings . . .

Interlude
Shop girl, poor clerk—
Ephemerons . . wing your swift way.
A little love . . it will not mark
The soul unused to day.
So cold, so far away you seem,
Shop girl, poor clerk.

I am the dreamer. . . Are you the dream?

How the noise mocks me . . and the pain!

And they laugh about me . . . while the trees un­
heard . . .
Though not to one or three . . .
The water calls in vain.
For she is much more amorous then,
And will not prize her sweets too dear. . .
For after all we are poor men
And love we may not know;
Though here. . .

[121]
Hyde Park Corner
Stress of the crowd . . . and the whole of it mute. . .
Tunics that thrill in the light till you look at his face
With a rush of hate . . and hate for the grace
Of the slavey wooing the brute.

Stress of the crowd!

Picture Palace
Breathless. . . The giggles cease. . .
The ruddled alcove. . .
The clicking of the reel . . . peace.
Flicker . . . light.
We thrill to the rush and the clatter. . .
And spatter the night with our souls. . .
And steal the soul of the night.

The girl at the box was very sweet. . .
Manicured nails, and massaged smile, and teeth
Resplendent . . . Flicker . . . light.
The rush and the clatter,
With dust of fatuity
Spattered
Out of the void.

Always the street and the giggle of girls,
Women from where?
    God, but the night must be full of them. . .

[122]
London Night

Anarchist Club

Quiet at last . . . she here. . .
The babble of hot voices strangely soothes. . .
The coffee is black. . . Avernus' waters where
The soul’s disquiets flare,
And she. . . Her face is like half-old ivory,
A something past in its whiteness,
With cheeks a-hollow. . . Smoking ever she talks
And disdains me . . . quite. . .
This is not the place. . .
Later, perhaps, she'll not deny me.
And now and then some one will say,
"A bas!" . . . "Saboter!"

How came we here?

Café

The sybaritic waiter brings us drink. . .
Thick lips and mottled face. . .
And gazes at her.
I think his eyes swoon back
To ancient arcadies
In her black, secret eyes.
She is the beauty at the feast . . .
My friends and their friends flock,
With words well greased.
Oh! but the babble wearies me
And the lights. . .
And rococo. . .

[123]
Liqueur
One lotus bud swings to the harbor of my soul
And bursts...
And each glad petal... thirsts
Unto all heaven... Far
Insinuating roots...
Wondrous fruits
Creating, becoming of all things,
And God singing!

"My moon, my almond-eyed delight goes from me
And I am old...
I am far older than she is...
And now she laughs at my gray hairs...
Yet may I not stretch out to chasten her lest she rebel.
I will use songs and fair words...
To bring her to me.
Then she shall languish forever
In the prison of my infinite mercy."

Night, speak me soft—
I have sipped but the rim of "her" cup...
Horror of vastness dripped
From star to star—
And even you
Could not help me.
I am afraid.

John Rodker
COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

CHRISTMAS, 1914

The tidal year brings us once more to the Christmas season, reminds us once more of the beauty of that ideal of human brotherhood which, for two thousand years, the blundering quarrelling world, absorbed in immediate needs and passions, has nevertheless not quite been able to forget. Again and again, through these twenty centuries, the star in the east has been obscured, the promise of peace on earth has been outraged, the blossoming fields have been strewn with dead, in the name of this or that flag or cause. But the ideal persists toward its ultimate fulfilment, which may perhaps be hastened by the coldness, the devilish ingenuity, the anachronistic autocracy, of modern war.

Illusion rules the world—we are still led by mediaeval dreamers—nay, by Caesar, Alexander, Sesostris. The feudal system, the world-old divine right of kings, may be making its last stand at the Marne and the Yser. The new illusions must have time to grow to full stature—the illusion of liberty, equality, fraternity, the impossibly glorious illusion of democracy—before they will have a giant’s strength to lead men and compel nations. But the day of their power will surely come—may their discipline be more humane.
than that of the war-lords of the past, and not too soft to satisfy the human need of heroism.

Meantime, by way of compensation for its awful and immeasurable losses, the world must get what comfort it can out of heroic self-sacrifice, and the purging and cleansing effect of war. Blood washes cleaner than water; in its flood the subtle degeneracies, the rotten sores, of an over-ripe civilization, may be purified, obliterated. Already we hear a new statement of values—even we who are sea-walled from the tumult. And the sternness of it silences a thousand once-loud voices of comfort and despair.

