OCTOBER, 1915

Days

Carl Sandburg
Sketch — Nocturne — Alone — Monotone —
Harvest Moon — Joy — The Great Hunt — Days —
Handfuls — They Will Say — A Fence — The
Poor — Killers — Choose — Kin — Places — Our
Prayer of Thanks.

Songs

Sara Teasdale
Leaves — Morning — The Answer.

Pictures

A New England Church

Wilton Agnew Barrett

The Scarlet Thread
Charles H. Musgrove

Mirella Dances
Lee Wilson Dodd

Three Poems

T. S. Eliot

The Transcript
Aunt Helen — Cousin Nancy.

Images I—VI
Richard Aldington

Slavic Songs
Florence Randal Livesay

Ruthenian Folk Song — The Cossack — Where
Luck Lies — The Lover — Before the Wedding.

Editorial Comment

Our Birthday — Poetic Drama — At the Fair —
Robert Bridges' New Book — Reviews.

Our Contemporaries

What Would Walt Think? — Partisan Verdict.

Prize Announcements
Notes

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DAYS

SKETCH

The shadows of the ships
Rock on the crest
In the low blue lustre
Of the tardy and the soft inrolling tide.

A long brown bar at the dip of the sky
Puts an arm of sand in the span of salt.

The lucid and endless wrinkles
Draw in, lapse and withdraw.
Wavelets crumble and white spent bubbles
Wash on the floor of the beach.

Rocking on the crest
In the low blue lustre
Are the shadows of the ships.
NOCTURNE IN A DESERTED BRICKYARD

Stuff of the moon
Runs on the lapping sand
Out to the longest shadows.
Under the curving willows,
And round the creep of the wave line,
Fluxions of yellow and dusk on the waters
Make a wide dreaming pansy of an old pond in the night.

ALONE

Naked I stood on the soft shingle of sand where the sea
swept my legs with salt and wet.
Alone I walked under the arch of night where stars fluttered
between treetops in the wind.
And a long memory it is I have how the sea and the night
were kind.

MONOTONE

The monotone of the rain is beautiful,
And the sudden rise and slow relapse
Of the long multitudinous rain.

The sun on the hills is beautiful,
Or a captured sunset sea-flung,
Bannered with fire and gold.
A face I know is beautiful—
With fire and gold of sky and sea,
And the peace of long warm rain.

UNDER THE HARVEST MOON

Under the harvest moon,
When the soft silver
Drips shimmering
Over the garden nights,
Death, the gray mocker,
Comes and whispers to you
As a beautiful friend
Who remembers.

Under the summer roses
When the flagrant crimson
Lurks in the dusk
Of the wild red leaves,
Love, with little hands,
Comes and touches you
With a thousand memories,
And asks you
Beautiful, unanswerable questions.
JOY

Let a joy keep you.
Reach out your hands
And take it when it runs by,
As the Apache dancer
Clutches his woman.
I have seen them
Live long and laugh loud,
Sent on singing, singing,
Smashed to the heart
Under the ribs
With a terrible love.
Joy always,
Joy everywhere—
Let joy kill you!
Keep away from the little deaths.

THE GREAT HUNT

I can not tell you now;
When the wind's drive and whirl
Blow me along no longer,
And the wind's a whisper at last—
Maybe I'll tell you then—
Keep away from the little deaths.
The Great Hunt

And the rose is a red bygone,
When the face I love is going
And the gate to the end shall clang,
And it's no use to beckon or say, "So long"—
Maybe I'll tell you then—
some other time.

I never knew any more beautiful than you:
I have hunted you under my thoughts,
I have broken down under the wind
And into the roses looking for you.
I shall never find any
greater than you.

DAYS

I will keep you and bring hands to hold you against a
great hunger.
I will run a spear in you for a great gladness to die with.
I will stab you between the ribs of the left side with a great
love worth remembering.

HANDBULS

Blossoms of babies
Blinking their stories
Come soft
On the dusk and the babble;

[5]
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

Little red gamblers,
Handfuls that slept in the dust.

Summers of rain,
Winters of drift,
Tell off the years;
And they go back
Who came soft—
Back to the sod,
To silence and dust;
Gray gamblers,
Handfuls again.

THEY WILL SAY

Of my city the worst that men will ever say is this:
You took little children away from the sun and the dew,
And the glimmers that played in the grass under the great sky
And the reckless rain; you put them between walls
To work, broken and smothered, for bread and wages,
To eat dust in their throats and die empty-hearted
For a little handful of pay on a few Saturday nights.

A FENCE

Now the stone house on the lake front is finished and the workmen are beginning the fence.
The palings are made of iron bars with steel points that can stab the life out of any man who falls on them.
As a fence, it is a masterpiece, and will shut off the rabble and all vagabonds and hungry men and all wandering children looking for a place to play. Passing through the bars and over the steel points will go nothing except Death and the Rain and To-morrow.

THE POOR

Among the mountains I wandered and saw blue haze and red crag and was amazed; On the beach where the long push under the endless tide maneuvers, I stood silent; Under the stars on the prairie watching the Dipper slant over the horizon's grass, I was full of thoughts. Great men, pageants of war and labor, soldiers and workers, mothers lifting their children—these all I touched, and felt the solemn thrill of them. And then one day I got a true look at the Poor, millions of the Poor, patient and toiling; more patient than crags, tides, and stars; innumerable, patient as the darkness of night—and all broken, humble ruins of nations.

KILLERS

I am singing to you Soft as a man with a dead child speaks; Hard as a man in handcuffs, Held where he can not move:
Under the sun
Are sixteen million men,
Chosen for shining teeth,
Sharp eyes, hard legs,
And a running of young warm blood in their wrists.

And a red juice runs on the green grass;
And a red juice soaks the dark soil.
And the sixteen million are killing . . . and killing
and killing.

I never forget them day or night:
They beat on my head for memory of them;
They pound on my heart and I cry back to them,
To their homes and women, dreams and games.

I wake in the night and smell the trenches,
And hear the low stir of sleepers in lines—
Sixteen million sleepers and pickets in the dark:
Some of them long sleepers for always,
Some of them tumbling to sleep to-morrow for always,
Fixed in the drag of the world's heartbreak,
Eating and drinking, toiling . . . on a long job of
killing.

Sixteen million men.
Choose

CHOOSE

The single clenched fist lifted and ready,
Or the open asking hand held out and waiting.
Choose:
For we meet by one or the other.

