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DRIPOUNTS

RUE BONAPARTE

OU that but seek your modest rolls and coffee,
When you have passed the bar, and have saluted
Its watchful madam, then pray enter softly
The inner chamber, even as one who treads
The haunts of mating birds, and watch discreetly
Over your paper’s edge. There in the corner,
Obscure, ensconced behind the uncovered table,
A man and woman keep their silent tryst.
Outside the morning floods the pavement sweetly;
Yonder aloft a maid throws back the shutters;
The hucksters utter modulated cries
As wistful as some old pathetic ballad.
Within the brooding lovers, unaware,
Sit quiet hand in hand, or in low whispers
Communicate a more articulate love.
Sometimes she plays with strings and, gently leaning
Against his shoulder, shows him childish tricks.
She has not touched the glass of milk before her,
Her breakfast and the price of their admittance.
She has a look devoted and confiding
And might be pretty were not life so hard.
But he, gaunt as his rusty bicycle
That stands against the table, and with features
So drawn and stark, has only futile strength.
The love they cherish in this stolen meeting
Through all the day that follows makes her sweeter,
And him perhaps it only leaves more bitter.
But you that have not love at all, old men
That warm your fingers by this fire, discreetly
Play out your morning game of dominoes.

THE VIEW AT GUNDERSOHN'S

Sitting in his rocker waiting for your tea,
Gazing from his window, this is what you see:
A cat that snaps at flies; a track leading down
By log-built shanties gray and brown;
The corner of a barn, and tangled lines of fence
Of rough-hewn pickets standing dense;
The View at Gunderson's

The ghost of a tree on a dull, wet day;
And the blanket fog where lies the bay.

But when he's seen the last of you,
Sitting in his rocker, what's his view?

(For there he sits, day in day out,
Nursing his leg—and his dreams, no doubt.)

The snow-slide up behind the gaard;
The farm beside old Trondjem fjord;

Daughters seven with their cold blue eyes,
And the great pine where his father lies;

The boat that brought him over the sea;
And the toothless woman who makes his tea.

(Their picture, framed on the rough log wall,
Proves she had teeth when he was tall.)

He sees the balsam thick on the hill,
And all he's cleared with a stubborn will.

And last he sees the full-grown son
For whom he hoards what he has won.

You saw little worth the strife:
What he sees is one man's life.

[55]
In a chamber choked with shadows
The dim light overhead
Reveals a ghostly figure
Bent down above my bed;
A figure dim and priestly,
Soft-footed and discreet,
With sacramental beard and eyes
Above his winding sheet.

His eyes are close and narrow
And shaded from the light,
But something strange and eerie
Yet glitters to my sight.
His voice is soft and toneless,
With a hint of faraway
Uncanny resonances heard
Beyond our night and day.

His fingers strong and skilful,
That follow every curve,
Wake quivers of sensation
In each remotest nerve.
And ever, as he passes
His palms along my skin,
He goes on speaking grave and still
Of Satan and of sin.

[56]
And out of the prophet Daniel
And out of John the seer,
He proves the Second Coming
And how it draweth near.
He strips the scarlet woman
And lays the dragon bare,
And shows me Armageddon red
About us everywhere.

. . . . .

His voice grows faint and fainter.
His face I cannot see.
A flush of warmth and drowsiness
Flows up and covers me.
My waking soul goes under
In gradual eclipse . . .
I sleep, and dream of judgment day
And dread Apocalypse.

THE POINT OF VIEW

I overtook her on the bridge
Loitering in the morning gray,
And straight she told me all her heart
In her direct and childish way.

"Helen was sick for long," she said,
And slipped a trustful hand in mine.
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“She never had to go to school,
And she had oranges . . . and wine! . . .

“When Helen died, you should have seen
The flowers, so many and so bright—
Red roses all about her face . . .
And Helen’s face so very white!”

JENNY’S DANCING

When Jenny danced with Janet,
I saw two silver birches swaying
To a breeze that left the hillside quiet,
Save for these white stems
It singled out
To set them tossing.

I saw two flames,
Two slim and volatile
Twin flames wind-blown,
That wound and wound
Their delicate bodies
To a tune no ear could follow . . .

And then came Rupert—
Hapless male! —
And he took Jenny.

[58]
He could not follow the tune—
The breeze passed by him;
And as he could not bend himself,
He broke her.

CAVE TALK

What are you doing there by the shore?

—I’m pushing out my boat.
I mean to follow the sun across
To islands far remote.
It may be I shall find a land
    Where fruits and spices grow;
Fairer women, stronger men,
    And mountains topped with snow.

—Nay, go not forth across the wave,
    Where ghosts and monsters be.
What fairer folk can heart desire
    Than my sweet cubs and me?
And who shall bring us fish and flesh
    When you are gone away?
Come, spread the net and string the bow—
    But fare not far astray!

What are you scratching there on the rock?
—I'm carving pictures here—
Feathered bird and otter furred,
To bide for many a year.
When a thousand moons have waxed and waned
And I am dust and smoke,
Men shall behold my handiwork
And praise the master-stroke.

—O sluggard, leave your idle ways—
Behold our bitter dearth!
We shiver in the frosty wind
And couch upon the earth.
Go, strip the otter and her cubs
For coats and kirtles fine,
And pluck the feathered bird to strew
A bed for me and mine.

What are you doing out in the dark?
—I count the stars in the sky,
And wonder if they are the souls
Of such as you and I;
And if the bear and the lean gray wolf
Have souls like yours and mine,
That go to feed the milky way
Or make the great stars shine.

—O dreamer, what are the stars to you
And the souls of wolf and bear?
The gray wolf prowls about the rock
   And sniffs upon the air;
His eyes are shining in the dark
   Like stars above the sea!
Build high the fire before the cave
   To guard my cubs and me.

What do you see that stare so hard?

   —A face all smooth and white,
And breasts and shoulders smooth and round
   And soft in the flickering light.
I muse how wondrous women are
   And how unlike to men . . .
I saw white arms in the sea at dawn . . .
   Long since . . . and never again . . .