There will be a new statement of values in the arts. Many little schools are like to disappear while painters, sculptors, poets, follow the danger-trails of beauty. The lithe muse is like to strip her followers bare of ornaments, luxuries, affectations; to summon them out of their halls and garrets for a stern heroic march into a wild new kingdom of untried and dangerous illusions—that kingdom of the future in which the race will be born again to its endless sorrow, its unconquerable joy, and its undying hope of peace on earth.

And so it may be with a deeper meaning than usual, a more heroic plunge of the spirit into veiled distances, that we wish each other this year Merry Christmas.

H. M.
It is a sinister thing that so American, I might even say so parochial, a talent as that of Robert Frost should have to be exported before it can find due encouragement and recognition.

Even Emerson had sufficient elasticity of mind to find something in the "yawp." One doesn't need to like a book or a poem or a picture in order to recognize artistic vigor. But the typical American editor of the last twenty years has resolutely shut his mind against serious American writing. I do not exaggerate, I quote exactly, when I say that these gentlemen deliberately write to authors that such and such a matter is "too unfamiliar to our readers."

There was once an American editor who would even print me, so I showed him Frost's *Death of the Hired Man.* He wouldn't have it; he had printed a weak pseudo-Masefieldian poem about a hired man two months before, one written in a stilted pseudo-literary language, with all sorts of floridities and worn-out ornaments.

Mr. Frost is an honest writer, writing from himself, from his own knowledge and emotion; not simply picking up the manner which magazines are accepting at the moment, and applying it to topics in vogue. He is quite consciously and definitely putting New England rural life into verse. He is not using themes that anybody could have cribbed out of Ovid.
There are only two passions in art; there are only love and hate—with endless modifications. Frost has been honestly fond of the New England people, I dare say with spells of irritation. He has given their life honestly and seriously. He has never turned aside to make fun of it. He has taken their tragedy as tragedy, their stubbornness as stubbornness. I know more of farm life than I did before I had read his poems. That means I know more of "Life."

Mr. Frost has dared to write, and for the most part with success, in the natural speech of New England; in natural spoken speech, which is very different from the "natural" speech of the newspapers, and of many professors. His poetry is a bit slow, but you aren’t held up every five minutes by the feeling that you are listening to a fool; so perhaps you read it just as easily and quickly as you might read the verse of some of the sillier and more "vivacious" writers.

A sane man knows that a prose short story can’t be much better than the short stories of De Maupassant or of "Steve" Crane. Frost’s work is interesting, incidentally, because there has been during the last few years an effort to proceed from the prose short story to the short story in verse. Francis Jammes has done a successful novel in verse, in a third of the space a prose novel would have taken—Existences in La Triomphe de la Vie. Vildrac and D. H. Lawrence have employed verse successfully for short stories. Masefield is not part of this movement. He has avoided all the difficulties of the immeasurably difficult art
of good prose by using a slap-dash, flabby verse which has been accepted in New Zealand. Jammes, Vildrac and Lawrence have lived up to the exigencies of prose and have gained by brevity. This counts with serious artists.

Very well, then, Mr. Frost holds up a mirror to nature, not an oleograph. It is natural and proper that I should have to come abroad to get printed, or that “H. D.”—with her clear-cut derivations and her revivifications of Greece—should have to come abroad; or that Fletcher—with his tic and his discords and his contrariety and extended knowledge of everything—should have to come abroad. One need not censure the country; it is easier for us to emigrate than for America to change her civilization fast enough to please us. But why, IF there are serious people in America, desiring literature of America, literature accepting present conditions, rendering American life with sober fidelity—why, in heaven’s name, is this book of New England eclogues given us under a foreign imprint?

Professors to the contrary notwithstanding, no one expects Jane Austen to be as interesting as Stendhal. A book about a dull, stupid, hemmed-in sort of life, by a person who has lived it, will never be as interesting as the work of some author who has comprehended many men’s manners and seen many grades and conditions of existence. But Mr. Frost’s people are distinctly real. Their speech is real; he has known them. I don’t want much to meet them, but I know that they exist, and what is more, that they exist as he has portrayed them.