KIN

Brother, I am fire
Surging under the ocean floor.
I shall never meet you, brother—
Not for years, anyhow;
Maybe thousands of years, brother.
Then I will warm you,
Hold you close, wrap you in circles,
Use you and change you—
Maybe thousands of years, brother.

PLACES

Roses and gold
For you today,
And the flash of flying flags.
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

I will have
Ashes,
Dust in my hair,
Crushes of hoofs.

Your name
Fills the mouth
Of rich man and poor.
Women bring
Armfuls of flowers
And throw on you.

I go hungry
Down in dreams
And loneliness,
Across the rain
To slashed hills
Where men wait and hope for me.

OUR PRAYER OF THANKS

God,
For the gladness here where the sun is shining at evening on
the weeds at the river,
Our prayer of thanks.
Our Prayer of Thanks

God,
For the laughter of children who tumble barefooted and bare-headed in the summer grass,
Our prayer of thanks.

God,
For the sunset and the stars, the women and their white arms that hold us,
Our prayer of thanks.

God,
If you are deaf and blind, if this is all lost to you,
God, if the dead in their coffins amid the silver handles on the edge of town, or the reckless dead of war days thrown unknown in pits, if these dead are forever deaf and blind and lost,
Our prayer of thanks.

God,
The game is all your way, the secrets and the signals and the system; and so for the break of the game and the first play and the last,
Our prayer of thanks.

Carl Sandburg
LEAVES

One by one, like leaves from a tree,
All my faiths have forsaken me;
But the stars above my head
Burn in white and delicate red,
And beneath my feet the earth
Brings the sturdy grass to birth.
I who was content to be
But a silken-singing tree,
But a rustle of delight
In the wistful heart of night,
I have lost the leaves that knew
Touch of rain and weight of dew.
Blinded by a leafy crown
I looked neither up nor down—
But the little leaves that die
Have left me room to see the sky;
Now for the first time I know
Stars above and earth below.

MORNING

I went out on an April morning
All alone, for my heart was high,
I was a child of the shining meadow,
I was a sister of the sky.
Morning

There in the windy flood of morning
   Longing lifted its weight from me,
Lost as a sob in the midst of cheering,
   Swept as a sea-bird out to sea.

THE ANSWER

When I go back to earth
And all my joyous body
Puts off the red and white
That once had been so proud,
If men should pass above
With false and feeble pity,
My dust will find a voice
To answer them aloud:

"Be still, I am content,
Take back your poor compassion—
Joy was a flame in me
Too steady to destroy.
Lithe as a bending reed
Loving the storm that sways her—
I found more joy in sorrow
Than you could find in joy."

Sara Teasdale
PICTURES

Hung in the parlors of the town
Are many pictures of tall ships,
White-billowy to their pennon-tips,
And painted black or shining brown.
And seeing them, the wild thought slips
Back to those wild and white sea-trips
When Round Pond shared the sea's renown;

And all her captains sailed a fleet,
Long-keeled and deep, around the Horn,
Where Del Fuego lies forlorn
In cloudy rack or scudding sleet.
On other seas of Capricorn
Old voyagers knew their house-flags, borne
Where Indian and Pacific meet.

Strong oils and wool from Boston bar,
Bright silks from busy blue Hong Kong—
And many a little mellow gong
On the shore wind, cleared for Samar
And all the isles of Orient song.
Oh, how the wind-clipt sails would throng!
Great ships—who knows now where they are?

The captains leave their white-walled homes
Built out of earnings from far lands,
But not to take their old commands
Into the wind where water foams!
The captains leave; to helmless hands
Are fallen their houses on these sands;
Their old wives wither in the rooms.

Their children pause, with vision spent—
Dear folk! they dabble, and put away
The majesties of yesterday.
No vital pulse, no strong event,
Sweeps in to break their life's delay;
The steam-boat lands, leaves them each day
Contented with their discontent.

Where is the blood that loved the sea!
Though old sea-commerce be no more,
Shall children of the sea on shore
Sink dull with careless industry?
Those painted ships bold purpose bore,
And what great glorious sails they wore—
Pictures that shame posterity!

A NEW ENGLAND CHURCH

The white church on the hill
Looks over the little bay—
A beautiful thing on the hill
When the mist is gray;

[15]
When the hill looks old, and the air turns cold
With the dying day!

The white church on the hill—
A Greek in a Puritan town—
Was built on the brow of the hill
For John Wesley's God's renown,
And a conscience old set a steeple cold
On its Grecian crown.

In a storm of faith on the hill
Hands raised it over the bay.
When the night is clear on the hill,
It stands up strong and gray;
But its door is old, and the tower points cold
To the Milky Way.

The white church on the hill
Looks lonely over the town.
Dim to them under the hill
Is its God's renown,
And its Bible old, and its creed grown cold,
And the letters brown.

Wilton Agnew Barrett
THE SCARLET THREAD

With scarlet threads she hung her house,
   That Israel’s hosts might know
Where dwelt the harlot, Rahab, on
   The walls of Jericho.

The foeman came with sword and spear,
   The ram’s horn blew a blast,
And o’er the fallen parapets
   The tribes exultant passed.

Their red fires laid the city low,
   Their red swords drank its blood;
But when they passed the harlot’s house
   They looked and understood.

For she had shared with Israel’s spies
   Her roof and flaxen bed,
And fire and sword passed by the house
   Where hung the scarlet thread.

Poor Rahab! Up and down the world
   Your outcast daughters go,
With lives to sell like yours upon
   The walls of Jericho.

And though the world shall know them not
   As mother, maid or wife,
Their scarlet threads shall cling for aye
   Unto the House of Life.

Charles Hamilton Musgrove
MIRELLA DANCES

I

Sadie Bimberg—that's her name
Down in Houston Street;
And her brother, Isidore,
With his family—wife, and four—
Lives there now, unknown to fame:
He sells Kosher meat.

Sadie used to work
In Lasalle's department store;
Wasn't thirteen when she started
(White and scrawny, with big eyes
Black and lustrous, and black hair
In two pig-tails tied with red;
Over-tall and under-fed!)
On the dubious ascent
Toward a living wage . . . But shirk—
Always, from the very first—
All she durst!
Dared to dream she wasn't meant
To live in a tenement,
Help her mother pay the rent:
"What a foolishness," thought Sadie,
"I was born to be a lady!"
So a little past sixteen
Sadie disappeared.
"On the streets—that's where she'll end,"
Said each reassuring friend
To the little crooked mother
Brooding on a fate she feared.
"Sadie always was that mean!"
Grumbled Isidore, the brother,
Plucking at his silky beard . . .

