



# Poetry

## A Magazine of Verse

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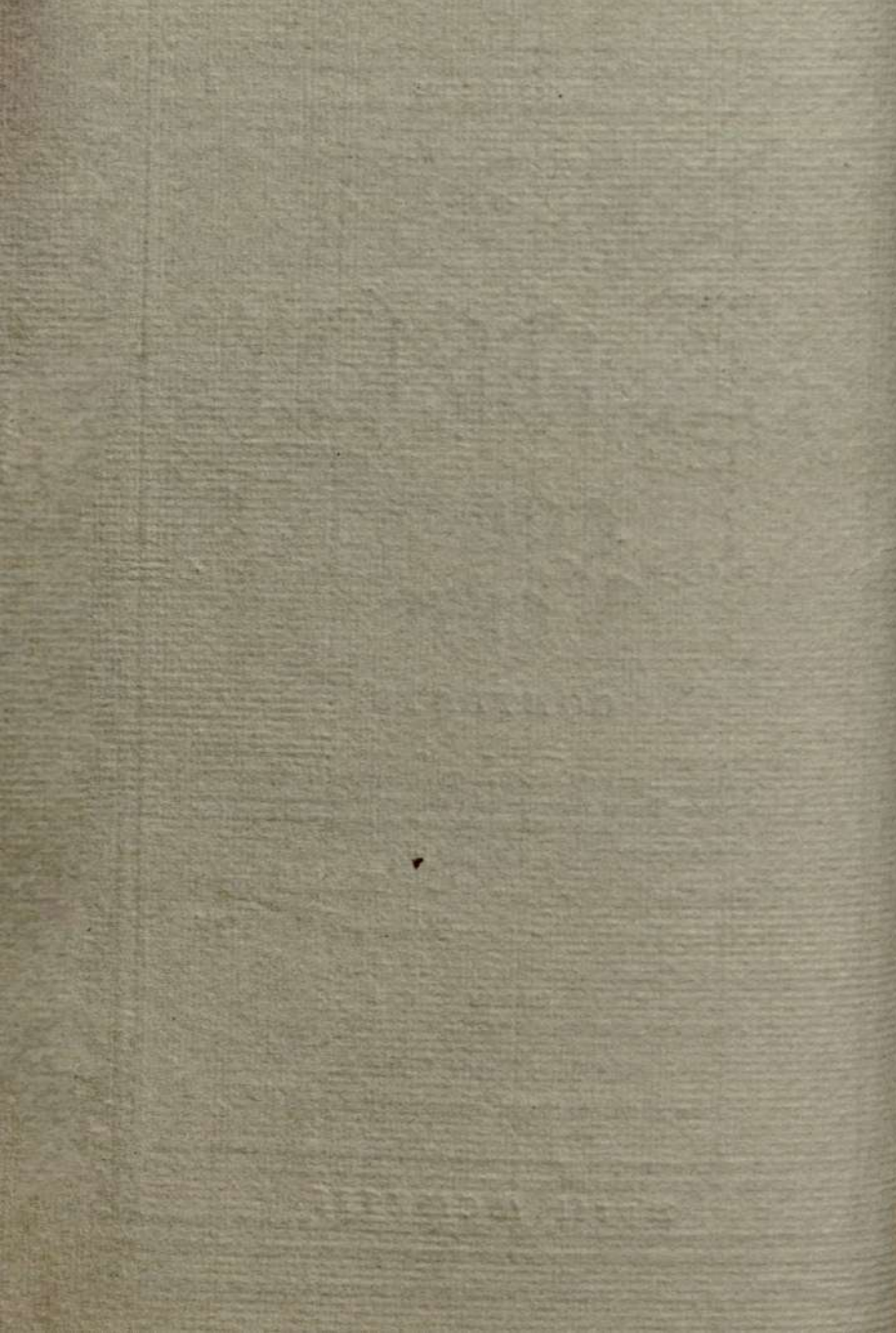
Editorial Comment

The New Beauty—Reviews  
Notes and Announcements

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CONTEMPORANIA

TENZONE

Will people accept them?

(i. e. these songs).

As a timorous wench from a centaur

(or a centurian),

Already they flee, howling in terror.

Will they be touched with the truth?

Their virgin stupidity is untemptable.

I beg you, my friendly critics,

Do not set about to procure me an audience.

mate with my free kind upon the crags;

the hidden recesses

Have heard the echo of my heels,

in the cool light,

in the darkness.