   —You love me not, O stranger man,
   Who talk of women and men,
Of white arms in the sea at dawn . . .
   You love me never again!
You sit and dream the while I wait—
   And the little ones all asleep . . .
Oh, if you love me a little, man,
   Kiss me . . . or I shall weep!

Joseph Warren Beach
ROOT BUDS

THE SHADOW

Soft as the bed in the earth
Where a stone has lain—
So soft, so smooth and so cool,
Spring closes me in
With her arms and her hands.

Rich as the smell
Of new earth on a stone,
That has lain, breathing
The damp through its pores—
Spring closes me in
With her blossomy hair;
Brings dark to my eyes.

METRIC FIGURE

There is a bird in the poplars—
It is the sun!
The leaves are little yellow fish
Swimming in the river;
The bird skims above them—
Day is on his wings.
Phoenix!
It is he that is making
The great gleam among the poplars.
It is his singing
Outshines the noise
Of leaves clashing in the wind.

SUB TERRA

Where shall I find you—
You, my grotesque fellows
That I seek everywhere
To make up my band?
None, not one
With the earthy tastes I require:
The burrowing pride that rises
Subtly as on a bush in May.

Where are you this day—
You, my seven-year locusts
With cased wings?
Ah, my beauties, how I long!
That harvest
That shall be your advent—
Thrusting up through the grass,
Up under the weeds,
Answering me—
That shall be satisfying!
The light shall leap and snap
That day as with a million lashes!

[63]
Oh, I have you!
Yes, you are about me in a sense,
Playing under the blue pools
That are my windows.
But they shut you out still
There in the half light—
For the simple truth is
That though I see you clear enough . . .
You are not there.

It is not that—it is you,
You I want, my companions!
God! if I could only fathom
The guts of shadows!—
You to come with me
Poking into negro houses
With their gloom and smell!
In among children
Leaping around a dead dog!
Mimicking
Onto the lawns of the rich!
You!
To go with me a-tip-toe
Head down under heaven,
Nostrils lipping the wind!
SLOW MOVEMENT

All those treasures that lie in the little bolted box whose tiny space is
Mightier than the room of the stars, being secret and filled with dreams:
All those treasures—I hold them in my hand—are straining continually
Against the sides and the lid and the two ends of the little box in which I guard them;
Crying that there is no sun come among them this great while and that they weary of shining;
Calling me to fold back the lid of the little box and to give them sleep finally.

But the night I am hiding from them, dear friend, is far more desperate than their night!
And so I take pity on them and pretend to have lost the key to the little house of my treasures,
For they would die of weariness were I to open it, and not be merely faint and sleepy
As they are now.

A CONFIDENCE

Today, dear friend, this gray day,
I have been explaining to a young man of the West Indies
How the leaves all fall from the little branches
And lie soon in crowds along the bare ground;
   How they lie
On all sides so thick that no man
May pass any way without touching them,
Or hearing at his feet a great crying-out!

But in no way at all could I have told him
This that I tell you so easily:
How having become wise as a flame with watching
Above the year since that time he lifted
   His young face
For a moment—that time of the first passing—
They lie exultant, pressing his foot-prints,
Melting away because of their passion!

William Carlos Williams
I think I have no soul,
Having instead two hands, sensitive and curious,
And ten subtle and inquisitive fingers
Which reach out continually into the world,
Touching and handling all things.
The fascination of objects!—
The marvellous shapes!
Contours of faces and of dispositions,
Hearts that are tender or rough to the touch,
The smooth soft fabrics in which lives go clothed—
Hope and pity and passion:
All these as I touch them delight and enchant me,
And I think I could go on touching them forever.
But the impulse comes into the nerves of my fingers,
Into the muscles of my hands,
To give back this beauty in some shape
Confessional of joy.
And so I make these toys.

Floyd Dell
INVOCATION

O glass-blower of time,
Hast blown all shapes at thy fire?
Canst thou no lovelier bell,
No clearer bubble, clear as delight, inflate me—
Worthy to hold such wine
As was never yet trod from the grape,
Since the stars shed their light, since the moon
Troubled the night with her beauty?

A VIVID GIRL

Her face is fair and smooth and fine,
Childlike, with secret laughter lit,
Drooping in pity, bright with wit,
A flower, a flame—God fashioned it.
Who sees her tastes the sacred wine.

PROVINCIAL

The Dunkard ladies ride to town
Demure in the wagon behind their men:
Each wears a black bonnet tied under her chin,
And a green or scarlet gown.
I saw three stand in an awning's shade,
    Where golden fruits were in prim rows laid—
Plump girls, like rabbits, with dough-white skin.
    One sucked at a fig as at secret sin.

Half-scared, half-stolid, they eye the crowd,
    Blink at shop-windows, gape toward the sky.
A sharp Italian, chattering loud,
    Regards them—her glance is comedy!

Clara Shanafelt
O David, if I had
Your power, I should be glad—
   In harping, with the sling,
   In patient reasoning!

Blake, Homer, Job, and you,
Have made old wine-skins new.
   Your energies have wrought
   Stout continents of thought.

But, David, if the heart
Be brass, what boots the art
   Of exorcising wrong,
   Of harping to a song?

The sceptre and the ring
And every royal thing
   Will fail. Grief's lustiness
   Must cure that harp's distress.
To an Intra-Mural Rat

TO AN INTRA-MURAL RAT

You make me think of many men
Once met, to be forgot again;
Or merely resurrected
In a parenthesis of wit,
That found them hastening through it
Too brisk to be inspected.

COUNSEL TO A BACHELIER

Elizabethan Trencher Motto—Bodleian Library: [with title and modification of second line]

If thou bee younge, then marie not yett;
If thou bee olde, then no wyfe gett;
For younge mens' wyves will not bee taught,
And olde mens' wyves bee good for naught.