II

Out from the wings, half-shy, as half-afraid,
Timidly poised as if for startled flight,
Fawn-like she steps, and round her hesitant feet
Lurks the charmed circle of the calcium light.
A moment thus, as by her fears delayed,
She hearkens—dryad!—to the sensuous beat
Of savage rhythms, then half-emboldened sways
A little from the hips, and then more bold,
No longer she delays—
Maenad—but with fierce glee and sensual glance
Lithe, amorous, ecstatic, uncontrolled—
Leaps to the footlights in tempestuous dance.
And they who sit within the darkened hall
Feast quick insatiate eyes and smite their hands
When breathless, brazen, palpitant she stands
Before the curtain for her twentieth call.
Twice daily this her triumph, and she knows
The only world she knows is at her feet! . . .  

"Mirella" is the name of Broadway's rose:
They called her Sadie down in Houston Street.

Lee Wilson Dodd
THREE POEMS

THE BOSTON EVENING TRANSCRIPT

The readers of the Boston Evening Transcript
Sway in the wind like a field of ripe corn.

When evening quickens faintly in the street,
Wakening the appetites of life in some
And to others bringing the Boston Evening Transcript,
I mount the steps and ring the bell, turning
Wearily, as one would turn to nod good-bye to Rochefoucauld,
If the street were Time and he at the end of the street,
And I say, “Cousin Harriet, here is the Boston Evening Transcript.”

AUNT HELEN

Miss Helen Slingsby was my maiden aunt,
And lived in a small house near a fashionable square
Cared for by servants to the number of four.
Now when she died there was silence in heaven
And silence at her end of the street.
The shutters were drawn and the undertaker wiped his feet—
He was aware that this sort of thing had occurred before.
The dogs were handsomely provided for,
But shortly afterwards the parrot died too.
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

The Dresden clock continued ticking on the mantelpiece,
And the footman sat upon the dining table
Holding the second housemaid on his knees—
Who had always been so careful while her mistress lived.

Cousin Nancy

Miss Nancy Ellicott
Strode across the hills and broke them,
Rode across the hills and broke them—
The barren New England hills—
Riding to hounds
Over the cow-pasture.

Miss Nancy Ellicott smoked
And danced all the modern dances;
And her aunts were not quite sure how they felt about it,
But they knew that it was modern.

Upon the glazen shelves kept watch
Matthew and Waldo, guardians of the faith,
The army of unalterable law.

T. S. Eliot
IMAGES

I
Like a gondola of green scented fruits
Drifting along the dank canals at Venice,
You, O exquisite one,
Have entered my desolate city.

II
The blue smoke leaps
Like swirling clouds of birds vanishing.
So my love leaps forth towards you,
Vanishes and is renewed.

III
A rose-yellow moon in a pale sky
When the sunset is faint vermilion
In the mist among the tree-boughs,
Art thou to me.

IV
As a young beech-tree on the edge of a forest
Stands still in the evening,
Yet shudders through all its leaves in the light air
And seems to fear the stars—
So are you still and so tremble.

[23]
V

The red deer are high on the mountain,
They are beyond the last pine trees.
And my desires have run with them.

VI

The flower which the wind has shaken
Is soon filled again with rain;
So does my mind fill slowly with misgiving
Until you return.

Richard Aldington
SLAVIC SONGS

OLD RUTHENIAN FOLK-SONG

Brother, whence comest thou?
From beyond Dunai?
What heardest thou in Ukraine?

Nothing have I heard,
Nothing have I seen
But horsemen on four sides.
The Russians have covered the mountain.
On that mountain a Turkish horse stands;
On the horse sits a Turk's young son.
In his right hand he holds a sword;
From his left blood flows.

On that hill a crow is calling,
And a mother cries over her soldier son.

"Don't cry, mother, do not grieve;
I am wounded, but not badly.
My head, in four pieces; my heart, in six;
My white hands in three pieces,
My white fingers in pieces,
My white body is as fine as poppy-seed.

"Look for a doctor, mother—
The doctor, the young carpenter.

[25]
POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Let him build for me a house  
Without doors or windows,  
For now am I at the end of my life.”

**SONG OF THE COSSACK**

Heavily hangs the rye  
Bent to the trampled ground;  
While brave men fighting die  
Through blood the horses bound.

Under the white-stemmed tree  
A Cossack bold is slain—  
They lift him tenderly  
Into the ruined grain.

Someone has borne him there,  
Someone has put in place  
A scarlet cloth, with prayer,  
Over the up-turned face.

Softly a girl has come—  
Dove-like she looks; all gray—  
Stares at the soldier dumb  
And, crying, goes away.

Then, swift, another maid—  
Ah, how unlike she is!—
Song of the Cossack

With grief and passion swayed
Gives him her farewell kiss.

The third one does not cry,
Caresses none has she;
"Three girls thy love flung by—
Death rightly came to thee!"

WHERE LUCK LIES

From the Ukrainian of Fedkovich

You, my brother, stayed at home,
Threshing out the beans—
I hied me to Germany
Seeking where my Luck might be,
League on league to roam.

Under Bukowina's sky
Even there I went.
Passed the flinty Tyrol's bar,
Wandered till I reached a star—
Wandering still am I!

Ah, my brother; you did well
Threshing all the while.
Luck that would not come to me,
Luck I went so far to see—
In your beans it fell!

[27]
THE LOVER—IN STRAWBERRY TIME

While I pick the berries sweet
In the woods near where you live,
Oh, Kohanka, let us meet—
Happiness to me you'll give.

Kokhanits, I've much to do,
I've no time to roam about—
Not an hour to play with you
Lest my fire may go out.

Oh, Kohanka, how you slave!
You would surely lose your life
If forevermore you gave
All your time to clean a knife.

I was born, O vagrant one,
Not to sit in rocking-chair;
Happier I when all is done
Than a rich man's daughter fair.

She has but her hair to curl—
I make all things fair to see.
Work has never killed a girl;
Work will never finish me.

