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A Magazine of Verse

Edited by Harriet Monroe

JANUARY, 1915

The Troubadour Madison Cawein

Five Poems Edith Wyatt

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F. W.—On the Great Plateau.

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The Death of Madison Cawein—Notes.

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THE TROUBADOUR



NIGHT, they say, is no man's friend:
And at night he met his end
In the woods of Trebizend.

Hate crouched near him as he strode
Down the darkness of the road,
Where my lord seemed some huge toad.

Eyes of murder glared and burned
At each bend of road he turned,
Or where wild the torrent churned.

And with Death we stood and stared
From the bush as by he fared;
But he never looked or cared.

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He went singing; and a rose
Lay upon his heart's repose
With what thoughts of her—who knows?

He had done no other wrong
But to sing a simple song—
"I have loved you, loved you long."

And my lady smiled and sighed;
Gave a rose and looked moist-eyed,
And forgot she was a bride.

And my lord saw; gave commands.
I was of his robber bands:
Love should perish at our hands.

Young the knight was. He should sing
Nevermore of love and spring,
Or of any gentle thing.

When he stole at midnight's hour
To my lady's forest bower,
We were hidden near the tower.

In the woods of Trebizend
There he met an evil end:
Night, you know, is no man's friend.

The Troubadour

He had fought in fort and field;
Borne for years a stainless shield,
And in strength to none would yield.

But we seized him unaware;
Bound and hung and stripped him bare;
Left him to the wild boars there.

Never has my lady known.
But she often sits alone,
Weeping when my lord is gone.

Night, they say, is no man's friend:
In the woods of Trebizend
There he met an evil end.

Now my old lord sleeps in peace,
While my lady—each one sees—
Waits, and keeps her memories.

Madison Cawein

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POEMS

CLOVER

The clover's grassy breath,
To him who listeneth
 Upon the pastured lea,
Is like the monotone
Of some far sheep-bell, blown
 From tranquil Arcady.

The airs of that last rose,
That late and crimson blows
 And frosted dies,
Smell, as in green and dew,
The first, first rose that blew
 In waking Paradise.

What fragrance, ages hence,
Shall tell the listening sense
 Of men who guess—
Men whose far lives shall range
On paths remote and strange—
 Our happiness?

APRIL WEATHER

If you could have a perfect day
 To dream of when your life were done,
Would you choose one all clear, all gay—
 If you could have a perfect day—
The airs above the wide green way
 Sheer virgin blue with crystal sun?—
If you could have a perfect day
 To dream of when your life were done.

Or would you have it April's way,
 Haphazard rain, haphazard sun,
Divine and sordid, clear and gray,
 Dyed like these hours' own work and play;
All shot with stains of tears and clay,
 Haphazard pain, haphazard fun—
If you could have a perfect day
 To dream of when your life were done?

SUMMER HAIL

Once the heavens' gabled door
Opened: down a stabled floor,
Down the thunders, something galloped far and wide,
Glancing far and fleet

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Down the silver street—
And I knew of nothing, nothing else beside.

*Pitty patty polt—
Shoe the wild colt!
Here a nail! There a nail!
Pitty patty polt!*

Good and badness, die away.
Strength and swiftmess down the day,
Dapple happy down my glancing silver street!
Oh, the touch of summer cold!—
Beauty swinging quick and bold,
Dipping, dapping where the distant roof-tops meet!

*Pitty patty polt—
Shoe the wild colt!*

Listen, dusty care:
Through a magic air,
Once I watched the way of perfect splendor ride,
Swishing far and gray,
Buoyant and gay—
And I knew of nothing, nothing else beside.
Good and badness, go your ways,
Vanish far and fleet.
Strength and swiftmess run my days,
Down my silver street.
Little care, forevermore
Be you lesser than before.

Summer Hail

Mighty frozen rain,
Come! oh, come again!
Let the heavens' door be rended
With the touch of summer cold—
Dappling hoof-beats clatter splendid,
Infinitely gay and bold!

*Pitty patty polt—
Shoe the wild colt!
Here a nail and there a nail!
Pitty patty polt!*

Once the heavens' gabled door
Opened: down the stabled floor,
Down the thunders something galloped wide and far;
Something dappled far and fleet,
Glancing down my silver street,
And I saw the ways of life just as they are.

*Pitty patty polt.
Shoe the wild colt!
Here a nail! There a nail!
Pitty patty polt!*

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TO F. W.

You are my companion
Down the silver road,
Still and many-changing,
Infinitely changing.
You are my companion.

Something sings in lives—
Days of walking on and on,
Deep beyond all singing,
Wonderful past singing.

Wonderful our road,
Long and many-changing,
Infinitely changing.
This, more wonderful—
We are here together,
You and I together,
I am your companion;
You are my companion,
My own, true companion.

Let the road-side fade:
Morning on the mountain-top,
Hours along the valley,
Days of walking on and on,
Pulse away in silence,

On the Great Plateau

In eternal silence.
Let the world all fade,
Break and pass away.
Yet will this remain,
Deep beyond all singing,
My own true companion,
Beautiful past singing:
We were here together—
On this earth together;
I was your companion,
You were my companion,
My own true companion.

ON THE GREAT PLATEAU

In the Santa Clara Valley, far away and far away,
Cool-breathed waters dip and dally, linger towards another
day—
Far and far away—far away.

Slow their floating step, but tireless, terraced down the great
Plateau.
Towards our ways of steam and wireless, silver-paced the
brook-beds go.
Past the ladder-walled Pueblos, past the orchards, pear and
quince,

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Where the back-locked river's ebb flows, miles and miles
the valley glints,
Shining backwards, singing downwards, towards horizons
blue and bay.

All the roofs the roads ensconce so dream of visions far
away—

Santa Cruz and Ildefonso, Santa Clara, Santa Fé.