APPELLATE JURISDICTION

Fragments of sin are a part of me.
New brooms shall sweep clean the heart of me.
    Shall they?    Shall they?

When this light life shall have passed away,
God shall redeem me, a castaway.
    Shall He?    Shall He?

[71]
THE WIZARD IN WORDS

“When I am dead,”
The wizard said,
“I'll look upon the narrow way
And this Dante,
And know that he was right;
And he'll delight
In my remorse—
Of course.”

“When I am dead,”
The student said,
“I shall have grown so tolerant
I'll find I can't
Laugh at your sorry plight,
Or take delight
In your chagrin,
Merlin.”

Marianne Moore
THREE POEMS

CREATIVE

Renew the vision of delight
By vigil, praise and prayer,
Till every sinew leaps in might
And every sense is fair.

TWILIGHT AT VERSAILLES

Unfold for men, O God, love's true, creative day,
To flower our barren souls by mellow sun and noon:
The glory of old thought is still, and cold, and gray,
Like gardens unrenewed beneath the sterile moon.

LOVERS

Whate'er our joy compelled, men's praise and blame fall hollow,
A voice upon the winds that drown it as they blow:
So fair a vision led, our thought was all to follow;
So strong a passion urged, our will was all to go.

Horace Holley
A SPRING SONG

Smell the sweet wind
From far woodlands—
How it comes
   Blowing
Soft breezes,
   Sharp breezes,
In clear pureness
From high hilltops!
Feel the wild wind
In the city streets—
How it comes
   Bearing
New strongness,
   Fresh gladness,
In light laughter
To a wearying world!
Hark you, free wind,
Tapping at my window
As you go
   Singing
Glad songs,
   Mad songs,
New love take to
   Mon camarade—mon chéri!

Mabel D. Carry
THE LILACS

If you come to Catskill in the spring
You will find the lilacs blossoming.
Though a miser hold the cup,
Every vagabond may sup.
Oh, we drink the wind of spring
When the lilac's blossoming!

A VILLAGE CHURCH

There is a little church I know
With six white pillars in a row,
And for a hundred years or more
God's people have gone through the door.
A goodly company are they
Who come no more on Sabbath Day.
Sometimes I think the Sabbath air
Is filled with little ghosts of prayer,
And in the rafters linger yet
Words that the church cannot forget.
Full of old songs the belfry is,
And every pew has memories.

Louise Driscoll

[75]
THE WORLD CRY

Joy, light, and love I crave
And shall discover—
Life's wild adventure opening to my will:
High thought and brave,
The rapture of a lover,
The Vision gleaming from yon western hill.

Beyond my present sight
There lies some sweet allure,
Some crested glory waiting to be won;
Shimmering in light,
Beautiful and sure,
Beckoning bright hands that call me on.

I know not where it lies,
Nor whither I go, nor how
The way is paved—with pleasure or with pain;
But the search is in my eyes,
And the dust upon my brow
Shall turn to aureoled gold when I attain.

Oh, old old hope—
Unfulfilled desire!
Pitiful the faith,
Beautiful the fire!

[76]
The World Cry

Know, soul who criest,
Thy gleaming from afar,
Thy quest of wild adventure,
Thy sweet far star

Shall be the bitter path
To a high stern goal;
So bow thy head
To thine own soul.

Mary Aldis
NIGHTFALL

Deep-bosomed dusk obscures
The sun's last ray,
And night descending lures
Westward the day.
Naught that we love endures
For aye.

Among the withered leaves
The pale winds sigh,
And shrouded twilight weaves
Her memories wistfully;
Summer but gilds his sheaves
To die.

Flowers that the morn found bright
At evening fade;
Hours that have taken flight
Can ne'er be stayed:
Rome was eternal once,
Helen a maid.

Maurice Browne
VOYAGES

I

To come so soon to this imagined dark—
 More velvet-deep than any midnight park!
Palaces hem me in, with blind black walls;
The water is hushed for a voice that never calls.
My gondolier sways silently over his oar.

II

At St. Blaise, à la Zuecca! Oh, my dear,
Laugh your gentle laughter! This old land,
From Provence to Paris—never fear—
All the heart can feel will understand.

A small town, a white town,
A town for you and me—
With a Café Glacier in the square,
And schooners at the quay;
And the terrasse of a small hotel
That looks upon the sea!
There gay sounds and sweet sounds
And sounds of peace come through:
The cook sings in the kitchen,
The pink-foot ring-doves coo,
And Julien brings the Pernods
That are bad for me and you.

[79]
At St. Blaise, à la Zuecca! Oh, my dear,
Laugh your genile laughter! This old land,
From Provence to Paris—never fear—
All the heart can feel will understand.

III

Waves lap the beach, pines stretch to meet the sea;
A pale light on the horizon lingers and shines,
That might shine round the graal: and we
Stand very silent, underneath the pines.

O swift expresses for the spirit's flight!
Sometimes the moon is like a maid I know,
Looking roguishly back, and flying forward—so
I follow, flashing after. Blessed night!

IV

Do you remember, have you been these ways,
Dreaming or waking, after sunny days;
Sailed, in a moment, to imagined lands—
With one to love you, holding both your hands—
To old hot countries where the warm grape clings,
And an old, musical language strikes the ear
Like a caress, most exquisite to hear—
Your soul the voyager and your heart her wings?

Douglas Goldring

[80]
AM moved sometimes to wonder at the narrowness of the field accorded to the poet by conservative public taste, as compared with the freer range granted today, as a matter of course, to other artists.

The architect must pass with ease from cottage to cathedral, from the village shop to the skyscraper, and in doing so he may take his choice of classic, renaissance, gothic, secession, or catch-as-catch-can. The painter may paint figures, landscapes, marines, histories, mysteries, in any style that pleases him, from Rembrandt to Cézanne, from Cimabue to Kandinsky. Even the sculptor, despite the bulk and hardness of his medium, has the freedom of marble, bronze, terracotta, wax, wood, and many other substances, and of all styles from the Chou dynasty to the futuristic dream in his own soul. And the musician—but his range is the widest of all: he may compose song or symphony, fugue or rhapsody, opera, fantasia, or extravaganza; and to express all the fine harmonies or riotous discords of his dream he may call on hundreds of cunning instruments, singly or in miraculous unison, and on the human voice as well, and compel them to reveal him, whether he be Bach or Debussy, Wagner or Schoenberg.