THE DAY BEFORE THE WEDDING

The bride sings to her lover:
Broad were the leaves on the lofty tree—
The Day Before the Wedding

Why came you not last night to me?
I wonder! But of course
Maybe you had no horse!
Maybe you lost your way!
Your mother made you stay?

Her lover replies:
I had the horse and the way I knew,
And my mother kept me not from you.

But my youngest sister loves you not.
She hid my saddle in some strange spot.

My oldest sister sought and found—
Swift on my horse's back 'twas bound.

She whispered, "Try and get there soon,
Riding along by the light o' the moon!

"In body brave keep a good head,
Brother o' mine," she laughing said.

"In Sweetheart Land there's much to learn,
The road has many a curve and turn.

"Don't lose your horse, don't go astray!
Ride—ere yet dawns your wedding day."

Florence Randal Livesay

[29]
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

EDITORIAL COMMENT

OUR BIRTHDAY

WITH this number POETRY begins its fourth year. Three years have passed of the five assured to us by the generosity of more than one hundred lovers of the art.

"POETRY has a fighting edge," an editor wrote to us recently by way of compliment. And no doubt we should keep the edge polished, since art, whose quest is beauty, which is truth, needs to carry a sword for her enemies. But today let us sheathe that august weapon—if we can find it—and bury the hatchet which might open a path through all thickets. Let us seek a clearing in these western woods, and light our three candles, and invite the fairies, and gather around the birthday cake for a love-feast.

For art is love as well as war. As artists we are imitators of God, engaged in a sublime—or preposterous—effort to give ourselves away, to present to the world the life that is in us in some form so beautiful that it can not die. How far are we living up to our rôle? How far are we creators of life, diviners of truth, singers at the cross-roads pointing out the way? How far are we seers and prophets, minds illumined who read the centuries—backward and forward—as astronomers read the suns?

Or, if we are not great enough for the supreme vision and the crown of fire, what are we doing to immortalize the fleeting moment, to tell the "tale of the tribe" to the next
Our Birthday

age? Have our voices been bugles of hope, lutes of joy, drums of power, to put courage and faith into men's hearts, fill their lives with ardor?

Or, if we are not sure and simple enough to tell the tale of the tribe, are we expressing beauty in detail, showing that every experience is emotion? Are we lifting men and women out of the inertness of their fate, till the passing hour is color in their eyes and music in their ears? Is each of our songs a thing of perfect clarity and truth, like the trill of a bird?

No doubt we have compromised, we have followed false gods, we have kept our eyes on the ground, and strayed into narrow places, and been content with little. But tonight we are under the open sky, and the fairies have wreathed our bowl. Let us lift it high with a pledge none may refuse: To the art!—to the poets who are coming! May their vision be deeper than ours, their hearts higher, their song grander! And may we gather their audience for them, and light the torch for them, and keep each orchestral instrument in tune!

H. M.

POETIC DRAMA

It has been said that we shall never have fine poetic drama in this country until we have fine realistic prose drama. This may be true, although it suggests a reversal of the usual order; poetic drama has usually preceded what we call realism on the stage, even as tragedy precedes comedy, and comedy precedes farce. From the present meagre fare offered us by poetic playwrights, we need not predicate a

[31]
continuous famine. Prose playwrights have furnished us very little more that is substantial, very little that lasts beyond a season’s run. Beside continental authors, the American playwright, as evidenced in recent books giving a comparative outlook, makes but a poor showing. And England is not much better off. Critics have tried to help the situation by declaring that the American playwright is learning his craft, the “well-made play,” often the antithesis of all that is abundant and vital, growing steadily in amount if not in quality. The critics fail to realize that this is a purely external gain, if gain at all; the inherent weakness of American plays being a poverty of imagination. Ingenuity and “plot” can not atone for this defect. The need is deeper and more serious than one suspects.

Poverty of imagination implies a lack of sympathetic understanding of character, and there can be no fine drama without this understanding. In our plays today we have types rather than personalities, external action rather than that internal conflict of destiny or character out of which really vital drama springs. (The word conflict itself has become narrowed in meaning through its connection with plot, but it is not in that sense that it is used here.) The stage has become a platform for sociological propaganda, for reform, for all sorts of current journalistic ideas. Nowhere do we find that beauty of life intensified in moments of grief or passion which endears the older dramatists to our memory. “If Homer were alive to-day,” Mr. Yeats says, “he would only resist, after a deliberate struggle, the temptation
Poetic Drama

to find his subject not in Helen’s beauty, that every man has desired, nor in the wisdom and endurance of Odysseus that has been the desire of every woman that has come into the world, but in what he would describe, perhaps, as the ‘inevitable contest,’ arising out of economic causes, between the country places and small towns on the one hand, and, upon the other, the great city of Troy, representing one knows not what ‘tendency to centralization.’” What hope, then, is there for poetic drama of a fine imaginative quality? There is every hope in the world, just because of the supreme need.

A new order of poetic playwrights must be created—will be created, if we dare prophesy so much, in answer to the demand that is already manifested in many subtle ways. Would there be so many organizations hopefully devoted to the cause of the drama if there were not this hunger for vital, imaginative plays? The attempt of the manager to satisfy this special kind of hunger with dramatized fairy tales and romantic spectacles is in itself significant. But these, after all, are not what we want; we want plays immediate to our life, lifted into that larger life which mirrors a nation, an individual, or a community. We want something as much of us as Synge’s plays are of the life of the Irish people. In them we find the complete fusion of realism and poetic imagination, and that is what we need in America. Deirdre is not merely a queen, but a woman. One trouble with our poet playwrights is usually that their queens are consistently queens, their kings, kings. They serve as counters, and we neither grieve with them very deeply nor love
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

them very much. They are "types" of another kind than those used by the prose playwright. That is all. In attempting the universal, the poet achieves only the general—always colorless and cold. Only the specific is universal. In the genuine creation of character, the type takes care of itself. The truth, as Rodin says, is in the modeling.

When, however, we find American poets as capable of creating character as Robert Frost and Edgar Lee Masters have recently proved themselves, we have every reason to believe that there is in this country an abundance of power that is none the less in reserve, although still undiscovered. It is significant, also, that both these men, in their verse technique, have broken away from the stereotyped conventional metres, seeking inflections of rhythm in sympathy with internal necessity; and this is another indication of promise for the future of poetic drama.