Ancient, sacred fears and faiths, ancient, sacred faiths and
fears—

Some were real, some were wraiths—Indian, Franciscan
years,

Built the Khivas, swung the bells; while the wind sang plain
and free,

“Turn your eyes from visioned hells!—look as far as you
can see!”

In the Santa Clara Valley, far away and far away,

Dying dreams divide and dally, crystal-terraced waters sally—

Linger towards another day, far and far away—far away.

As you follow where you find them, up along the high
Plateau,

In the hollows left behind them Spanish chapels fade below—

Shaded court and low corrals. In the vale the goat-herd
browses.

Hollyhocks are seneschals by the little buff-walled houses.

Over grassy swale and alley have you ever seen it so—

Up the Santa Clara Valley, riding on the Great Plateau?

On the Great Plateau

Past the ladder-walled Pueblos, past the orchards, pear and
quince,
Where the trenchèd waters' ebb flows, miles and miles the
valley glints,
Shining backwards, singing downwards towards horizons
blue and bay.
All the haunts the bluffs ensconce so breathe of visions far
away,
As you ride near Ildefonso back again to Santa Fé.
Pecos, mellow with the years, tall-walled Taos—who can
know
Half the storied faiths and fears haunting Green New
Mexico?
Only from her open places down arroyos blue and bay,
One wild grace of many graces dallies towards another day.
Where her yellow tufa crumbles, something stars and grasses
know,
Something true, that crowns and humbles, shimmers from
the Great Plateau:
Blows where cool-paced waters dally from the stillness of
Puyé,
Down the Santa Clara Valley through the world from far
away—
Far and far away—far away.

Edith Wyatt

ANNIE SHORE AND JOHNNIE DOON

Annie Shore, 'twas, sang last night
Down in South End saloon;
A tawdry creature in the light,
Painted cheeks, eyes over bright,
Singing a dance-hall tune.

I'd be forgetting Annie's singing—
I'd not have thought again—
But for the thing that cried and fluttered
Through all the shrill refrain—
Youth crying above foul words, cheap music,
And innocence in pain.

They sentenced Johnnie Doon today
For murder, stark and grim;
Death's none too dear a price, they say,
For such-like men as him to pay;
No need to pity him!

And Johnnie Doon I'd not be pitying—
I could forget him now—
But for the childish look of trouble
That fell across his brow,
For the twisting hands he looked at dumbly
As if they'd sinned, he knew not how.

IN THE MOHAVE

As I rode down the arroyo through yuccas belled with bloom
I saw a last year's stalk lift dried hands to the light,
Like age at prayer for death within a careless room,
Like one by day o'ertaken, whose sick desire is night.

And as I rode I saw a lean coyote lying
All perfect as in life upon a silver dune,
Save that his feet no more could flee the harsh light's spying,
Save that no more his shadow would cleave the sinking moon.

O cruel land, where form endures, the spirit fled!
You chill the sun for me with your gray sphinx's smile,
Brooding in the bright silence above your captive dead,
Where beat the heart of life so brief, so brief a while!

Patrick Orr

THE LOST KINGDOM

In the dead city where the waning moon
Lights the strange faces of the carven kings
With subtle smiles, and curiously each rune
Upon the emeralds of their signet-rings

Paints with dull light—there upon each eyelid
The weary-footed Sleep sits sorrowful,
And calm upon the painted pyramid
The night-owl, with his bleary eyes sad and dull

Keeps watch; and desert lions, hungry-eyed
Prowl through the palaces all pale with gold
Under the moon; where, even as they died
In some phantasmal ruin, centuries old,

Lie jewelled guards with golden scimitars
And glorious women, wound with green and red,
So beautiful and evil under the stars,
Not even the gray wolves rend them, fair and dead.

Ethel Talbot Scheffauer

CONQUERED

O pale! O vivid! dear!
O disillusioned eyes
Forever near!
O Dream, arise!

I will not turn away
From the face I loved again;
Your beauty may sway
My life with pain.

I will drink the wine you pour,
I will seek to put asunder
Our ways no more—
O Love! O Wonder!

THE WANDERER

The ships are lying in the bay,
The gulls are swinging round their spars;
My soul as eagerly as they
Desires the margin of the stars.

So much do I love wandering,
So much I love the sea and sky,
That it will be a piteous thing
In one small grave to lie.

Zoë Akins

EPIGRAMMES

JE N'AIME PLUS

Je n'aime plus les fleurs, elles meurent trop vite.
À peine si leur cœur s'entr'ouvre et nous invite
 À les aimer,
Qu'on les sent résignées, inévitable rite,
 À se fermer.

Je n'aime plus les femmes, leurs sourires sont trop fous.
À peine si nos cœurs ont palpité pour vous,
 Vaines maîtresses,
Vos lèvres se détournent et vos mains sont des houx
 À nos tendresses.

LA VASQUE

La vasque s'est remplie peu à peu de feuilles mortes.
N'y cherchez pas d'eau pure. Celle que la pluie apporte
A été bue goutte à goutte par les oiseaux.
Il n'y reste rien que la mort. C'est un tombeau.

Mais ne regardez pas au fond parmi les feuilles.
Quelque chose s'agite encore dans ce cercueil:
Des rêves, des tendresses, des troubles, des désirs,
Je ne sais quoi d'absurde qui ne veut pas mourir.

Remy De Gourmont

PAGEANT

Silently, through the misted, silver quiet,
They come.
And the feet that were dancing,
And the music and laughter,
Are still.
And the wreaths that were
Of poppies and vine-leaves,
And the sheaves of wheat,
And the purple fruit of the vineyards
That they bore in their hands,
And the colored robes that they wore,
Were of one tint and transparence,
Silver.
And lightly they passed.
And music,
Long sought and forgotten music,
Lifted the mists.
And One, holding a scourge
Whose devious flames
Sang,
Bade them kneel down;
And each ineffable Victim
Went forth,
Bearing a golden, never-healing wound.