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THE CONDOLENCE

*A mis soledades voy,  
De mis soledades vengo,  
Porque por andar conmigo  
Mi bastan mis pensamientos.*  
Lope de Vega.

O my fellow sufferers, songs of my youth,  
A lot of asses praise you because you are "virile,"  
We, you, I! We are "Red Bloods!"  
Imagine it, my fellow sufferers—  
Our maleness lifts us out of the ruck.  
Who'd have foreseen it?

O my fellow sufferers, we went out under the trees,  
We were in especial bored with male stupidity.  
We went forth gathering delicate thoughts,  
Our "*fantastikon*" delighted to serve us.  
We were not exasperated with women,  
for the female is ductile.

And now you hear what is said to us:  
We are compared to that sort of person  
Who wanders about announcing his sex  
As if he had just discovered it.  
Let us leave this matter, my songs,  
and return to that which concerns us.





Ivory sandaled,  
There is none like thee among the dancers,  
None with swift feet.

I have not found thee in the tents,  
In the broken darkness.  
I have not found thee at the well-head  
Among the women with pitchers.

Thine arms are as a young sapling under the bark;  
Thy face as a river with lights.

White as an almond are thy shoulders;  
As new almonds stripped from the husk.

They guard thee not with eunuchs;  
Not with bars of copper.  
Gilt turquoise and silver are in the place of thy rest.  
A brown robe, with threads of gold woven in patterns,  
  hast thou gathered about thee,  
O Nathat-Ikanaie, "Tree-at-the-river."

As a rillet among the sedge are thy hands upon me;  
Thy fingers a frosted stream.

Thy maidens are white like pebbles;  
Their music about thee!





Watch the reporters spit,  
Watch the anger of the professors,  
Watch how the pretty ladies revile them:

“ Is this,” they say, “ the nonsense  
that we expect of poets? ”

“ Where is the Picturesque? ”

“ Where is the vertigo of emotion? ”

“ No! his first work was the best.”

“ Poor Dear! he has lost his illusions.”

Go, little naked and impudent songs,  
Go with a light foot!  
(Or with two light feet, if it please you!)  
Go and dance shamelessly!  
Go with an impertinent frolic!

Greet the grave and the stodgy,  
Salute them with your thumbs at your noses.

Here are your bells and confetti.

Go! rejuvenate things!

Rejuvenate even “ The Spectator. ”

Go! and make cat calls!

Dance and make people blush,

Dance the dance of the phallus

and tell anecdotes of Cybele!

Speak of the indecorous conduct of the Gods!

(Tell it to Mr. Strachey.)



Say that I am a traitor and a cynic,  
Say that the art is well served by the ignorant pretenders:  
    You will not lack your reward.

Praise them that are praised by the many:  
    You will not lack your reward.

Call this a time of peace,  
Speak well of amateur harlots,  
Speak well of disguised procurers,  
Speak well of shop-walkers,  
Speak well of employers of women,  
Speak well of exploiters,  
Speak well of the men in control,  
Speak well of popular preachers:  
    You will not lack your reward.

Speak of the profundity of reviewers,  
Speak of the accuracy of reporters,  
Speak of the unbiased press,  
Speak of the square deal as if it always occurred.  
Do all this and refrain from ironic touches:  
    You will not lack your reward.

Speak of the open-mindedness of scholars:  
    You will not lack your reward.



*Contemporania*

Go like a blight upon the dulness of the world;  
Go with your edge against this,  
Strengthen the subtle cords,  
Bring confidence upon the algae and the tentacles of the  
soul.

Go in a friendly manner,  
Go with an open speech.  
Be eager to find new evils and new good,  
Be against all forms of oppression.  
Go to those who are thickened with middle age,  
To those who have lost their interest.

Go to the adolescent who are smothered in family—  
Oh how hideous it is  
To see three generations of one house gathered together!  
It is like an old tree with shoots,  
And with some branches rotted and falling.

Go out and defy opinion,  
Go against this vegetable bondage of the blood.  
Speak for the free kinship of the mind and spirit.  
Go, against all forms of oppression.

A PACT

I make truce with you, Walt Whitman—  
I have detested you long enough.

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I come to you as a grown child  
Who has had a pig-headed father;  
I am old enough now to make friends.  
It was you that broke the new wood,  
Now is a time for carving.  
We have one sap and one root—  
Let there be commerce between us.