The new order of playwrights will not give us pale imitations of Elizabethan blank verse. English blank verse may furnish the norm, as it has served Mr. Frost or Mr. Yeats, but the new rhythm of the poet playwrights will be a speech rhythm, direct, nervous, compact and individual. This, too, we may safely predicate, or at least this much. If we could predicate also that the new poetic play would not be literary, not a book play full of book speech, but a play based upon a sure instinct for dramatic values—and what is this instinct but a sense of the contrast, the light and shade of incident revealing character?—then indeed we could completely prophesy the play for which we are looking.
Poetic Drama

When Deirdre, knowing the sure fate that will overtake herself and Naisi should they return to Ireland, yet gives the word to go because of taunting words spoken by Naisi, we have the essence of that mingled motive which makes drama. Much that we call dramatic in plays today is merely an external trick, like pressing the wrong button, getting into the wrong room, or enclosing letters in the wrong envelopes. Character has nothing to do with it. The new playwright will not go on crutches.

It may be that this prophecy is too hopeful. But prophecies very often create their own fulfilment. And it is in this faith that we call attention to the announcement in this number of a special request for a poetic play which the Players Producing Company of Chicago makes through Poetry.

A. C. H.

AT THE FAIR

The editor has made the grand tour. The Yellowstone, San Francisco, San Diego, the Grand Cañon, with the plains and deserts and mountains, the rivers and lakes and seas, that lie along or between—these were her spectacular vacation from desks and doors, from poets and prosers. And now she is tempted to grow garrulous, after the manner of adventurers since the cave-dweller carved on the rock the story of his travels.

Since nature preserves her monuments, while spendthrift man destroys his in this year of grace, since the two Pacific fairs must soon furl their banners and put out their lights,
let us begin by saluting their ardent and perishable beauty. Even a magazine so specialized as ours may not omit some mention of this latest international festival, for these bubble cities are poems of our age, songs of praise that die as they are uttered and live only in memory. "I have loved flowers that fade," sang the Laureate—why may we not then love these fabrics of an hour, these "cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces" built not for permanence, to perpetuate the glory of kings, but for a dream's length, to express a people's aspiration. Are they mere costly extravaganzas, wasteful in life and ignoble in death—these joy cities which cost more than dreadnoughts, and flaunt their flags for a briefer season? Or is peace indeed more glorious than war, and a great festival of nations better worth its price than a battle?

What is most beautiful in San Francisco's bubble city? For me the first memorable picture was the water front, the Marina, as I emerged the first morning from the grandiloquent courts. The sun shone clear on blue bay and purple mountains, on orange domes and Spanish portals and creamy eucalyptus-shaded walls. Beyond the yacht harbor, with its crowd of little boats, rose the California Building, which, taking its motive from the old missions, is the finest design on the grounds. The tall Column of Progress lifted its salute to the sun, and the gay little caravel climbing its spiral seemed to sail off happily from its shaft into the sky.

I liked the creamy walls with their skilfully stony surface; the long, slender, drooping eucalyptus blowing its wash of green against them was as beautiful as falling waters.
liked the pale orange domes and banners, the battle-ships in the bay, the brightly dressed crowds gathering on the green for some festival. The picture was perfect and complete; I reflected upon its value for thousands of our fellow-country-men who get from these festival-cities their first impression of what the united arts may do for men.

Afterwards I assembled other pictures in my gallery. Never from the entrance plaza, where the Fountain of Energy seemed too energetic, the façades too crowded, and the Tower of Jewels—done by Carrère and Hastings, usually so discreet—merely a showy anachronism. But the fountains in the Court of the Universe, with that ecstatic figure of the Rising Sun lifting us up like the song of a lark. The long cloistral colonnades of the Court of Abundance meeting in a high square tower with the sky through its arches—and all flaring out at night with great red torches from serpent-guarded basins. The proud rotunda of the art building mirrored in its little pool; seeming to suggest the pomp of kings to our farmers and traders.

And then a thousand lesser surprises—beauty in ambush, to take one unaware. The little alcoves of the Fountain of Youth and the Fountain of El Dorado, so near to the crowd and yet always so still and secret. The tangles of green and color in odd corners, the carpets of purple violets and yellow pansies, the rows of monumental palms praising the old-travertine walls.

And everywhere sculpture! No doubt too much sculpture at times, but why should not art be over-prodigal when
she is playing with plaster for an hour of gladness? In these festal cities the arts try their experiments; the Centennial, the Columbian, each began an epoch, and no doubt the Panama-Pacific will prove also a far-reaching influence. Our sculptors have learned much since ninety-three, especially in their decorative reliefs; more than our mural painters, for Mr. Brangwyn’s brilliant panels, badly placed as they are, far out-distance even the lovely pediments of Mr. Hassam and Mr. Holloway, the best of the Americans. But the sculptors were given a free field, while the painters had a narrow one.

The night transfigured all this, of course, and added sometimes a new beauty. But there was too little night—night was brighter than day in the great courts, and even the fireworks were lit up with search-lights. Night should not be banished by a glare in such a pageant, but emphasized by soft lights discreetly used, so that its mystery enfolds and enhances great buildings.

The little old Spanish San Diego exposition is a thing of perfect unity and charm. For me it will always possess two magic memories. I had been told to stay out-of-doors, but in the beautiful California Building I found, in the superb reproductions of Maya sculpture and architecture from Yucatan, the revelation of a new grand style, a style utterly unlike Egyptian, Greek, Chinese, Gothic, or any other system of design hitherto known to history, but like them original, authoritative, and inspired. I was feeling like stout Cortez, with a new world swimming in my ken—what a marvelous
At the Fair

age is ours, to bring all strange things near!—when, as I emerged on the little plaza, a lighter emotion chased away the sublimities. For there the most enchanting group of gaily colored Spanish singer dancers were exciting tropical emotions in Puritan tourists. I never saw anything so vividly and mischievously gay as the flashing laugh which one or two golden beauties turned up into stodgy Yankee faces; nor anything so funny as the sheepish half-hearted smile they got in return. It seemed too good to be true—the little Spanish plaza with all this happy youth in it—Romeo-like boys, flashing gipsy-humored girls, twanging their guitars and singing and dancing on a level with us, to make the romantic old time live again.