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TO H. D.

You were all loveliness to me—
Sea-mist, the spring,
The blossoming of trees,
The wind,
Giver-of-Dreams.
Then—
A wistful silence guarded you about,
As in the spring
Iris and anemone are guarded.
And like a flame
Your beauty burned and wrought me
Into a bell,
Whose single note
Was echo of your silence.
Now—
You sing.
And I, muted,
Yet vibrate throughout,
Stirred by your hymn's immemorial burden;
"Spare us from loveliness!"

Frances Gregg

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Shuffling the dim sands.

The iris joined him, they marched on together.

She will never leave him.

The gold green of the trees curves over the lawn,

And the light of the world centres in a yellow iris:

The old man and the iris march on forever.

Hall Roffey

THE MUSICMAKER'S CHILD

Long time my Mother lived in Seaside.

A maiden, waiting for a man to take her:
Then, for the love of his blue eyes,
She wandered after Weir the musicmaker.

I know the burden of the tide,
I catch the cry and moan of every breaker,
I read the secrets of the sands—
I, the child of Weir the musicmaker.

In the white hush before the storm,
I hear a heavy calling from the ocean—
The souls of men who drowned at sea,
Aweary of its restless, flowing motion.

“I am choked with sand,”
Says Jan the fisher.
“A pearl in each hand,”
Says Jan the fisher.

“One for the earth,
My grave to be;
One for the priest
Will pray for me.”

And Michael of the Wild Rocks, his bright beard streaming,
“Give me Christian burial, and a stone above my head!

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For I've a wife," says he, "and my babe is on her knee;
And she has naught to weep on but a memory of the dead."

Old Fergus lies sleeping, and calls in his sleep,
His white hair all matted with weeds of the sea:
"I have Shawn and Colom who watch for me—
Shall my two sons not call me from out the deep?"

And the soul of Peter Day,
That young, young lad,
Whose quick, warm heart
Was all the wealth he had,

"O dear Lord God," he prays,
"There on the shore
Was a girl used to walk
Who'll never walk there more.

"It's in church and holy ground
That Janet lies:
For my grave next hers,
I will give up Paradise."

Lord God has heeded Peter Day;
He has thrown his body on the white sand stretches:
And they have laid him by a grave
That's two years overgrown with docks and vetches.

The Musicmaker's Child

"Is it not strange," they say in Culm,
"That he alone came in upon the breaker?"
I smile my wise smile to myself—
I, the child of Weir the musicmaker.

Miriam Allen de Ford

MODERN MUSIC

Men call me Longing; and I come to you
To lure and taunt you in the graying dawn
Or breathless even, when, the sun withdrawn,
The shallow moon hangs empty in the blue.
Chill spring is mine, when eager winds pursue
The tree-boughs traced with chary fringe of tawn,
And trenchant blades fresh-pierce the russet lawn,—
Mute questions asked, despaired, and asked anew.

I am that hunger which all mad Youth is,
Fretful and faint, with fever-burning eye;
Its thin arms, dread with sweet concavities,
Reached out to wisps that beckon and deny—
Strange unresolving chords, and ironies
That stir, excite, yet never satisfy.

Alice Ormond Campbell

THE TEMPLE

Hear me, brother!
Boldly I stepped into the Temple,
Into the Temple where the God dwells
Veiled with Seven Veils,
Into the Temple of Unbroken Silence:
And my joyous feet shod with crimson sandals
Rang out on the tessellated pavement,
Rang out fearlessly
Like a challenge and a cry!
And there—in that shrouded solitude,
There—before the Seven Veils,
There—because of youth and youth's madness,
Because of love and love's unresting heart,
There did I sing three songs!
And my first song praised the eyes of a wanton;
And my second song praised the lips of a wanton;
And my third song praised the feet of a dancing girl!

Thus did I desecrate the Temple,
Thus did I stand before the Seven Veils,
Proudly!
Thus did I wait upon the God's Voice—
Proudly!—
And the sudden shaft of death

The Temple

But no Voice stirred the Seven Veils,
Though I stood long

And my knees shook,
My bones were afraid

Swiftly I loosed the crimson sandals,
And, tearing them from off my feet,
Crept shuddering forth!

Hear me, brother!
Now am I as one stricken with palsy,
Now am I sick with the close ache of terror,
Now am I as one who, having tasted poison,
Cowers, waiting for the pang!

For the God spake not

And the sense of my littleness is upon me:
And I am a worm in my own sight,
Trodden and helpless;
A casual grain of sand
Indistinguishable amid a million grains:
And I take no pleasure now in youth
Nor in youth's madness,
In love
Nor in love's unresting heart;

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And I praise no longer the eyes of a wanton,
Nor the lips of a wanton,
Nor the light feet of a dancing girl.

ONLY NOT TO BE TOO EARLY OLD

Only not to be too early old;
Only not to feel too soon the day
Emptied of all desire, unyielding gray;
Only not to sink too weary and cold
For fireside mirth, for friendly talk, for free
Soul-kindling thought "about it and about";
Nay, I would rather end life in a rout,
Stricken low by folly, dropping with a laugh,
 Than creep thus tamely out
Trailing the tatters of my mystery
To the dull cadence of an epitaph.

THE COMRADE

Call me friend or foe,
Little I care!
I go with all who go
Daring to dare.

I am the force,
I am the fire,
I am the secret source
Of desire.

I am the urge,
The spur and thong:
Moon of the tides that surge
Into song!

Call me friend or foe,
Little care I,
I go with all who go
Singing to die.