[129]
Mr. Frost has humor, but he is not its victim. The Code has a pervasive humor, the humor of things as they are, not that of an author trying to be funny, or trying to "bring out" the ludicrous phase of some incident or character because he dares not rely on sheer presentation. There is nothing more nauseating to the developed mind than that sort of local buffoonery which the advertisements call "racy"—the village wit presenting some village joke which is worn out everywhere else. It is a great comfort to find someone who tries to give life, the life of the rural district, as a whole, evenly, and not merely as a hook to hang jokes on. The easiest thing to see about a man is an eccentric or worn-out garment, and one is godforsakenly tired of the post-Bret-Hartian, post-Mark-Twainian humorist.

Mr. Frost's work is not "accomplished," but it is the work of a man who will make neither concessions nor pretences. He will perform no money-tricks. His stuff sticks in your head—not his words, nor his phrases, nor his cadences, but his subject matter. You do not confuse one of his poems with another in your memory. His book is a contribution to American literature, the sort of sound work that will develop into very interesting literature if persevered in.

I don't know that one is called upon to judge between the poems in North of Boston. The Death of the Hired Man is perhaps the best, or The Housekeeper, though here the construction is a bit straggly. There are moments in Mending Wall. The Black Cottage is very clearly stated.

Ezra Pound
TWO KINGS

Philip the King and other Poems, by John Masefield. William Heinemann.
The King of the Dark Chamber, by Rabindranath Tagore. Macmillan.

Mr. Masefield's new book contains several poems already familiar to readers of The English Review and American periodicals—Truth, August, 1914, Biography, Ships and The River; several shorter poems and translations, and a new dramatic poem from which the book takes its title. This new poem, Philip the King, is singularly effective. Whether it would have seemed so effective if it had been published before August first of this year, one can not say. Certainly it loses nothing by being published at this moment, when the "genius of empire" is again to be tested to some form of bitter conclusion. For Philip the Second of Spain was a man who had the genius of empire, and Mr. Masefield shows us at what a bitter cost that empire was won, and lost. Mr. Masefield is not the poet of victorious empire; he is too much the poet of life and of the significance of common human experience for that. The quiet depth of feeling, which has always been the most vital feature of his work, is shown to much better advantage in this book than in anything else that he has written. The spirit of Mr. Masefield's poem on the war, August, 1914, in which he feels through the beauty of the English fields
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the unknown generations of dead men whose dumb lives contributed to that beauty—

Who, century after century, held these farms
And, looking out to watch the changing sky,
Heard, as we hear, the rumors and alarms
Of war at hand and danger pressing nigh—

this spirit is emphasized in *Philip the King* in many forceful passages of strength and beauty—not the less strong because their subtly revolutionary import is thus veiled in beauty. Perhaps, after all, an empire in defeat furnishes the most truthful source of study of empire. The froth of victory ignores the volume of the wave, as it ignores the waste and wreckage which is not cast up for reckoning until a later day. Mr. Noyes may celebrate the froth, but Mr. Masefield counts the wreckage.

One would like to dwell at greater length upon this poem, but the reader will gain more from reading it than one may suggest in a review.

In addition to these, there are in this volume one or two short poems and several translations from the Spanish and Portuguese, remarkable for their simplicity of diction and direct feeling—better models for the young poet than the more generally imitated narrative poems by Mr. Masefield. There is, throughout the book, less of the melodramatic and banal sentimentality noted in his narrative poems. There is greater restraint and greater strength, a more masculine expression. Yet it may be noted in conclusion that the cumulative feeling of the book is one of intense

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sadness. Temperamentally Mr. Masefield has the tragic sense; the sense of beauty that is most poignant because of its impermanence; the nobility of human action reared upon frailty; the celebration of the moment that is the moment's death—

And no new stones laid where the trackway ends.

Is there no further assurance, no joy that transcends the joy's decease?

In *The King of the Dark Chamber*, Mr. Rabindranath Tagore indeed records a joy that it is impossible for many of us of the western mold of faith to attain to. No less sensitive to the moment's death, every moment's death is yet, for this poet, that moment's birth in a kingdom which is continuously active and in which death and negation have no part. The word mystic is too often misapplied to convey a precise impression, and it may be that for western readers the term used by Mr. Llewellyn Jones when he spoke of Mr. Tagore as "spiritual empyricist" will be most serviceable as a definition of the author's quality. *The King of the Dark Chamber*, first published in *The Drama* for May, 1914, is a dramatic expression of the reconciliation between the soul and God. A contrast wider than that between this drama, and the western conception of such a conciliation as recorded in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, could hardly be conceived. Perhaps it is because the western mind has had so little worthy imaginative food that the western soul has so slight an acquaintance with God, and that God, as Mr. Tagore once remarked, remains a stranger to the western soul.
This is the play that Mr. Tagore read before a company of people in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to their complete mystification.