As I left the two fairs behind me, their beauty faded before older memories. Why was there a magic in the Columbian fair which no other has possessed? Was it merely that I saw it in youth, and in my own city, where my friends had planned and built it? Or was it the softness of summer days and nights, which San Francisco misses, perched as she is on her hills between the fog-blown sea and the great bay? Neither of these reasons was quite enough to explain the persistent glory of that White City in Jackson Park which has gone the way of all flesh. No other festal city has been so spacious by land and water, with buildings so nobly grouped beside large lagoons. No other has achieved the Venetian magic of water life among palaces—little launches and gondolas moving from building to building between mirrored colonnades, or drifting around a
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

wooded island as wild as a Sierran valley, and then passing out into the dark lake until the city was a string of jewels in the distance. And at night, when the palaces were hung with lights that trailed gold fringes in the water, when the boats drifted in and out of shadows, and iridescent domes and towers faded off into darkness—then was a passion of great beauty evoked out of dust and fire; for a moment all unreal things were real, and dreams had the hardihood of marble.

No gala city was ever so beautiful as this Columbian City at night. We Americans are wasteful of our treasure, spendthrift even of memories. But this was a consummate perfect thing—let us not cast it away, but keep it in our hearts.

H. M.

REVIEWS

ROBERT BRIDGES' NEW BOOK

A certain element in the American literary weeklies and monthlies is still descanting on its opinion that "vers libre won't do." We are expected to read long papers full of abstract and indefinite words saying that "the poet's true freedom," etc., is not to be gained through this gate. The writers must be innocent of any knowledge of the poetic tradition, otherwise they would know that practically all forms of verse date from antiquity: China and India and Greece had free verse before some forgotten Italian got stuck in the beginning of a canzone and called the fragment a sonnet.
Robert Bridges' New Book

Egypt had vowel-chants, and the middle ages their polyrhythmic sequaires and litanies.

And after all these things came the English exposition of 1851 and the Philadelphia Centennial, introducing cast-iron house decorations and machine-made wood fret-work, and there followed a generation of men with minds like the cast-iron ornament, and they set their fretful desire upon machine-like regularity. Miss Mitford had objected to Dante because he was "Gothic"; the indigenous Anglo-Saxon rhythms were neglected because society did not read Anglo-Saxon. And the most imitative generation of Americans ever born on our continent set themselves to exaggerating the follies of England.

For these provincials it is what I can call by no more fitting name than "a smack in the eye" that Robert Bridges, Laureate, whose name is almost a synonym for classic and scholarly poetry, should have labeled one poem in his latest book "experiment in free verse."

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

Robert Bridges' work has been always a subject for debate. There is the party which compares it to the innumerable pseudo-renaissance-classic façades of the buildings of the University of London, etc., and finds it unreadable; and the opposing party which says that if one will only read through the collected edition he will find a reasonable number of poems which will stand comparison with the best in the language.

[41]
Beyond dispute, his command of the sheer mechanics of quantitative verse can be looked on with nothing but envy. I have a grave respect for any man who is restless and persistent in the study and honor of his craft.

There are two poems in his last book which it is better to quote than to comment on. The first shows well what he has won from untiring practice of quantitative metres, and from, I should think, the reading of Middle-English. It is as follows:

THE FLOWERING TREE

What fairy fann'd my dreams while I slept in the sun?—
As if a flowering tree were standing over me:
Its young stem strong and lithe went branching overhead,
And willowy sprays around fell tasseling to the ground,
All with wild blossom gay as is the cherry in May
When her fresh flaunt of leaf gives crowns of golden green.

The sunlight was emmesh'd in the shifting splendor
And I saw through on high to soft lakes of blue sky:
Ne'er was mortal slumber so lapt in luxury.
Rather—Endymion—would I sleep in the sun 'Neath the trees, divinely, with day's azure above,
When my love of beauty is met by beauty's love.
So I slept enchanted  
under my loving tree,  
Till from his late resting  
the sweet songster of night  
Rousing awaken'd me:  
Then I this—the birdis note—  
Was the voice of thy throat  
which thou gav'est me to kiss.

The other poem is a brief epigram, bitter as Palladas,  
full of emotional violence held in by rigid, delicate barriers:  

é̲t̲ò̲d̲a̲n̲ ̲ά̲χ̲ή̲ ά̲ρ̲ό̲ψ̲ι̲ς

Who goes there? God knows. I'm nobody. How shall I answer?  
Can't jump over a gate nor run across the meadow.  
I'm but an old whitebeard of inane identity. Pass on.  
What's left of me today will very soon be nothing.

This is worthy of a place in the Greek anthology, not  
only because it is hard and concise as their epigrams, but  
because it is novel. It is the only poem I can think of which  
shows quite this sense of the attrition of personality through  
living. It is not age which speaks, but a mood that is per­  
manent and recurrent in life, and therefore so fine a matter  
of art.

The thin volume contains also some whimsical lines on  
Flycatchers, inspired possibly by the sight of some of his col­  
leagues on the Academic Committee, but the American  
reader may imagine that it was written about this or that  
well-known editor, and get from it an equal pleasure. Dr.  
Bridges recalls the time when, "a chubby young chap," he  
sat with others on a school form
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

While an authoritative old wiseacre
Stood over us and from a desk fed us with flies.

Dead flies—such as litter the library south-window,
That buzzed at the panes until they fell stiff-baked on the sill.

A dry biped he was, nurtured likewise
On skins and skeletons, stale from top to toe,
With all manner of rubbish and all manner of lies.

The island is to be congratulated on having at last obtained a laureate who declines to treat himself as an institution.

E. P.


Let us completely forget for a moment the fact that Mr. Fletcher is one of the Imagists—there has been lately so much idle controversy on the subject—and consider him simply as a poet.

His most marked personal characteristic is an extreme sensitiveness to impressions. He gives us the sense of nature—not a description; the thrill of trees in the wind, of boats under sail, or steamers plunging through heavy seas, "like black, plunging dolphins with red bellies"; of shifting wrinkled sand-dunes; or "the mad ballet of the summer sky." His is not the art of the symbolist, although it is largely impressionistic. In intention it is as far removed from the school of descriptive landscape poets as a Japanese painting is from a Hudson River primitive. His method is closely allied to music, not only in verse form, but in sub-
stance. He uses words to convey impressions more often expressed in music or in painting.