Call me friend or foe. . . .
Taking to give,
I go with all who go
Dying to live

Lee Wilson Dodd

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

CONTEMPORARY POETRY AND THE UNIVERSITIES

I HAVE had occasion lately to speak with several university professors of literature on the subject of contemporary poetry. In each case I have surprised a look of polite inquiry whenever any poet of a date more recent than 1890 was mentioned. Of course there were exceptions that proved the rule. Mr. Alfred Noyes and Mr. W. B. Yeats have lectured before American colleges; Mr. Masefield's fame has reached the classic walls. But these are the exceptions. My surprise was perhaps the greatest when I encountered the head of a certain Romance department, expecting from him some illumination on the subject of modern French poetry. If he were living in France, would his interest have stopped short with the French symbolists? Would he have come, as it were, to the brink of a precipice with Baudelaire, Verlaine, and Mallarmé, and consider himself, even at that, as the most ultra-modern of his kind?

Why is it that the college literary courses establish no direct contact with modern life in so far as poetry is concerned? The novel fares better. The student who is fortunate enough to have attended lectures by Mr. Robert Herrick does not venture out into the world supposing that the novel stopped suddenly with Thackeray or Dickens. But the average student is likely to leave college firmly rooted in the belief that poetry ceased with Shelley or Keats, or Tennyson or Browning, as the case may be.

Contemporary Poetry and the Universities

A scientific department conducted as a literary department is conducted, with no consideration of the achievements of the last thirty years, would be a disgrace to any college.

It is the gap unbridged by the university course which is of most vital consequence to the student; and when, after much false subsequent groping, that gap is bridged finally, the student is often no longer a student, and the first flush of the formative, creative period is passed. College students in literary courses remind one of rows of bleaching celery, banked and covered with earth; they are so carefully protected from any coloring contact with the ideas of the living present.

The other day the literary department of Princeton telegraphed to Mr. Vachel Lindsay to come down and recite his poems and talk about poetry to the students. This, for an American poet, is, so far as I know, a unique phenomenon. It is characteristic of the academic system that William Vaughn Moody was required to correct prose themes rather than to speak directly, during all the time that he was connected with the University of Chicago, on the subject of contemporary poetry. One could name at least a dozen living American poets whose creative enthusiasm might prove stimulating to members of the younger generation—if it were decided to expose the students to it.

Of late the modern drama and the modern novel have been considered not wholly unworthy of academic consideration, but modern poetry and modern art remain the outcasts and pariahs of the institutions of formal education.

A. C. H.

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MODERN GERMAN POETRY

I

In the notes which follow, I shall touch briefly upon some aspects of modern German poetry, suggesting the problems which beset the poets, and indicating as far as possible, the line upon which they have approached their task. A consideration of a poet's outlook is of primary importance, because, other things being equal, it is upon this that the value of his work and its chances of survival ultimately depend.

Europe has been chary of admitting the existence of a German culture. France, ever jealous of art and letters outside her borders, has shrugged her shoulders contemptuously. England, suspicious of anything she cannot readily understand, has been consistently skeptical. Nevertheless, there can be no possible doubt of the reality of German culture; and, in the light of present events, it would be interesting to study this culture more profoundly and compare it with the achievements of other European countries and with the culture of America.

For the outstanding feature of German culture is the fact that it is the exclusive possession of a small class. The culture of other lands is the possession of the whole nation. In England it is handed down the classes feudalwise. Born in the upper classes, which set the standard, it is enthusiastically caught up through snobbism by each class beneath, which gets as near to the standard as possible. As the English are conservative, progress though steady is slow, and the last lines are relatively not so far behind. In France

and Italy their culture is an inherited tradition, as much the birthright of the hairdresser as of the *litterateur*. In Germany, culture is the monopoly of the professional thinking classes—not what we call the professional classes, but a class which has officially adopted thought as a profession. The German intellect is capable of intense thought and unremitting labor, and this small class has attained to a very high state of culture. It is a strange, self-conscious thing, their culture; heavy, laden with accumulated evidence, encyclopaedic, full of curious disproportions. The German savants have a mania for cataloguing, for filing, for reducing the most abstract speculation to scientific form. They are at once clerical and esoteric in their outlook. They acquire all the available knowledge greedily, but they often use it unintelligently, and they have absolutely no humor. Nevertheless, the results of their labor are important and eminently worthy of study.

But just because the thinking class is so small, and so immeasurably in advance of the rest of the population, it has very little influence on the nation's life. This is especially true in that phase of its activities which finds expression in art. This is, moreover, its least admirable phase, for the German genius has always shown itself more philosophic and scientific than aesthetic. The arts, with the obvious exception of music, have not flourished in Germany for centuries. Since the days of German Gothic, Germany's painting has been negligible, and the modern revival has produced singularly uninspired results. The reasons for this are similar

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to the reasons for the comparative failure of the main mass of modern German poetry, and must be attributed partly to the isolated position of the artists, who form a small portion of the thinking class, and partly to the frantic efforts they have been forced to make to produce quickly an art which shall be worthy of the new Germany, both in extent and character. Modern Germany has demanded an art as glittering and imposing as her army, and on the same scale. The artists have felt themselves bound to demonstrate that centuries of artistic achievement count for nothing, and that a systematized effort can create a harvest without seed. The poets have the same duty imposed upon them. They have in fact not only to produce a harvest without seed, but to destroy weeds in plenty before they start. For their tradition is overgrown with sentimentalism, and no conditions could be more unfavorable to fine art than those in which the modern poets in Germany have found themselves.

By modern German poetry, I mean poetry written within the last forty years; that is, within the period synchronising with the consolidation of modern Germany, with the rise of the Krupp factory, the army and the war party, and with Germany's commercial expansion. A poet would be inevitably influenced by this environment. But he would as inevitably be influenced by the poetical tradition of this country. The German tradition in poetry, as in all the arts, has been, as I have said, intensely sentimental, from the days when Walter von der Vogelweide sang:

Unter den linden
An der Heide

[180]

Modern German Poetry

Da unser zweier bette was,
Da muget ir vinden
Schoene beide
Gebrochen bluomen unde gras.
Vor dem walde in einem tal
Tandaradei
Schoene sanc diu nachtegal.