And all these various extremes in these various arts the public admits to its streets and gardens, its theatres and concerts.
cert halls, its museums and exhibitions. Indeed, the more violent the extreme the more eagerly do we flock to see or hear, the more firmly do we believe that we must see and hear in order to bring our culture, or kultur, up to date, and meet the cannonading future with a quiet mind.

But the poet, the English-writing poet today—what does his potentially vast public expect of him? His language circles the globe; his era is cosmopolitan, enormous, full of newly released forces, of newly emerging ideas. He lives in a world which is wound in a net of rails and wires, of sea-ways and air-ways, a world of far kinships and inhuman wars, of intolerable poverty and luxury, incredible fellowships and isolations.

To express the unprecedented magnificence of this modern era, the unprecedented emotion of this changing world—to tell the “tale of the tribe” to the future, and thereby make the future as Homer and Dante and Shakespeare have made us, the poet has but one instrument—words. To use this instrument adequately, to make it resound far and wide to the heights and depths of the human spirit, the poet has need of the utmost freedom and the utmost sympathy. He needs as large and as eager an audience as any confrère in the other arts, an audience giving him the widest liberty of experiment in his effort to enrich his instrument, broaden its range, and break down technical barriers between his art and the far-flung modern tribes whom it must address.

Yet instead of such a co-operating public, what does he find? He finds an indifferent public, loath to listen at all,
but demanding, if it does listen, close observance of the well-worn formulae of rhymes and iambics which Chaucer imported from France in his scorn of the Anglo-Saxon tradition. If a poet ventures out of this classic park he is at once suspect; the public gives him up as mentally afflicted and leaves the paragraphers to diagnose his malady. And even the more conservative of his fellow-poets question his right to batter down sacred walls.

Now POETRY has frankly tried to widen the poet's range, to question conventional barriers, whether technical or spiritual, inherited from the past, and help to bring the modern poet face to face with the modern world. We have printed not only odes and sonnets, blank verse dramas and rhymed pentameter narratives, but imagistic songs, futuristic fugues, fantasies in vers libre, rhapsodies in polyphonic prose—any dash for freedom which seemed to have life and hope in it—a fervor for movement and the beauty of open spaces—even if the goal was vague and remote, or quite unattainable in the distance.

And probably we shall go on in this reckless course, whether the public gathers in great numbers or not. A certain public—small, perhaps, but choice—is gathering; of that we receive indisputable evidence every day. Even that satirical newspaper editor who turns one of our fugues upside down, or that other who gaily parodies imagism, or that graver one who points at us the finger of scorn—all these are more or less consciously our friends, for they are helping the public to WAKE UP, to observe that something, through
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whatever illusions and extravagances, is going on, that poetry is not a dead art but a living one, and that the poet today, like the liberator of long ago, WILL BE HEARD.

H. M.

THE RENAISSANCE

III

No, I am not such a fool as to believe that a man writes better for being well fed, or that he writes better for being hungry either. Hunger—some experience of it—is doubtless good for a man; it puts an edge on his style, and so does hard common sense. In the end, I believe in hunger, because it is an experience, and no artist can have too many experiences. Prolonged hunger, intermittent hunger and anxiety, will of course break down a man’s constitution, render him fussy and over-irritable, and in the end ruin his work or prevent its full development.

That nation is profoundly foolish which does not get the maximum of best work out of its artists. The artist is one of the few producers. He, the farmer and the artisan create wealth; the rest shift and consume it. The net value of good art to its place of residence has been computed in logarithms; I shall not go into the decimals. When there was talk of selling Holbein’s Duchess of Milan to an American, England bought the picture for three hundred and fifty thousand dollars. They figured that people came to London to see the picture, that the receipts of the community were worth more
The Renaissance

per annum than the interest on the money. People go where there are good works of art. Pictures and sculpture and architecture pay. Even literature and poetry pay, for where there is enough intelligence to produce and maintain good writing, there society is pleasant and the real estate values increase. Mr. F. M. Hueffer has said that the difference between London and other places is that “No one lives in London merely for the sake of making money enough to live somewhere else.”

The real estate values, even in Newark, New Jersey, would go up if Newark were capable of producing art, literature or the drama. In the quattrocento men went from one Italian city to another for reasons that were not solely commercial.

The question is not: Shall we try to keep up the arts?—but: How can we maintain the arts most efficiently? Paris can survive 1870 and 1914 because she is an intellectual and artistic vortex. She is that vortex not because she had a university in the middle ages—Cordova and Padua had also mediaeval universities. France recognizes the cash value of artists. They do not have to pay taxes save when convenient; they have a ministry of fine arts doing its semi-efficient best. Literary but inartistic England moves with a slow paw pushing occasional chunks of meat towards the favored. England does as well as can be expected, considering that the management of such affairs is entrusted to men whose interests are wholly political and who have no sort of intuition or taste. That is to say, in England, if someone of good social position
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says that your work is "really literary," and that you are not likely to attack the hereditary interests or criticise the Albert Memorial, you can be reasonably sure of a pension. If your sales have suddenly slumped, you can also have "royal bounty," provided that you respect the senile and decrepit and say a good word for Watts' pictures.

The result is that France gets Rodin's work when he is fifty instead of the day he began doing good work. England gets Rodin's work after it has gone to seed, and rejects the best work of Epstein in his full vigor. England let half her last generation of poets die off, and pensioned such survivors as hadn't gone into something "practical."