IN A STATION OF THE METRO

The apparition of these faces in the crowd :  
Petals on a wet, black bough .

*Ezra Pound*

MOTHER EARTH

Oh a grand old time has the earth  
In the long long life she lives!  
From her huge mist-shrouded birth,  
When reeling from under  
She tore space asunder,  
And feeling her way  
Through the dim first day  
Rose wheeling to run  
In the path of the sun —  
From then till forever,  
Tiring not, pausing never,  
She labors and laughs and gives.

Plains and mountains  
She slowly makes,  
With mighty hand  
Sifting the sand,  
Lifting the land  
Out of the soft wet clutch of the shouting sea.  
At lofty fountains  
Her thirst she slakes,  
And over the hills  
Through the dancing rills  
Wide rivers she fills,  
That shine and sing and leap in their joy to be free.  
Cool greenness she needs

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And rich odor of bloom;  
And longing, believing,  
Slowly conceiving,  
Her germ-woof weaving,  
She spawns little seeds  
By the wombful, the worldful,  
And laughs as the pattern grows fair at her loom.

Proudly she trails  
Her flower-broidered dresses  
In the sight of the sun.  
Loudly she hails  
Through her far-streaming tresses  
His coursers that run.  
For her heart, ever living, grows eager for life,  
Its delight and desire;  
She feels the high praise of its passion and strife,  
Of its rapture and fire.  
There are wings and songs in her trees,  
There are gleaming fish in her seas;  
The brute beasts brave her  
And gnaw her and crave her;  
And out of the heart of these  
She wrests a dream, a hope,  
An arrogant plan  
Of life that shall meet her,  
Shall know and complete her,



*Mother Earth*

That through ages shall climb and grope,  
And at last be man.

Out of the bitter void she wins him —  
Out of the night;  
With terror and wild hope begins him,  
And fierce delight.

She beats him into caves,  
She starves and spurns him.  
Her hills and plains are graves —  
Into dust she turns him.

She teaches him war and wrath  
And waste and lust and greed,  
Then over his blood-red path  
She scatters her fruitful seed.

With bloom of a thousand flowers,  
With songs of the summer hours,  
With the love of the wind for the tree,  
With the dance of the sun on the sea,  
She lulls and quells him —

Oh soft her caress!  
And tenderly tells him  
Of happiness.

Through her ages of years,  
Through his toil and his tears,  
At her wayward pleasure  
She yields of her treasure  
A gleam — yea, a hope,

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Even a day of days,  
When the wide heavens ope  
And he loves and prays;  
Then she laughs in wonder  
To see him rise  
Her leash from under  
And brave the skies!

Oh a grand old time has the earth  
In the long long life she lives!  
A grand old time at her work sublime  
As she labors and laughs and gives!

*Harriet Monroe*

THE GREY ROCK

*Poets with whom I learned my trade,  
Companions of the Cheshire Cheese,  
Here's an old story I've remade,  
Imagining 'twould better please  
Your ears than stories now in fashion.  
Though you may think I waste my breath  
Pretending that there can be passion  
That has more life in it than death,  
Though at the bottling of your wine  
The bow-legged Goban had no say;  
The moral's yours because it's mine.*

When cups went round at close of day —  
Is not that how good stories run?—  
Somewhere within some hollow hill,  
If books speak truth, in Slievenamon —  
But let that be — the gods were still  
And sleepy having had their meal:  
And smoky torches made a glare  
On painted pillars, on a deal  
Of old stringed instruments, hung there  
By the ancient holy hands that brought them  
From murmuring Murias; on cups —  
Old Goban hammered them and wrought them,  
And put his pattern round their tops  
To hold the wine they buy of him.

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But from the juice that made them wise  
All those had lifted up the dim  
Imaginations of their eyes;  
For one that was like woman made  
Before their sleepy eyelids ran,  
And trembling with her passion said:  
"Come out and dig for a dead man,  
Who's burrowing somewhere in the ground;  
And mock him to his face, and then  
Hollo him on with horse and hound,  
For he is the worst of all dead men."