The modern poet can find no vitality in his country's verse until he reaches the lyrics of Heine the Jew. The classical period he finds obsessed with the sentimental melancholy which appeared for centuries the outstanding feature of the national character. It was perhaps partly due to the undeniably melancholy character of the German landscape, or perhaps to a fundamental passivity in the German character when allowed to develop on its own lines freely. However that may be, the modern poet found the German tradition sentimental, and if he was a well-educated young man he was bound to respect it. Here, however, his dilemma began. For he was surrounded by a generation which cast aside the sentimental tradition, and cried out for a new Germany of howitzers and cut prices, and which called for an up-to-date culture to keep pace with it. He was between the devil and the deep, deep sea!

The poets set to work to solve the problem in various ways. Some of them, such as Dehmel, Dauthendey, Hille, George, decided to be good and stick to the tradition, and they won themselves thereby a reputation and perhaps some gold. Others compromised. Their high priest is Liliencron—Detlev Freiherr von Liliencron—who conceived the ingenious plan of writing sentimental verses about soldiers.

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I have not yet struck the poet who wept gently over a falling market, but I doubt not he exists. Others flung in their lot with the modern spirit. They would sing no more of smiling harvests, or of gloomy forests beneath the moon, or of mothers suckling infants at their breast; they would sing of the life in a *Grosse Stadt*, of trams and American bars, and ladies of the demi-monde.

O komm! O komm, Geliebte! In der Bar
Verrät der Mixer den geheimsten Tip.
Und überirdisch, himmlisch steht dein Haar,
Zur Rötlichkeit des Cherry-Brandy-Flip.

Thus sings Ernst Blass in *Der Kondor (Eine rigorose Sammlung radikaler Strophen)*, which appeared from Heidelberg in 1912, and in which a number of these up-to-date young men published their poems. In a year or two this book will be curiously out of date. Its most ultra-modern flashes will ring as strangely as a man writing today of "the fierce speed of the bicycle." Yet it is worth reading in spite of its vulgarity and its silliness, for here we find some real vitality strangely misapplied, and some experiments in versification, essays in *vers libre*, and attempts at new methods of expression. Take the following, which presents the poet's emotions at three o'clock in the morning:

Böses Stampfen! (Vom Lauschen, vom Warten. . . .)
Grünliches Hämmern, wie in der Chloroform-Narkose!
Ein Pumpwerk zerstösst die Nacht.
Dröhnt.
Mein Herz explodiert.
Die Angst arbeitet rhythmisch, exakt.
Aus einer Röhre, einem Trichter (einer Trompete?)

Modern German Poetry

Fliesst schleimiger Schein:
Das morastgelbe Licht der Welt—meiner Welt.
Der Lichtkegel trifft mein Ohr.
Leider bin ich verdammt, aus diesem schmutzigen Licht Angst
zu pulsen, den Schein in Grauen zu transformieren, in
Sentiments, in Elend-Quartsch.
Das dauert gewiss bis zum Grauen der Dämmerung hinter den
Gardinen.
(O: das gute Angelus-Läuten!
Hirten auf dem Felde,
Kartoffelbauern auf dem Felde Millets!
Liebe Demut ihres gebeugten Rückens!)
. . . Ich bin einer, der nicht in Betracht kommt.
Kein Leben, keine Schminke um mich.
Nur die Angst meine Dame.
(Blicke kratzten, stächen mich,
Ich schrie, stampfte—hautlos ich.)
. . . Nur verschrumpfte Gebete gelingen,
Keine Gebet-Kunstwerke.
Eine Schmach ists, von der Angst erlöst sein zu wollen,
Eine Schmach ists, glücklicher sein zu wollen, als äusserst
unglücklich
Es irritiert die geringste geglückte . . . Harmonie.
. . . Warum nicht das äusserste?
Das isolierte Brennen heiliger Nervenspitzen, letzter Nahrung
des Brandes?
Zuckende Reserven, zügelnd im Dampf, im Krampf.
. . . Übrigens bin ich durchaus im stande, den Ablauf solcher
Empfindungen brüsk zu unterbrechen, "Amerikanismus"
anzuordnen und, mit einer Cigarette, kühlsten Herzens
weiterzulesen in Henri Beyles, *Le Rouge et le Noir*.
Selbstverständlich.
Die Lampe brennt ja noch.

Here we have a daring attempt by Ferdinand Hardekopf. Its weakness is its exotic character. It is all frankly derivative, a German copy of a French model. It is Guillaume Apollinaire dressed up in the Friedrichstrasse, and it has much of the affected babbling of a blasé youth without

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experience. Moreover there is much in it to sadden us. For we see here traces of another aspect of the poet's dilemma.

Isolation is a dangerous thing for highly strung sensibilities. The violent change in the outlook of the main mass of the German people in the last few generations, the change from the outlook of the traditional poets to the outlook of the Crown Prince and the Handelsbank, has had disastrous results upon personalities too thin-skinned to adapt themselves, and neurosis is today a real danger, destroying the best brains in the country. We find this expressed in the plays of Wedekind, and no class is more affected by it than the *litterateurs*. In *Der Kondor* we have poems which are the expression of minds turned inward upon themselves, revolving in a vicious circle, as much out of touch with the root-springs of life as with modern German civilization. Poor ailing creatures, with pale fingers and sunken cheeks, voicing their obsessions in a *café*.

But over and above the main body of poets, who have succumbed to the equivocal position of the poet in modern German society, one or two men stand out who have overcome their difficulties. [To be concluded.]

Reginald H. Wilenski

FRENCH POETS AND THE WAR

How many young writers, how many poets, will be cut down by the war in the flower of their life. There has been a good deal of talk of Péguy, killed at the battle of the Marne, where he commanded a company as *officer de*

réserves. He was admired by some and disliked by many. But, after recent events, he would have been destined to a considerable amount of fame, which would have found no opposers. It is one of the saddest things in these great contests between nations that the finest minds are dragged from their work-tables and thrown into the trenches—those minds whose work was desired by humanity like a benediction. I know one man whose life is in danger every day and whose death would leave me inconsolable.