But even this is enough to show that bourgeois France and stolid England recognize the cash value of art. I don't imagine that these sordid material considerations will weigh with my compatriots. America is a nation of idealists, as we all know; and they are going to support art for art's sake, because they love it, because they "want the best," even in art. They want beauty; they can't get along without it. They are already tired of spurious literature.

They recognize that all great art, all good art, goes against the grain of contemporary taste. They want men who can stand out against it. They want to back such men and women to the limit. How are they to go about it? Subsidy? Oh, no. They don't want to pauperize artists!

Of course Swinburne was subsidized by his immediate forebears, and Shelley also; and Browning, the robust, the virile, was subsidized by his wife; and even Dante and Villon
did not escape the stigma of having received charities. Nevertheless it is undemocratic to believe that a man with money should give—horrible word!—give it, even though not all of it, to painters and poets.

They give it to sterile professors; to vacuous preachers of a sterilized form of Christianity; they support magazines whose set and avowed purpose is either to degrade letters or to prevent their natural development. Why in heaven's name shouldn't they back creators, as well as students of Quinet? Why shouldn't they endow men whose studies are independent, put them on an equal footing with men whose scholarship is merely a pasteurized, Bostonized imitation of Leipzig?

How are they to go about it? Committees are notably stupid; they vote for mediocrity, their mind is the least common denominator. Even if there are a few intelligent members, the unintelligent members will be the ones with spare time, and they will get about trying to "run the committee," trying to get in new members who will vote for their kind of inanity. Et cetera, ad infinitum.

There is one obvious way, which does not compel individuals to wait for an organization:

Private people can give stipends to individual artists. That is to say, you, Mr. Rockefeller, you, Laird Andy of Skibo, and the rest of you (I am not leaving you out, reader, because you have only one million or half of one); you can endow individuals for life just as you endow chairs in pedagogy and calisthenics. More than that, you can endow them with the right to name their successors. If they don't
need the money they can pass it on, before their deaths, to younger artists in whom they believe.

For instance, you may begin by endowing Mr. James Whitcomb Riley, Mr. George Santayana, Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, Mr. Jack London, or anybody else you believe in. And any artist will applaud you. Any artist would rather have a benefice conferred upon him by one of these men as an individual than by a committee of the "forty leading luminaries of literature." I take a hard case; I don't suppose for a moment that Mr. Riley or Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. Santayana or Mr. London wants money—in all probability they would one and all refuse it if offered; but none of them would refuse the right of allotting an income, sufficient to cover the bare necessities of life, to some active artist whom they believe in.

If you endow enough men, individuals of vivid and different personality, and make the endowment perpetual, to be handed down from artist to artist, you will have put the arts in a position to defy the subversive pressure of commercial advantage, and of the mediocre spirit which is the bane and hidden terror of democracy.

Democracies have fallen, they have always fallen, because humanity craves the outstanding personality. And hitherto no democracy has provided sufficient place for such an individuality. If you so endow sculptors and writers you will begin for America an age of awakening which will overshadow the quattrocento; because our opportunity is greater than Leonardo's: we have more aliment, we have not one
The Renaissance

classic tradition to revivify, we have China and Egypt, and the unknown lands lying upon the roof of the world—Khotan, Kara-shar and Kan-su.

So much for the individual opportunity—now for the civic. Any city which cares for its future can perfectly well start its vortex. It can found something between a graduate seminar and the usual "Arts Club" made up of business men and of a few "rather more than middle-aged artists who can afford to belong".

I have set the individually endowed artist against the endowed professor or editor. I would set the endowment of such grouping of young artists parallel with the endowment, for one year or three, of scholars and fellows by our universities. Some hundreds of budding professors are so endowed, to say nothing of students of divinity.

There is no reason why students of the arts—not merely of painting but of all the arts—should not be so endowed, and so grouped: that is, as artists, not merely as followers of one segregated art. Such endowment would get them over the worst two or three years of their career, the years when their work can't possibly pay.

Scientists are so endowed. It is as futile to expect a poet to get the right words, or any sort of artist to do real work, with one eye on the public, as it would be to expect the experimenter in a chemical laboratory to advance the borders of science, if he have constantly to consider whether his atomic combinations are going to flatter popular belief, or suit the holders of monopolies in some over-expensive com-

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Pound. The arts and sciences hang together. Any conception which does not see them in their interrelation belittles both. What is good for one is good for the other.

Has any one yet answered the query: why is it that in other times artists went on getting more and more powerful as they grew older, whereas now they decline after the first outburst, or at least after the first successes? Compare this with the steady growth of scientists.

.................................................................

The three main lines of attack, then, which I have proposed in this little series of articles, are as follows:

First, that we should develop a criticism of poetry based on world-poetry, on the work of maximum excellence. (It does not in the least matter whether this standard be that of my own predilections, or crochets or excesses. It matters very much that it be decided by men who have made a first-hand study of world-poetry, and who "have had the tools in their hands."

Second, that there be definite subsidy of individual artists, writers, etc., such as will enable them to follow their highest ambitions without needing to conciliate the ignorant en route. (Even some of our stock-size magazine poets might produce something worth while if they could afford occasionally to keep quiet for six months or a year at a stretch.)

Third, there should be a foundation of such centres as I have described. There should be in America the "gloire de cénacle." Tariff laws should favor the creative author rather than the printer, but that matter is too long to be gone into.

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Praise from Mr. Colum

In conclusion, the first of these matters must be fought out among the artists themselves. The second matter concerns not only the excessively rich, but the normally and moderately rich, who contribute to all sorts of less useful affairs: redundant universities, parsons, Y. M. C. A.'s, and the general encouragement of drab mediocrity. The third matter concerns millionaires, multimillionaires and municipalities.

When a civilization is vivid it preserves and fosters all sorts of artists—painters, poets, sculptors, musicians, architects. When a civilization is dull and anemic it preserves a rabble of priests, sterile instructors, and repeaters of things second-hand. If literature is to reappear in America it must come not through, but in spite of, the present commercial system of publication.