Perhaps that is why he, along with other Imagists, has been accused of a lack of passion. It all depends upon what one means by the word. The emotion of color or the emotion of sound is sufficient for the musician or the painter. Mr. Fletcher sees nature very much as the painter or the musician, and that is the way I think he means us to feel nature in his poems, with, however, the addition of one element which belongs pre-eminently to poetry—the gift of creative metaphor. In many of his poems Mr. Fletcher is entirely successful. If one must look for weakness in his method, I think it is in a certain tendency to pile too many sensations one upon another. There is a certain cumulative effect, but the clear image is blurred. One retains not so much a definite impression of the whole, as a succession of impressions, like a threading of beads that never complete the circle of a necklace. Occasionally single lines or groups of lines are perfect in themselves. I remember particularly certain passages from his Blue Symphony, published in POETRY:

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

or this:

And a heron that cries out from the water . . .

and this:

Now in my palace
I see foot-passengers
Crossing the river:
Pilgrims of autumn
In the afternoons.
These are instances of Mr. Fletcher's power to create beautiful impressions with a few words. And sometimes I think he uses too many! That is, certain words or phrases impede the impression rather than add to it. This is a minor defect, but its correction would contribute greater strength to his style. Mr. Fletcher's sea-symphony, *Sand and Spray*, is a spirited experiment. Although there are delightful movements in it, I do not feel that its effect as a whole is so fine as that of his *Blue Symphony*, perhaps because motion and sound and color strive constantly for mastery one above the other and are not finally resolved as they might be in music. The symphonic poem demands a poet's full strength. Sidney Lanier's *Marshes of Glynn* was a deliberate attempt to achieve the effect of music in poetry. It was rhythmic, but it remained descriptive and objective. Less obviously, Whitman's *When Lilacs Last in the Door-yard Bloomed*, and *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking* are symphonic poems that achieve a perfect synthesis.

Many of the finest *Irradiations* were published in *POETRY* in 1913. This, however, is one that will be new to our readers:

The balancing of gaudy broad pavilions
Of summer against the insolent breeze:
The bellying of the sides of striped tents,
Swelling taut, shuddering in quick collapse,
Silent under the silence of the sky.

Earth is streaked and spotted
With great splashes and dapples of sunlight:
The sun throws an immense circle of hot light upon the world,
Rolling slowly in ponderous rhythm
Darkly, musically forward.

[46]
All is silent under the steep cone of afternoon:
The sky is imperturbably profound.
The ultimate divine union seems about to be accomplished,
All is troubled at the attainment
Of the inexhaustible infinite.

The rolling and the tossing of the sides of immense pavilions
Under the whirling wind that screams up the cloudless sky.

A. C. H.


The name of John Curtis Underwood has for a long
time been associated with the literature of insurgency and
this volume is no exception. It is first of all a passionately
idealistic commentary on life and only secondarily a book of
verse. The spirit of the whole is the cosmic spirit which
John Alford amusingly deplores in American poetry, with
its real strength of evolutionary optimism, and its consequent
loss of clarity and definite conceptions.

Mr. Underwood is too vague, too lacking in lyric poig­
nancy, too careless of his choice of words, to be distinguished
as a poet. He writes in complicated rhyme and rhythm
schemes, and is very fond of the rapid beats, those which in
Sidney Lanier's method of notation would be three-four
time and four-four time, with only one strong beat to the
measure. But in English these forms, like their counterparts
the waltz and the march, have a tendency to carry the mind
forward so swiftly with the beat of the rhythm that the sense
is lost. Mr. Underwood has not escaped the danger. And
in this volume, which is two hundred and seventy pages, he
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

has paraphrased his best ideas so many times that the effect is weakened.

Yet, considered not as pure art, but as the expression of a spiritual attitude, the book is valuable. It is essentially modern in spirit, expressive of the best contemporary ideals, and is evidently written by a man who realizes deeply the spiritual complexities of life to-day. The poems are too long to quote but The Public, Library and Revenants are among the best.

E. T.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

WHAT WOULD WALT THINK?

"And, by the way, what, oh, what do you suppose Walt would have thought of Miss Monroe’s magazine if he had lived to see it?" So asks Mr. John L. Hervey in a recent letter to The Dial. The question is delightfully suggestive. We would love to know just what Walt Whitman would have thought of POETRY. It is not impossible that Mr. Hervey thinks that Walt would have thought of POETRY just what he, Mr. Hervey, thinks of the magazine. No doubt it is under this conviction that Mr. Hervey delivers this last, smashing blow! Still, there isn’t any way of being sure that Walt would have come out on Mr. Hervey’s side. Walt was very tolerant; tolerant of poets—you remember his charming, “I like your tinkle, Tom,” to Thomas Bailey Aldrich; also tolerant of editors—of Richard Watson Gilder, to whom Whitman’s November Boughs “did not appeal” for publication in The Century.
What Would Walt Think?

No, it's a toss-up just what Walt would have thought about the magazine. Undoubtedly, he would have thought about it just as each of you, whoever you are, now reading this magazine, think about it. For the great dead, curiously enough, always mold their opinions to suit their admirers.

But why is it a sacrilege to speak disrespectfully of poets after they are dead and have secured a fair modicum of public approval? Walt admired Bryant's qualities. Must every admirer of Whitman also admire Bryant? Miss Monroe thinks that the majority of Bryant's poems would mean little to us if published for the first time today. And now Mr. Hervey wants Miss Monroe to say what Carl Sandburg's poems will mean to the reader of fifty years hence, if she thinks any of them will live that long. Mr. Hervey himself does not risk a direct opinion. Fortunately there were people intelligent and courageous enough to risk an opinion on Whitman fifty years ago. And these people were not the editors of magazines, who "knew what the people wanted," and took no risks. If Whitman had waited for them, Mr. Hervey might have missed his Walt, and he would then have had to invoke some other shadowy figure, possibly Bryant, to pass mythical judgment upon the new poetry. At any rate, it is amusing to wonder what Bryant would have thought of Carl Sandburg's poetry, and even more interesting to conjecture the possible opinion of Whitman. Would Walt applaud the risk taken by Miss Monroe in publishing it, or would he, too, like Mr. Hervey, be shocked by her temerity?

A. C. H.

[49]
A PARTISAN VERDICT

Painters very rarely enter the field of criticism—they are too busy painting. Their selections or rejections are made privately and the result is seen in their canvases. When painters or sculptors have written or talked about their work, in letters or in recorded conversations, they have given us a body of creative criticism far finer than anything the critic, who is not a painter or a sculptor, may undertake to add.