"I suppose," said one lady, at least courageous in voicing her impression, "I suppose that by the King of the dark chamber you mean the spirit of evil. And I suppose, that in your eastern, oriental way, you mean that we should not struggle against it, but give in to it, be reconciled; but that," drawing herself up proudly, "that is not our western way, Mr. Tagore—we fight!" It was the poet himself who repeated the story.

A. C. H.

OTHER REVIEWS


This poet has hewn his art out of shale and slate—stubborn materials which show harsh clefts and ridges, which scorn to be smooth and fine. He seems to be still learning—in fact, he has scarcely more than begun his work. But already the observer, standing not too near, may see that the figure he is hammering into shape has large lines, massiveness, structure—a lonely monumental dignity.

Mr. Gibson has deliberately studied the poor—British peasants and laborers, tramps and vagabonds. One does not feel in his poems that pre-natal intimacy, which exists between Mr. Robert Frost and his New England farmer neighbors; but one does feel knowledge, insight, and sure
imaginative sympathy. Sometimes he slips up in his phrasing—do English “hinds” say *ere*, for example?—and no doubt the hinds themselves could find graver faults. But behind the realism of his scenic effects—the truth to character and environment as he sees them—is a realization of that limitless background of mystery which widens all human lives. His hinds and tramps feel airs from Arcady and salt mists from a polar sea. His London burglar must have a “night in the heather,” and let his imagination rove over the wilds. His “old hind” in *The Queen’s Crags* was a poet once, when in his youth he loved a circus-rider.

I see her tripping now into the ring,
With flashing eyes and teeth,
Clean-limbed, and mettlesome as the coal-black
mare,
Coal-black from mane to fetlocks,
That pawed and champed to greet her . . .

And the forty lines which follow send us racing round the ring with her, and give us the young man’s exaltation even through the old man’s memory.

In short, Mr. Gibson is working out an interpretation of life. It is sculpturesque rather than pictorial, and the light upon it is not sunshine but the veiled gray monotone of an English November. The figure which begins to emerge is larger than life and not exact in realism, but it is nobly descriptive. It gives us the profounder instincts and higher imaginings of people deeply rooted in reality, people whom harsh life strips bare of luxury and pretence.

Besides the three dialogues in this book, we have nearly thirty brief poems. Through all of them one feels the
wind blowing, and most of them carry a suggestion of the eeriness of common things, as in *The Lodging House*:

> And when at last I stand outside
> My garret door, I hardly dare
> To open it,
> Lest, when I fling it wide,
> With candle lit
> And reading in my only chair,
> I find myself already there.

A minor but most welcome detail is this poet's love of animals. Certain horses and dogs live in these pages, especially that noble-minded bitch, Mabel—

> Stubborn, wild and white,
> Snuffing the wet air of the windy night.

And the last poem pictures

> —the sun-enkindled fire
> Of gorse upon the moor-top.

Indeed, we are out-of-doors in wild places throughout this volume. 

*Sword Blades and Poppy Seed*, by Amy Lowell. Macmillan.

Miss Lowell's title-poem—or rather, her initial poem which interprets the book's title—is a kind of *apologia*, a presentation of her ideals as an artist. Poetry, she insists, must either pierce or soothe the heart of man, and her manner of telling the illustrative dream-tale of a poet's visit to the Dealer in Words presents the utmost vigor—not to say rigor—of her style. We have stripped and trenchant metaphors, as in these lines:

> All day my thoughts had lain as dead,
> Unborn and bursting in my head...
> My table seemed a graveyard, full
> Of coffins waiting burial.

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We have vivid descriptive passages, pictures painted in a few bold strokes, like these of Wedgwood and Chinese porcelains:

There was dusky blue of Wedgwood ware,
The carved white figures fluttering there
Like leaves adrift upon the air.

These porcelains with unknown hues
Of reds dyed purple and greens turned blues,
Of lustres with so evanescent a sheen
Their colors are felt, but never seen.

And lastly, we have the poet's sense of consecration, expressed in the conditions imposed by the merciless Dealer:

The money I demand is Life,
Your nervous force, your joy, your strife.
Who buy of me must simply pay
Their whole existence quite away.