But then, Sophocles was a soldier; Descartes was a soldier. Fate is not always disastrous. And though a man of forty may not have finished his work, he has laid the foundations and indicated its general scheme; everything is not lost for humanity. Much more pitiful are those who die like plants which have just flowered or only budded. Some of us cared for these young men whose deaths have brutally disappointed our hopes, and people ask each other what will remain of the younger generation after the war.

And what will be the spirit of the survivors after these days of danger and heroism? Will they hate or will they respect war? What souls will come through this test? It is perhaps too early to think of such questions, but time, though it passes in horror, passes all the same. It passes on the battle-fields and in peaceful meadows, it hovers on the same wing over dreaming towns and over towns engaged in daily work.

Yes, we may well ask ourselves, what will be the awakening from this nightmare? Economists and statisticians have

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calculated that the wounded world will need about five years in which to recover its health. Perhaps. But others think that the recovery will be quicker and that humanity, still stricken, will be suddenly seized with a furious desire for life. The world will not give itself a respite for convalescence. People will desire to live at any price, and to spend their scarcely recovered powers, while the grass covers the buried bodies. In minds as in the world there will be an unsuspected renewal of strength to which all will submit. Something stronger than death will arouse those who have escaped from death, and they will want to live twice, for themselves and for those who are no more. There will be everywhere a flowering of that plant, now practically abolished in the greater part of Europe—joy.

If it still flowers it is on the battle-fields, for those who hold back do not know it. If there is still gaiety in the world, it is under the shells and in the midst of the shrapnel. The soldiers one meets, who are coming back from the battle, or who have been wounded and healed and are returning, speak of these hours which seem to us so terrible, not indeed as pleasure parties but as hours profoundly moving because they are dangerous. I was listening to one the other day who, after some anecdotes about the life of an advanced out-post, concluded: "But I like it—it is something out of the ordinary." And he was returning to his regiment with an incredible joy.

I know that every soldier is not of so happy a disposition and that more than one is miserable in those murderous

trenches where shells are the only visitors. But these are fewer than one imagines. In war the soldier becomes a fatalist. There are a number of Mohammedans among the allies, but all have become Mohammedans in fatalism and in contempt for danger. A second soul is grafted upon the everyday soul, an extraordinary soul upon the ordinary soul; and man becomes again what civilization has never been able to stamp out—a dangerous being for whom danger does not exist.

But, the peril once passed, he will take up with an inconceivable facility his habits as a civilized man, a man, that is to say, whose efforts are directed toward escaping from pain. I have myself seen, in a provincial hospital, a man wounded in the horrible battle at Charleroi (where there were so many killed that the bed of the Meuse was choked) show terror at the idea of an insignificant operation. This man who could not be held back during the fight and who rushed recklessly upon danger, had to be held down while a bullet was extracted from his arm.

During a battle the imagination has no time to work. A man is suddenly borne into surroundings which absorb and inspire him, while he blanches before a peril which he has had time to consider coldly. The best and happiest soldiers are the men without imagination. It is the same in ordinary life, which is also dangerous sometimes: imagination destroys the power for action.

It is for this reason that at this time I think above all of the poets, of the men of imagination, of the dreamers.

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They also make good soldiers, soldiers for the sake of duty, but they are more deserving of praise than the common people with their coarser brains, who only perceive evil at the moment they feel it themselves.

Remy de Gourmont

Translated by Richard Aldington

NOTE. The first number of the *Bulletin des Écrivains*, 1914-1915, printed privately, which I have just received, tells us that among the French writers who are actively at the front twenty have died on the battle-field, more than thirty have been wounded, and a certain number are in hospitals for illnesses contracted during service.

R. A.

REVIEWS

You and I, by Harriet Monroe. Macmillan.

Miss Monroe, both as editor and as creator, has done so much for the art of poetry, in the several capacities of encouraging beginners and by way of setting a high example in poetical production, that any volume of hers commands attention. *You and I* may continue something of her manner of style as it was shown in the *Columbian Ode*; but it also expresses her sympathy with the feeling of to-day. *The Hotel*, the initial poem in the book, makes one wish that she had given us more free verse. Her catholic attitude toward the revolutionists in verse, the Imagists and Futurists, is not a matter of liberal taste alone; it is a matter of genius for mingling perception and philosophy with a musical skill all her own. We wonder, with this poem before us, why she

has clung so largely to the choral and symphonic effects of her earlier work. It is not a question of her failure to make good use of these forms. But we incline to the belief that in the free measures, and as to certain phases of modern life, her vision would find closer expression, for which opinion *The Hotel* is ample proof. On the other hand, some of Miss Monroe's lyrics of the swifter and intenser sort justify her large adherence to rhyme and the classical methods. *Nancy Hanks* and *The Childless Woman* are among these successes. The music of the latter with its antistrophic movement and impression of double rhyme is unusual indeed:

O mother of that heap of clay, so passive on your breast,
Now do you stare at death, woman, who yesterday were blest?

There is subtlety and a lyric quality in *The Wonder of It* not to be passed over. These things we say with the conviction that the author's artistry, if not the realization of her conceptions, shows at its best in her odes rather than in her lyrics. She seems to require dithyrambic lines and a soft diffusion of color for the complete out-pouring of her gifts. But we predict that her growing realism and the gradual emancipation of her art, here evident, from classical expletives and exclamation, will drive her closer to the living flesh of future subjects, rhyme or no rhyme. Rhyme must give way more and more where it results in spiking a subject about with javelins that do not pierce the heart of the theme.