I sometimes wish that poets confined their writing to poetry, that the only criticism indulged in by them was the intimate sort expressed in letters or conversations. Today it is so easy for poets to rush into criticism, and so much of their criticism consists in smashing other people's windows, instead of in making their own windows clear! As I remember the prefaces of the older poets, these were not used as battle grounds, or as totem poles on which were displayed proudly the scalps of neighboring chieftains. Yet it is this purpose which the preface very often serves for the poet today, who can, it seems, establish his own position only by explaining the futility of the work of some brother poet. And this preface then serves as a clew for the reviewer, who prolongs the discussion of irrelevant values, and establishes none—the intrinsic beauty of the poet reviewed often receiving little attention. It is not that one questions the worth of destructive criticism in itself, but that one distrusts and is annoyed by ex cathedra statements not sustained by a critique raisonné of the craft of poetry as such. To cite examples from recent prefaces would only lead us into the pitfalls
herein deplored. But a more flagrant example of a tendency to substitute irritability for criticism can not be allowed to pass without a word of protest.

I have not read the whole of Mr. Joyce Kilmer's attack upon the so-called "Tagore craze," as it appeared in America, but as I read the excerpts from his article quoted in The Literary Digest, I cannot help feeling that it is not really as a poet that Mr. Kilmer has approached the poetry of Rabindranath Tagore.

Mr. Tagore is a Hindu, and not a Catholic—I should hesitate to call him less a Christian than many that I know; but if Mr. Tagore had been born a Catholic (whether in Brooklyn or Calcutta) would Mr. Kilmer have felt that it was unfitting to link his name with that of St. Francis or Thomas à Kempis?

Of Gerard Hopkins, a Catholic poet, Mr. Kilmer has written, "His theme being God and his writing being an act of adoration, it is profitless to criticise him, as Mr. Bridges has done, for 'sacrificing simplicity' and 'violating the canons of taste'." Yet Mr. Kilmer objects to the "exotic" symbols—temple-bells, water-jars and the desert—the ordinary symbols of Mr. Tagore's daily life, which the poet uses to express "that desire for the mystical union with God" which is the theme of both Gerard Hopkins and Rabindranath Tagore. One might, of course, object to the Bible on the score of exoticism.

Certainly Mr. Kilmer has failed signally to appreciate the essential spirit of this man, who would, he says, "sub-
stitute fatalism for hope, Nirvana for Heaven . . . Krishna for Jesus Christ.” To the mind of the true mystic the goal is one. I doubt very much if the mind of the mystic recognizes any distinction between Krishna and Jesus Christ—except as these distinctions exist in the dogma of racial or religious sectarians.

Utterly without pretense of any sort, Rabindranath Tagore makes no attempt towards either “fashionable” or religious proselytizing. It is simply as a poet that he wishes to be accepted—by those who care to accept him.

A. C. H.

PRIZE ANNOUNCEMENTS

POETRY announces a prize of one hundred dollars, donated by the Players Producing Company, for a one-act poetic play. The conditions are that the play be in poetic form—in metrical verse or vers libre; that it be American in subject matter, or substance; and that it be actable.

Decision upon the plays will be made by the editors of POETRY and the donor. It is understood that the acting rights of the accepted play will belong to the Players Producing Company, with the customary royalties to the author in the event of production. The accepted play will be published in POETRY.

Plays must be received not later than February 1, 1916. POETRY reserves the right to withhold the prize in case no plays of a sufficiently high standard are received.

[52]
Prize Announcements

The award of the Helen Haire Levinson Prize of two hundred dollars will be announced in our November number. This prize was offered by Mr. S. O. Levinson, of Chicago, for the best poem, or group of poems, by an American poet, printed by Poetry during its third year—October, 1914, to September, 1915.

NOTES

Of the poets represented in this number, all but three are familiar to our readers. Mr. Carl Sandburg, of Chicago, had the honor, a year ago, of initiating the Helen Haire Levinson prize, which was awarded to his Chicago Poems, printed in Poetry for March, 1914. He is one of the editors of The Day-book, and has not yet published a volume.

Sara Teasdale, of St. Louis, (now Mrs. Ernst Filsinger), will soon publish through the Macmillan Company a new book of poems, Rivers to the Sea. Mr. Lee Wilson Dodd, of New Haven, and Mr. Richard Aldington, of London, will also publish new books of verse this fall, the former through the Yale University Press, and the latter through the Houghton-Mifflin Company. Mr. T. S. Eliot, born in St. Louis and recently a student of philosophy at Oxford, was introduced by Poetry last June, and has not yet published a volume.

Of the contributors new to our readers, Mr. Wilton Agnew Barrett is a young poet of New York City, and Mr. Charles Hamilton Musgrove, of Louisville, Ky. Florence Randal Livesay (Mrs. J. F. B. Livesay), of Winnipeg, has written chiefly for Canadian magazines and newspapers.

Mrs. Livesay’s interest in Ukranian, or Ruthenian, folk-song, began through contact with immigrants of that race. The Ukraine, lying between the Carpathians and the Caucasus, is partly in Russia and partly in Galicia and Hungary. For centuries it was an independent kingdom, and the people are almost
pure Slavs, with a language as different from Russian as French is from Portuguese. Their religion, which is Greek Catholic, recognizes the authority of the Pope, and is therefore forbidden in Russia. Their folk-love is exceedingly rich.

Kohanka means sweetheart, Kokhanits, my lover.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Original Verse:
Unpublished Lyrics and Other Verse, by Margaret Payne Gauss. Privately printed.
The Song of the Scarlet Host and Other Poems, by Joseph Bernard Rethy. Smith & Sale, Portland, Maine.
His Lady of the Sonnets, by Robert W. Norwood. Sherman, French & Co.
A Little Book of Local Verse, by Howard Mumford Jones. Privately printed.
Canzona Amorosa, by Harold Hersey. Privately printed.

Drama:

Biography and Essays:
The MOSHER BOOKS

Lyra Americana

It has been my wish for some time to show the high regard I hold for American authors, not necessarily the latest or loudest singers: rather those earlier voices whose verse has seemed so beautiful in refinement but, as the years have gone on, become less evident in new editions.

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Padraic Colum, the distinguished Irish poet and lecturer, says: "POETRY is the best magazine, by far, in the English language. We have nothing in England or Ireland to compare with it."

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