And he describes the sacrifice in detail.

If at times one feels inclined to quarrel with Miss Lowell's technical experiments; if she does not quite convince us, for example, through such a poem as The Forsaken, that Paul Fort's obscure measures and empirical internal rhymes may be as effective in English as in French: still one must admit her learning and her artistry. She is a good workman, even though at times the mere workmanship is a bit too apparent. She lives in her own time, not in the Victorian or the Elizabethan; and knows what is going on in her art, not only in New York and London, but in Paris. And beyond her intimate knowledge of French is a cosmopolitan consciousness which may even embrace remoter capitals. In short, her book, unlike so many which belie
their twentieth-century date, does not impose upon us either sloppy technique or a purely domestic and provincial point of view.

Miss Lowell has submitted to the stark discipline of the Imagistes, but she has not, like most of them, altogether discarded rhyme. The long poems are all in rhyme, and mostly in stanzas; of these Max Brueck is perhaps the least effective, while *A Tale of Starvation* and *Sancta Maria* are intimate and poignant character studies. Among the shorter poems are one or two fine sonnets, and several pieces, like *Apology* and *Patience*, play delicately with rhymes without losing feeling in their meshes.

But it is in the freer forms that this poet gets her finest effects. Such poems as *A Lady*, *Music*, *White and Green*, are well-nigh flawless in their beauty—perfect “images.” Or this from *The Captured Goddess*:

```
It was her wings,
Goddess!
Who stepped over the clouds,
And laid her rainbow feathers
Aslant on the currents of the air.
```

*H. M.*


Emily Dickinson, New England spinster of the nineteenth century, was an unconscious and uncatalogued Imagiste. She had the visual imagination, the love of economy in line and epithet, the rigorous austerity of style, and the individual subtlety of rhythm, demanded by the
code of the contemporary poets who group themselves under that title. Born a Puritan, her shy soul brooded upon the abstract, but her wildly rebellious pagan imagination at once transmuted the abstract into the concrete, gave it form and color. Who can forget this image of despair?—

The mind is smooth—no motion—
  Contented as the eye
  Upon the forehead of a Bust
  That knows it cannot see.

Or this of fame?—

Fame is a fickle food
Upon a shifting plate,
Whose table once a Guest, but not
The second time, is set;
Whose crumbs the crows inspect,
And with ironic caw
Flap past it to the Farmer's corn:
Men eat of it and die.

Mere existence was such an incredible ecstasy to this poet that she could not endure the rough-and-tumble of ordinary human intercourse. Her fiery spirit went through life—

Attended by a Single Hound
Its own Identity—
and encountered unendurable emotions in a tiny cottage and garden, in sisterly affection, in the passing homage of more or less detached lovers. But to the last she was impenetrable, unattainable, in spite of her iridescent personal charm. She was, even to her own niece, "not daily bread, but star-dust."

There is a solitude of space,
A solitude of sea,
A solitude of death, but these

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Society shall be,  
Compared with that profounder site,  
That polar privacy,  
A Soul admitted to Itself:  
Finite Infinity.

The present volume may not increase the measure of her spiritual height and depth, or add new lustre to her beauty of soul, to the star-like fidelity of her genius or the lithe nudity of her art. These were established by the two earlier collections, published soon after the poet’s death. But nothing in those precious books is finer than a few poems in this one, which doubtless represents the final effort of her niece and literary executor to extricate Emily Dickinson’s poems from a mass of ragged papers, and preserve them for lovers of her temperamental art.

H. M.


Joyce Kilmer has recently done a pleasant, and perhaps an important thing—he has rediscovered simplicity. In the whole of this very slight little volume there is hardly a word or a technical device that could not be used with surety in a nursery rhyme. Yet in the best of it is revealed a simple naiveté of soul which reminds one forcibly of The Little Flowers of Saint Francis, and which pleases in the same childlike fashion. The title poem, Trees, originally published in POETRY, is peculiarly successful in this mood. It has an unusual, haunting poignancy. Successful also, though reminiscent of the more deliberate simplicity of Oliver Wendell Holmes, are The Twelve-Forty-Five, Martin, and Servant Girl and Grocer’s Boy. But simplicity must be
perfect, and Mr. Kilmer has not always been able to compass it. Much of the verse in this volume is very slight indeed.

The following little bit on Easter is so delightful that in spite of the fact that POETRY published it first we must reprint it.