Anyone who has practiced the art of poetry and mastered its literature measurably as well as Miss Monroe has can well understand the irresistible temptation to treat subjects

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of modern life with something of the majestic form by which the ode is distinguished. Some years ago Kipling essayed to describe a locomotive in the manner of Homer. Our modern machinery, buildings, works of engineering, our cities are truly cyclopean; and Pindaric effects seem at first to give these subjects pictorial and aural expression. They would do so if our modern eyes could see an aeroplane or a ship canal through them. It is a question how nearly a Greek saw an Olympian game through an ode of Pindar, and whether he got an idealization or an ennobled image through the excitation of the imagination, or whether he saw it clearly and abstracted a vital significance from it. The final question is how much has been seen with the inner eye and also how much so seen has been unified into relations of truth and beauty and intelligible significance.

Miss Monroe's poems such as *Night in State Street*, *The Ocean Liner*, *Our Canal*, have varied music and loftiness of conception; but they do not seem to measure up to her sense of realism. Such lines from *The Ocean Liner* as—

Steel hulls impenetrable
To the waves that tease and pull,
Bright engines that answer the beat
Of their foam-slippered dancing feet—

stand out brilliantly against a back-ground of swirling color. And *The Turbine* which is written in iambic pentameter contains these lines:

What is this crystal sphere?
. In my hand it lies
Cold and inert, its puny artery—
That curling cob-web film—ashen and dead.

These quotations show with what precision Miss Monroe can visualize her imaginings. And yet, while confessing that the judgment may not be founded upon principles of art, it seems to us that simple quatrains or free verse would have given us more perfectly what was so clearly before her eyes. It may help out the argument to mention that there are among the accepted classics of English poetic literature more successes in the manner of *The Ode to the West Wind* and *To a Grecian Urn* and *To a Skylark* than in the manner of Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*. Again let us quote, this time from *At Twilight*:

The long white lights that glisten
Through Michigan Avenue;
With the red lights down the middle
Where the street shines mirror-wet,
While the rain-strung sky is a fiddle
For the wind to feel and fret.

The fifth line in a flash reproduces one of our Chicago skies, seizing the reality with wonderful truth. There are pictures and music in abundance throughout the book, and a wide variety of subjects treated; there are fugues and simple melodies, and sonnets of power. The double sonnet *Pain* is unforgettable, both for feeling and sound.

E. L. M.

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The Cry of Youth, by Harry Kemp. Kennerley.

Mr. Kemp's voice is rather raw and strident, and not so young as the title of his book would indicate, but now and then it is a poet's voice, singing, to a brass-band accompaniment, of the miseries of the down-and-out and the compensating freedom of the open road. Some of the poems are obvious, others melodramatic, but the best of them are authentic revelations of life, with something of pity and terror in their emotion. Of these the best is *The Ride*, in which the eerie suggestion of companionship of murderer and victim is carried with perfect aplomb to a strong climax.

In such dialect poems as *The Tramp's Confession*, *The Harvest Fly's Complaint*, *Cashing In*, we have flashes of the under-dog's point of view, his vision as well as his pain. And in poems like *Kansas*, *In a Storm*, and *Mount Rainier*—

Snow-garmented, immense,
And holding audience
With subject clouds—

in these we breathe far-blowing western winds.

Such a phrase also as "with star-seas a-wash at thy feet" is a not unworthy tribute to this poet's God. H. M.

My Lady's Book, by Gerald Gould. Kennerley.

Much love poetry comes to this office, presenting all phases of the subject, from tepid amorousness to erotic madness. But not often is the well-worn theme treated with such simplicity and freshness as in this thin little white volume.

Mr. Gould has the singing voice, not powerful but delicate. He attains softly musical cadences and jeweled phrases. Many a lover-poet has ranted about his passion through stormy odes without once convincing us of his emotion. But we do not question the quiet poignancy of the brief poem which begins thus:

My love is fair, she is better than fair to me:
She puts me in mind of a white sea-gull flying over the sea;
She puts me in mind of a dim wind going softly in the grass,
Of things remembered, and young things, and things that shall
 come to pass.

H. M.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

"I am so glad you like to see parts of the Saturday *Transcript*, and it will give me pleasure to send them to you. The editorials are usually bosh; but the paper reflects the tone and mode of thought of a certain part of Boston, and the thirty-six or forty-eight pages do what they can to guide and enlighten the Bostonian. Someone told me the other day of a 'spook' who comes back daily to his old home to read *The Transcript!*"

So writes a member of the older generation to a young relative in the west, happily enclosing a copy of *The Transcript* containing Mr. William Stanley Braithwaite's review of magazine poetry for the year 1914. And having, like the "spook," fallen a victim to the spell of *The Transcript*, I would not presume to criticise a paper which

affords Mr. Braithwaite this generous opportunity to enlighten Bostonians on the subject of modern poetry. Indeed, we can only regret that other papers do not afford other critics and other communities an equal opportunity. If they did, there would be more chance for a liberal congress of opinion; and there would be greater publicity for the poets, who need publicity in order that their art may be shared, not by Bostonians alone, but by their contemporaries in each centre of this nation's ninety-nine million inhabitants. One poet to a million is not too much to expect, but is there any single poet in the United States (unless it be Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, with the combined circulation of the Hearst newspapers) who has a million readers? Are there, all told, a million readers of contemporary poetry in the United States? I believe there are, but their interest is sporadic and unorganized, and it is for this reason that one must applaud Mr. Braithwaite's valiant attempt to effect a co-ordination of interest between poets and readers, even though one may disagree radically with his standards of selection.