Ezra Pound

PRAISE FROM MR. COLUM

The Art and Literature Department of the Chicago Woman's Club gave a luncheon on March 27th in honor of Mr. Padraic Colum, the Irish poet, after his morning lecture on modern Irish poetry. Complimentary speeches were made by Mr. Karleton Hackett, of the Chicago Evening Post; Prof. Cross, of the department of Celtic literature in the University of Chicago, and Prof. Dickinson, of the English department at Madison. Then Mrs. J. H. Buckingham, who presided, called upon Prof. Ferdinand Schevill to speak of local appreciation of the art, and especially of Poetry.

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Mr. Schevill, though in the department of history at the University, is one of the most discriminating connoisseurs of poetry in the country, with a talent for reading it aloud as rare as Isaye's mastery of the violin. To hear this lover of beautiful cadence read the Nightingale or the Prothalamion is a memorable experience of perfect art. But that is another story.

Mr. Schevill told the club-members and guests of his early reluctance to subscribe for POETRY, and his hesitation before unwrapping the first number—his fear that it would prove banal. This feeling, he said, changed to delight as he read the little brochure, and since then each number has been welcomed with ever keener zest, until now he looks forward to POETRY as the finest and most stimulating of all his periodical visitors. He wound up by frankly urging his two hundred hearers to give themselves similar pleasure by subscribing.

The guest of honor, Mr. Colum, in seconding this suggestion, told of the eagerness with which the magazine is received and handed around among English and Irish poets, and their appreciation of its success in gathering together the best work of the various schools, and informing the world of what the American poets are doing. "It is far and away better than any magazine of the kind in England or Ireland," he said; "in fact, I think POETRY is the best magazine—by far—in the English language."

In the face of such authoritative praise from the poet and the connoisseur of poetry, the editor need say nothing but
urge the friends of the magazine to spread the news and gather in an ever-increasing public. 

H. M.

REVIEWS


There are various kinds of enchantment in this brief volume. First, an elfin glee that shivers with delight, that finds an unexpected vigor and beauty by simply nosing around underneath the obvious. The tremor of wildness in nature, the glint of unseen wings, the beat of fairies' feet, the tune on the wind, the terror in the void—it is perhaps the special privilege of the Celt to discern these things; but few even of the Celts have presented them with such witty brevity, such choice felicity of phrase, as Mr. Stephens commands from his happy muse. Whatever he says one believes, no matter what the miracle may be:

I was there all alone in the night,
With the moon, and we talked for a while,
And her face was a wonder of light,
And her smile was a beautiful smile.

She leaned down and I nearly went mad,
(And she was as frightened as me),
But I got the kiss that she had
Intended to give to the sea.

Who would doubt this moon-magic? Or who can fail to see this "satyr creeping through the wood"?

He peeped about, he minced upon the ground,
He put a thin hand up to hide a grin;
He doubled up and laughed without a sound—
The very bodiment of happy sin.
Also tragic intensities of mystery are stated with the same high simplicity, the same convincing austerity of phrase. For example, *In the Night*:

There always is a noise when it is dark;
It is the noise of silence and the noise
Of blindness.

The noise of silence and the noise of blindness
Do frighten me;
They hold me stark and rigid as a tree!

These frighten me,
These hold me stark and rigid as a tree!
Because at last their tumult is more loud
Than thunder.

Because at last
Their tumult is more loud than thunder:
They terrify my soul,
They tear my heart asunder!

The poet's intimacies are not alone with sprites and elfin mysteries, however; he has a deep human tenderness for grass and flowers, singing birds and suffering animals. *The Snare* is in the same class with Burns' *To a Field Mouse*, and the resemblance of the trapped rabbit to sufferers higher in the social scale is not the less poignant for not being stated.

I hear a sudden cry of pain!
There is a rabbit in a snare:
Now I hear the cry again,
But I cannot tell from where.

But I cannot tell from where
He is calling out for aid;
Crying on the frightened air,
Making everything afraid.

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Making everything afraid,
   Wrinkling up his little face,
As he cries again for aid;
   And I cannot find the place!

And I cannot find the place
   Where his paw is in the snare:
Little one! O little one!
   I am searching everywhere.

This linking of stanzas together by the repetition of
the last line is a device employed by Mr. Stephens with rare
discretion. By this and other repetitions, and by the extreme
simplicity of his diction, he aids his own conviction to convince
us. Let me recommend this modern Irishman to the nu-
merous poets of the O thou school who search the chronicles
and dictionaries for antique subjects and Elizabethan phrases.
We rarely believe them for an instant, whereas we never
question the truth of whatever Mr. Stephens chooses to sum-
mon out of nothingness in lithe and naked beauty.

H. M.

The Night Watchman and Other Poems, by Vance Thomp-
son. Kennerley.

Mr. Thompson's poems express in mournful music the
sensuous passions and despairs of an emotional soul. One
does not usually question the poet's conviction, or the lan-
guorous beauty of his rhythmic tunes.

But oh, the reader, living in this year of grace—or, rather,
of turmoil—1915, does beg him to wake up. His book is
pervaded by the heavily perfumed atmosphere of the nineties.
It is full of "dim years" and "augural nights," of "lethal
wine” and “nenuphars,” of “avid girls” and “temptuous thighs” and “desultory suave serpents”: all of which interesting phenomena went out of fashion in 1900, and are no longer effective except to arouse dim memories of echoes.

We should like to recommend to this poet, and others similarly unaware of their epoch, a few months’ discipline as reader for POETRY. They would get so tired of artificial and hyperbolic language, and of supersensuous experiences, that they would sign a pledge, one and all, to sing hereafter only in words of one syllable on the commonest every-day affairs. In short, they would go forth holding up the stark nude figure of Simplicity as the only modern muse.

That Mr. Thompson is too good a poet to resign himself to those lethal years aforesaid, is the special reason why we urge upon him this discipline. The Night Watchman, When Love Died, and The City are typical of his style at its best. Also, this lyric, The Swallow:

There's a swallow flying to Venice
And sick for a sight of the sea.
O wayfarer, O swallow,
Fly light and low—I would follow
To the dim blue isles of Venice,
And the blue dim light of the sea.