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

E. T.


The poems in this little volume are not verse for verse's sake, but verse for the mountains' sake. They are in no way remarkable technically, but they are so full of genuine love of the mountains—of the vast, white loneliness of the Alps—and so full of sympathetic observation of the life of man and beast in the great solitudes, that they need no other justification.

E. T.

CORRESPONDENCE

A LYRICAL CHALLENGE

To the Editor:

In the August number of your admirable little magazine, you reviewed Louis Untermeyer's latest volume, Challenge, in a most bewildering manner. Luckily, Untermeyer's poetry is well and widely known. A dozen poems from this volume—such as Prayer, Caliban in the Coal
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

Mines, and On the Birth of a Child—have been reprinted from Maine to Miami, from Hackensack to Nome. Which is helpful, for familiarity with any one of them enables the reader

To meet with confidence the cynic jeers, the astonishing objections of this reviewer.

The editor finds two faults with this singer. First, that his phrases are “worn and tawdry,” “conventional trappings and claptrap utterances.” This of Louis Undermeyer! It is true—candor wrings from me the reluctant admission—he does not sing of Mumpodorus, Nimmin, The Bulmenian Literati, a young lady’s Lar (I trust this reference is not improper); “tomato cans . . . scaly, as leviathans ozily crawling”: gems culled from verse in this same issue of the magazine. These are not worn and tawdry. Quite the reverse. But to return to Louis Undermeyer and poetry, the reverse of this criticism is true. His poetry is the aggressive opposite of “worn and tawdry.” The reviewer made quite a slip when she exhibited as samples of this alleged fault such phrases as “meet indifference with a joyful rage,” “vigorous discontent,” and the couplet:

The scornful and untroubled skies,
The cold complacency of earth.

True, these lines are not epoch-making. They scarcely mark a cosmic crisis. But they are unworn, fresh, apt. The stigma tagged upon them indicates, let us hope, nothing more than a surprising lapse of critical ability.

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The second objection, that his art is muscle and brawn, instead of a singing with the voice, is as remote from the facts. Untermeyer is first of all a singer, a lyricist; and his ever-present loveliness of song, if anything, at times beguiles the attention from his message.

Most amazing of all are the reviewer’s preferences. Haunted and The Shell to the Pearl are served up as the finest things in the book. They are not the worst; but they are neither noteworthy, nor fairly representative. Our editor does not even discover the exquisite whimsey of God’s Youth, the poignant passion of Tribute, the clear loveliness of Summons, The Great Carousel, and several sonnets, nor the deep lyric inspiration of Caliban in the Coal Mines.

We are swamped today beneath a flood of verse, ranging from the exotic pseudo-daring of the Imagists, and the blundering polyrhythmics, to the refined quavering of the hang-overs of former times. Out of this chaos and confusion comes this brave challenge, this clear voice, healthy, vivid, melodious. Let me quote one of the best poems in the book, Caliban in the Coal Mines, as a cumulative answer to all objections:

God, we don’t like to complain—
We know that the mine is no lark—
But—there’s the pools from the rain;
But—there’s the cold and the dark.

God, You don’t know what it is—
You, in Your well-lighted sky,
Watching the meteors whizz,
Warm, with the sun always by.

God, if You had but the moon
Stuck in Your Cap for a lamp,
Even You'd tire of it soon,
Down in the dark and the damp.

Nothing but blackness above,
And nothing that moves but the cars—
God, if You wish for our love,
Fling us a handful of stars!

Clement Wood.

NOTE. The reviewer of Challenge did not fail to read Caliban in the Coal Mines, that "cumulative answer to all objections."

FROM LONDON: DEATH OF A FRENCH POET

I have just seen in today's Chronicle that Charles Péguy, poet, socialist, editor of Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine, est mort pour la patrie at the battle of the Marne. I have been glancing at one or two of his essays in Les Cahiers and in his Oeuvres Choisies. He wasn't a personality which appealed to me, though I knew him perfectly well by repute. His work always seemed to be more political and socialist than literary. But here is a piece of rather good emotional writing which I struck by accident. It is called, O flags of the past, so fair in histories, and runs thus:

We are a sacrificed generation. We are not only conquered—that would be nothing. There are glorious defeats, sounding disasters, more fixed, better preservers of glory, finer, more accepted, more commemorated than any triumph. But our defeat is the worst of all, an obscure defeat; we shall not even be de-
From London: Death of a French Poet

spised, we shall be ignored, perhaps we shall be grotesque. There are defeats—Waterloo was one—which more than victories are fixed in the memories of man, in the common memory of humanity. We shall be niggards, we shall be little, we shall be ordinary, we shall be mediocre; or rather we shall not be at all. Nobody will notice us. We shall pass unperceived. . . . We shall never be great; we shall never be known; we shall never be written of.