Mr. Braithwaite has subjected six hundred and forty-seven poems to an "impartial test," and out of this number one hundred and fifty-seven emerge as "poems of distinction," and thirty of these are given particularly honorable mention. We believe that the gentleman's intention is just, and that he honestly believes that his test is impartial. But all judgment is human, and Mr. Braithwaite's judgment remains Mr. Braithwaite's. Every prisoner has a right to a jury,

and every poet is a prisoner until he is given the liberty of recognition. If Mr. Braithwaite were multiplied by twelve other critics performing a like service in other newspapers, it is possible that there might not be so many sins of omission and commission. Why Mr. Braithwaite chooses just the seven magazines that he does, to stand as monumentally as the churches of Asia, is not quite clear. It is incredible that the *Atlantic Monthly* should have so fallen from grace as not to be included in this list; or why there should be this limit at all we do not quite understand. POETRY fares as well as the *Atlantic*, for two poems have been singled out from each. But the St. Louis *Mirror* gets no mention at all, and thus Mr. Edgar Lee Masters' fine *Spoon River Anthology*, from which we quoted in our November number—one of the year's most important achievements—passes unnoticed.

Will the newspaper editors of the Middle West please copy?
A. C. H.

THE DEATH OF MADISON CAWEIN

The death of Madison Cawein, which occurred on the eighth of December in Louisville, is a deep grief to his many friends and admirers.

Born at Louisville in 1865, he was still a young man when Mr. Howells' warm greeting of his first book of verse gave him an authoritative introduction to American

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readers. Since then he has published many small volumes, which were united in 1907 in his *Complete Poetical Works* (5 vols.). Three years later Mr. Howells reaffirmed his early praise of the poet in an introduction to a volume of selections. (Publishers, E. P. Dutton & Co., New York.)

This is not the moment to attempt a critical review of Madison Cawein's work. Many of his poems have been much quoted and dearly loved, and time, no doubt, will select a few for permanent honor in the anthologies of American song. Meantime we can only regret his too early death, and recall the gracious charm, the fine gentleness, of his character.

POETRY is fortunate in being able to offer to its readers one of his most recent poems.

NOTES

The poets represented in the present number are, with two exceptions, Americans. The first exception is M. Remy de Gourmont, one of the most prominent French poets of the younger school. The other, Mrs. Herman Scheffauer, author, with Mr. Stephen Swift, of *London Windows*, has perhaps become our fellow-citizen through her recent marriage with the well-known American poet.

Miss Edith Wyatt, of Chicago, writer of novels and critical articles, has contributed verse to various magazines. Some of her western and city poems have had a wide appeal.

Miss Zoë Akins, of Saint Louis, published in 1912 *A Book of First Poems* (Grant Richards, London, and Kennerley, New York).

Mr. Lee Wilson Dodd, of New Haven, Conn., is the author of a book of poems, *The Modern Alchemist* (Badger), and of a number of plays for the stage.

Of the more recent poets represented, Miss Miriam Allen de Ford, of Boston, is a young journalist and magazine writer; Alice Ormond Campbell (Mrs. James C.), of New York, was well known a few years ago as a precocious child poet to readers of the *Atlanta Constitution*; Frances Gregg (Mrs. Louis Wilkinson) is a young American imagist married to an Englishman; Mr. Hall Roffey is a young American also living abroad; and Mr. Patrick Orr is a Californian.

BOOKS RECEIVED

- Enchanted Tulips and Other Verses for Children*, by A., E., and M. Keary. Macmillan.
And Then Came Spring, by Juliane Paulsen. Gorham Press.
Some Textual Difficulties in Shakespeare, by Charles D. Stewart. Yale University Press.
The Songs of Aengus, by Robard Emmet Ua Cinneidig. Privately Printed.
Songs from the Smoke, by Madeleine Sweeny Miller. Methodist Book Concern, New York.
The Teacher's Day and Other Poems, by John Nickal. Longmans, Green & Co., London.

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- The School Door*, by John Nickal. Longmans, Green & Co.
Fra Angelico and Other Lyrics, by I. Gregory Smith. Longmans, Green & Co.
Reincarnated, by Charles Gould Beede. Privately Printed.
Songs of the Outlands, by Henry Herbert Knibbs. Houghton-Mifflin Co.
Something Beyond and Other Poems, by John Gaylord Davenport. Gorham Press.
Barricades, Lyrics and Sonnets, by Louis How. Sherman, French & Co.
Flood Tide and Other Poems, by Carolyn Elizabeth Haynes. Gorham Press.
Sunlight and Shadow, by Louis W. Kneeland. Sherman, French & Co.
Freedom, by Geoffrey Winthrop Young. Smith, Elder & Co., London.
The Present Hour, by Percy Mackaye. Macmillan.
Makers of Madness, a Play, by Hermann Hagedorn. Macmillan.
Earth Deities and Other Rhythmic Masques, by Bliss Carman and Mary Perry King. Kennerley.
The Rainbow Chaser and Other Poems, by Kenneth Rand. Sherman, French & Co.
A Caravel of Dreams, by Lila Munro Tainter. Sherman, French & Co.
The Man Sings, by Roscoe Gilmore Stott. Stewart & Kidd Co., Cincinnati.
Remember Louvain, A Little Book of Liberty and War, Selected by E. V. Lucas. Methuen & Co., London.
Phantasies, by Nanna Matthews Bryant. Gorham Press.
Literature and Insurgency, by John Curtis Underwood. Kennerley.
Children of Love, by Harold Monro. Poetry Bookshop, London.
Sing-Songs of the War, by Maurice Hewlett. Poetry Bookshop, London.

SCRIBNER BOOKS

The Grand Canyon and Other Poems

By Henry van Dyke

This collection of Dr. van Dyke's recent verse takes its title from that impressive description of the Grand Canyon of Arizona at daybreak, which stands among the most beautiful of Dr van Dyke's poems. The rest of the collection is characterized by those rare qualities that, as *The Outlook* has said, have enabled the author "to win the suffrage of the few as well as the applause of the many." \$1.25 net; postage extra.

The Poems of Edgar Allan Poe

With an introduction by E. C. STEDMAN and Notes by Professor G. E. WOODBERRY.

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The Path-Flower and Other Verses

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—JAMES HUNEKER, in the *North American Review*.
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Louisville Post.

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