I am sick for the strange new faces,
For the flags and the ships and the sea;
For the new strange life and the singing,
For the boatman's cries and the ringing
Of bells in the windy places,
And the windy foam on the sea.

H. M.
The Little King, by Witter Bynner. Kennerley.

Here is Louis XVII again, one of the children of sorrow whom the world will not permit to die. In Mr. Bynner's hands he is an ideally royal little lad, who refuses to escape from his tormentors when this means leaving a substitute in misery. A touching play, whose characters, though possibly too consistent, too true to type, are dramatically contrasted in a succession of emotional scenes moving to a pathetic climax. Apparently this brief little play would act well. H. M.


At his best this Italian-American poet has a delicate fancy and a true lyric touch. As yet he too often imitates Keats and other classics, and he likes too well stock figures and phrases, like "the rubies of sun-set," "the gold of the morn," "pale twilight's bier," "war's red hell." In the same way one finds him sometimes making poetry by sheer force of will instead of by compulsion of inner vision.

But these are perhaps faults of youth; Mr. Iris may be preparing his technic for the visions to come. Even now a few of these lyrics seem deeply felt and austerely expressed. Besides those published last December in Poetry, of which Early Nightfall is especially lovely, we would mention I am a-weary as the wind, A Nameless Prayer, and this brief Iteration:

My son is dead and I am going blind,
And in the Ishmael-wind of grief
I tremble like a leaf;  
I have no mind for any word you say:  
My son is dead and I am going blind.

H. M.

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

Three or four poems in this book—Last Desire, Chess Player, The Mother, Tryst—almost persuade one that Mr. Clarke might be a poet if he could forget all the poetry he ever read. But usually he is saying O thou in conventional measures, and rattling a bag of rhymes in which he reveals no more music. If only he could be less agile he might move more gracefully and get nearer his goal.

Remember Louvain, a Little Book of Liberty and War, selected by E. V. Lucas. Methuen & Co., Ltd., London.

This brief anthology of war poems is misnamed in that it consists mostly of well-known classics, among which are poems of four Americans—Whitman, Whittier, Longfellow and Mrs. Howe. The living poets in its rather short list are Messrs. Newbolt, Noyes, Conan Doyle and Kipling, but nothing from these is so stirring as Henley’s England, my England, or certain older and more familiar songs.

The Gypsy Trail, an Anthology for Campers, compiled by Pauline Goldmark and Mary Hopkins. Kennerley.

This volume, conveniently small for camping purposes, seems the result of wide reading, a free open-air spirit, and good taste, on the part of its editors. It ranges from the
Our Contemporaries

Book of Job to Fiona Macleod, from Lucretius to Bliss Carman, and few lovers of the open road would object to many of the entries.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Miss Amy Lowell had an interesting review of Mr. Robert Frost's *North of Boston* in a recent number of *The New Republic*. This new weekly, by the way, gives promise of competent criticism of art and letters, and the fact that it has, in one or two instances, followed some of Poverty's "leads" is not a little gratifying.

Miss Lowell's review is valuable because it gives one poet's personal impression of another. But Miss Lowell is not herself a realist, and perhaps that is why she seems to have missed the essential quality of Mr. Frost's work. The exception taken to the following paragraph is not a mere quibble. This comparison of art and photography is a commonplace so unsound and false that it should be relegated to the ash heap:

I have said that Mr. Frost's work is almost photographic. The qualification was unnecessary, it is photographic. The pictures, the characters, are reproduced directly from life, they are burnt into his mind as though it were a sensitive plate. He gives out what has been put in, unchanged by any personal process. His imagination is bounded by what he has seen, he is confined within the limits of his experience or at least what might have been his experience, and bent all one way like the wind-blown trees of New England hillsides.

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It would have been more just if Miss Lowell had said: Mr. Frost's work carries such a conviction of reality that it is impressed upon the reader's mind as if upon a sensitive photographic film. For how has this effect been achieved? Certainly not by any non-selective, mechanical, photographic process on Mr. Frost's part. How is it possible for any human being, least of all an artist, to "give out what has been put in, unchanged by any personal mental process?" And even if Mr. Frost were as non-selectively receptive as a kodak—by whom then, or by what agency, was the remarkably selective material of his poems put in? Who put into Mr. Frost what came out of him? Who took the trouble to arrange the hills, and the blackberry fields, and the stark New England people, in just the right folds for Mr. Frost's kodak mind, if all volition on his part is left out of the question?

The artist, not the kodak, is the arbiter of realism in art. Even if external truth were considered as the final end of art, which is ridiculous, the kodak is a notorious liar in comparison with the human eye.

From Miss Lowell's estimate one gains the impression that Mr. Frost is still in the stage of unreasoning response to external stimuli; that he is, in short, unconscious of his own reactions. And this colors her entire view of the man's work. Because the poet speaks through his characters, Miss Lowell attributes to him their lack of humor. But humor depends upon a certain detachment of vision, and without
it Mr. Frost could not have given us the essentially satiric quality of these grim New England people, to whom the one saving grace of humor—the ability to see themselves with a detached vision—is denied.

Miss Lowell herself seems to have a fixed idea about Mr. Frost's purpose in giving us a mirror of New England life. She speaks of the poem, *Home Burial*, as representing a New England woman who is unable to take up the burden of life after her child has died. Now it is very possible that that woman was not a New Englander. At any rate she represents a much less callous type than her husband. In him is the sinister quality of New England life in its most desperate form—a life of kill-joy practicality, of a hardness to things of beauty and feeling almost unbelievable to one of a mold less cramped and harsh. It would not be the death of her child that would drive this woman insane! If this woman had been less normally responsive in feeling, there would not have been the essential tragedy of this poem—in fact this poem would not have been at all!