The date of that is 1909, but there is still much of the bitterness of 1870 in it.

Péguy was a poet as well as an eloquent prose-writer. I have before me three books of his poetry published in Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine: La Tapisserie de Sainte Geneviève et de Jeanne d'Arc, La Tapisserie de Notre Dame, and Ève. The last is a huge long poem of four hundred pages written entirely in quatrains. In this admittedly hasty, absurdly superficial, note I can't attempt to criticise it. It gives a rather peculiar and epic effect by repeating one line at the beginning of about four to ten stanzas in sequence. Thus:

Et ce grand général qui prit tout un royaume
(Et ce n'était pas rien le royaume de France).
Dans le dernier climat et sous le dernier dome
N'aura pas plus vieilli que la jeune espérance.

Et ce grand général qui saisit un royaume
(Ét quel saisissement, le royaume de France),
Dans le dernier climat et sous le dernier dome
Sera du même jeu que la jeune espérance.

It is a poem which quickly bores; nevertheless it has its points. Note the martial subject in these verses taken quite at hazard.

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I gather from another book, *Le Mystère des Saints Innocents*, that M. Péguy was a Roman Catholic as well as a militarist. Indeed he belonged to the group of reactionaries satirized by France in *La Révolte des Anges*. At the battle of the Marne Péguy probably fought somewhere near Guy Charles Cros, one of the most satirical and delightful of the new poets of France. Thus every shade of intellectual opinion as well as of political and religious difference is actually represented in the French army. One of Péguy's essays seeks to prove that "there was heroism (in the large sense) in a republic." He had it proved to him before he died.

Richard Aldington.

*Note.* Another French poet now fighting with the Allies is Nicholas Beauduin, leader of the Paroxysmistes, and editor of that interesting quarterly, *La Vie des Lettres*.

**NOTES**

Mr. D. H. Lawrence, author of *Love Poems and Others*, and *Sons and Lovers* (Kennerley), is one of the most prominent of the younger English poets. *POETRY* introduced him to its readers last January.

Mr. John Rodker is a young American who lives in England, and whose first book of poems will soon be published there.

Mr. Francis Howard Williams, of Philadelphia, is the author of a number of plays in verse, and of *The Flute-
Notes

Player and Other Poems, Ad Astra, and The Burden-Bearer, of which Lincoln is the hero.

Alice Corbin (Mrs. Wm. P. Henderson), of Chicago, is the author of The Spinning Woman of the Sky (R. F. Seymour Co.).

Mr. Seumas O'Sullivan is one of the younger Irish poets. He has published little as yet.

Mr. Philip Becker Goetz, of Buffalo, N. Y., is the author of Kallirrhoe, Poems, Interludes, and The Summons of the King.

Mr. Scharmel Iris was born in Italy and brought to Chicago in early childhood. His Lyrics of a Lad will soon be published by the R. F. Seymour Co.

Mrs. Eunice Tietjens, of Chicago, has contributed to numerous magazines; also Antoinette De Coursey Patterson (Mrs. T. H. H.) of Philadelphia, whose first book will soon appear.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Lincoln at Richmond, A Dramatic Epos of the Civil War, by Denton J. Snider. Sigma Publishing Co., St. Louis, Mo.

Tuskawanta, by George H. Babcock. Privately printed.


Trees and Other Poems, by Joyce Kilmer. George H. Doran Co.

You and I, by Harriet Monroe. Macmillan.


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The Sharing, by Agnes Lee. Sherman, French & Co.
The Flying Dutchman, by Richard Wagner: English verse by Oliver Huckel. Thomas Y. Crowell Co.
Rienzi, by Richard Wagner: English verse by Oliver Huckel. Crowell Co.
Hints for Young Writers, by O. S. Marden. Crowell Co.
The Story of Beowulf, Translated from Anglo-Saxon by Ernest J. B. Kirtlan. Crowell Co.
Philip the King, by John Masefield. Macmillan.
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