That the reader identifies Mr. Frost with his characters is simply indicative of the high quality of Mr. Frost's art. This is the highest form of synthetic realism. Mr. Frost may indeed write with "his eye on the object," but his vision penetrates the object and infuses it with that imaginative life which is the primary and essential quality of art.

*A. C. H.*

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CORRESPONDENCE

DEATH OF A YOUNG GERMAN POET

Editor of Poetry: So far only one German poet has been reported as killed in the war—Georg Frakl. Frakl belonged to the new school in feeling, if not in form. His chief gift was his ability to select the salient qualities of a landscape and, by reproducing them with a few strokes of graphic and imaginative power, convey a rich yet subtle impression of the whole. In the death of Frakl German literature has lost a young poet of decided originality and promise.

Charles Wharton Stork

Mr. Stork, who is in the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, translates as follows one of Frakl's finest lyrics:

WHISPERED IN THE AFTERNOON

Feebly glints the sun's thin ray,
From the tree the ripe fruit falleth,
In the deep blue distance dwelleth
Silence—'tis an endless day.

Sharp a shot the stillness cleaves,
Prone to earth its victim bringing.
Harsh refrain of brown girls singing
Dies amid the fall of leaves.

Dream-wings o'er God's forehead play,
And He thinketh but in color.
Shadows round the hill grow duller,
Bordered by a dim decay.

Twilight, drunken with repose;
Sad guitar-notes trickle faintly.
Back unto his lamplight saintly
In a dream the wanderer goes.
A "SPOON RIVER" BOOST

Dear Editor: Let me quote a paragraph in a letter from Ridgely Torrence. He says:

"We find New York more vital this year than we have ever known it. This town, together with the whole country, seems to be waking up to poetry and the other arts as never before. Never has there been such a genuine and widespread interest in it. I really believe the place has come to be as alive as Chicago."

There now! Perhaps in the future you will trust my powers as soothsayer. The other day, when I expressed this sentiment, you feared I might be over-excited by the interest of people in our own circle. You doubted my power to catch far-off vibrations. Now if there should be an American renascence, and it could be traced to 543 Cass Street, what would you say to that? Yours very sincerely,

Edgar Lee Masters

MR. CARY PROTESTS

My dear Editor: Now that you have so graciously corrected your "injustice to Mr. Browne," may I ask that you consider your injustice to me? I was introduced at the meeting of the Book and Play Club as the associate editor of The Dial. In the course of my talk I frankly stated that my connection with that paper was then officially ended, and would in a few days be actually ended. That I should be
Considered representative of The Dial, or The Dial of me, seems to me most unjust.

In the course of a review of all the periodicals published in Chicago which have, or pretend to have, anything to do with literature, I made certain specific criticisms of The Dial, but I think I made no statements, one way or the other, about its conventionality, or about its financial history. I am, and was, under the impression that The Dial is a peculiarly successful business enterprise. Indeed, what I complained of was not its struggle, but its innocence of any struggle whatever. Yours sincerely,

Lucian Cary

NOTES

Seven of the poets represented in this number are new to readers of POETRY. Of these three have published books of verse, and three or four make their first public appearance as poets.

Mr. Joseph Warren Beach, of Minneapolis, now in the English department of the University of Minnesota, is a Harvard Ph. D. of 1907, and the author of Sonnets of the Head and Heart (Badger, 1903.)

Mr. Maurice Browne, though English by birth, is now director of the Chicago Little Theatre, and therefore one of the most important present influences of light and leading in dramatic art. He is the author of four brief books of verse: Zetes, Epithalamios, Job, a Dramatic Poem, and lastly Songs of Exile (Samurai Press, 1908.)

Mr. Horace Holley, born in Connecticut in 1887 and now a resident of New York, is the author of The Inner Garden (Sherman, French & Co., 1913) and The Stricken King (Shakespeare Head Press, 1913.)

Mr. Floyd Dell, born in Iowa and recently literary editor of the Chicago Evening Post, now lives in New York as one of the editors of The Masses.
Miss Marianne Moore, now in charge of the Commercial Department of the U. S. Indian school at Carlisle, Pa., was graduated from Bryn Mair in 1909. Mary Aldis (Mrs. Arthur T.) and Mabel D. Carry (Mrs. Edward F.) are Chicagoans.

Of the poets who have appeared before in poetry: Dr. W. C. Williams, of Rutherford, N. J., is a prominent American member of the Imagist group. Mr. Douglas Goldring, a young London poet, is the author of A Country Boy, and Streets, a Book of London Verses (Max Goschen, 1912.) Miss Louise Driscoll, of Catskill, N. Y., is the author of The Metal Checks, which won Poetry's war-poem prize last November. Miss Clara Shanafelt, of Dayton, Ohio, is a young poet whom the London Egoist includes among the Imagists.

**BOOKS RECEIVED**

Poems, by John Black. Privately printed, Brooklyn.


The Seamless Robe, by Gustav Melby. The Gorham Press.


Sun and Saddle Leather, by Charles Badger Clark, Jr. Gorham Press.

Selections from Catullus, translated by Mary Stewart. Gorham Press.

Earth With Her Bars, by Edith Dart. Longmans, Green and Co., London.

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Poems by Maurice Maeterlinck, done into English Verse by Bernard Miall. Dodd, Mead & Co.
Songs of Love and Rebellion, by Covington Hall. Weihing Co., New Orleans.
Collected Poems, by A. E. Macmillan.
The Shoes of Happiness, and Other Poems, by Edwin Markham. Doubleday, Page & Co.
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LYRICS OF A LAD
By Scharmel Iris

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But in the West is a poet who, born in Italy, has attained wonderful mastery over the speech of his adopted country. When he was but a boy, the lyrics of Scharmel Iris attracted the praise of Swinburne and Francis Thompson. Now they have been collected and published by Seymour, Daughaday & Co., with the title "Lyrics of a Lad." Mr. Iris's Italian origin has not kept him from writing in accordance with the best traditions of English poetry.

—Literary Digest, February 13, 1915.

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