*We should be dazed and terror struck  
If we but saw in dreams that room  
And those fierce eyes, and curse our luck  
That emptied all our days to come.  
I knew a woman none could please  
Because she dreamed when but a child  
Of men and women made like these;  
And after, when her blood ran wild,  
Had ravelled her own story out,  
And said, "In two or in three years  
I need must marry some poor lout,"  
And having said it burst in tears.  
Since, tavern comrades, you have died  
Maybe your images have stood,  
Mere bone and muscle thrown aside,  
Before that roomful or as good.*

*You had to face your ends when young —  
'Twas wine or women or some curse —  
But never made a poorer song  
That you might have a heavier purse;  
Nor gave loud service to a cause  
That you might have a troop of friends.  
You kept the Muses' sterner laws  
And unrepenting faced your ends;  
And therefore earned the right — and yet  
Dowson and Johnson most I praise —  
To troop with those the world's forgot,  
And copy their proud steady gaze.*

“The Danish troop was driven put  
Between the dawn and dusk,” she said;  
“Although the event was long in doubt,  
Although the King of Ireland's dead  
And half his kings, before sundown  
All was accomplished.

“When this day  
Murrough the King of Ireland's son  
Foot after foot was giving way,  
He and his best troops back to back  
Had perished there, but the Danes ran  
Stricken with panic from the attack,  
The shouting of an unseen man;  
And, being thankful, Murrough found,

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Led by a foot-sole dipped in blood  
That had made prints upon the ground,  
Where by old thorn trees that man stood;  
And though when he gazed here and there  
He had but gazed on thorn trees, spoke:  
'Who is the friend that seems but air  
And yet could give so fine a stroke?'  
Thereon a young man met his eye  
Who said, 'Because she held me in  
Her love and would not have me die,  
Rock-nurtured Aoife took a pin  
And pushing it into my shirt  
Promised that for a pin's sake  
No man should see to do me hurt;  
But there it's gone; I will not take  
The fortune that had been my shame,  
Seeing, King's son, what wounds you have.'  
'Twas roundly spoke, but when night came  
He had betrayed me to his grave,  
For he and the King's son were dead.  
I'd promised him two hundred years,  
And when, for all I'd done or said —  
And these immortal eyes shed tears —  
He claimed his country's need was most.  
I'd saved his life, yet for the sake  
Of a new friend he has turned a ghost.  
What does he care if my heart break?  
I call for spade and horse and hound

*The Grey Rock*

That we may harry him." Thereon  
She cast herself upon the ground  
And rent her clothes and made her moan:  
"Why are they faithless when their might  
Is from the holy shades that rove  
The grey rock and the windy light?  
Why should the faithfulest heart most love  
The bitter sweetness of false faces?  
Why must the lasting love what passes?  
Why are the gods by men betrayed!"  
But thereon every god stood up  
With a slow smile and without sound,  
And, stretching forth his arm and cup  
To where she moaned upon the ground,  
Suddenly drenched her to the skin;  
And she with Goban's wine adrip,  
No more remembering what had been,  
Stared at the gods with laughing lip.

*I have kept my faith, though faith was tried,  
To that rock-born, rock-wandering foot;  
And the world's altered since you died,  
And I am in no good repute  
With the loud host before the sea,  
That think sword strokes were better meant  
Than lover's music:— let that be,  
So that the wandering foot's content.*

*William Butler Yeats*

EDITORIAL COMMENT

THE NEW BEAUTY

*Quoiqu'il arrive, ces premières années de notre siècle annoncent une floraison qui sera parmi les plus riches. Et il fait bon de vivre en ces heures de rude combat pour la capture de la beauté nouvelle.* Fritz-R. Vanderpyl and Guy-Charles Cros in the *Mercure de France*, December 1, 1912.

Of the countless offerings of verse which have reached us during the last half-year the greater number have been pathetically ingenuous in their intellectual attitude. Numerous books and more numerous manuscripts appeal importunately for time and space, whose eager authors seem as unaware of the twentieth century as if they had spent these recent years in an Elizabethan manor-house or a vine-clad Victorian cottage. This is true even of certain ones who assert their modernism by rhyming of slums and strikes, or by moralizing in choppy odes, or in choppier prose mistaken for *vers libre*, upon some social or political problem of the day.

It is not a question of subject, nor yet of form, this new beauty which must inspire every artist worthy of the age he lives in. The poet is not a follower, but a leader; he is a poet not because he can measure words or express patly current ideas, but because the new beauty is a vision in his eyes and a passion in his heart, and because he must strain every sinew of his spirit to reveal it to the world. He can not resign his ancient



prophetic office; and the technique of its fulfilment—the style which he achieves with joyous ease or more or less painful labor, according to his temperament—necessarily can not satisfy him until it matches the beauty of the vision.

All this is so obvious as to be usually forgotten. Art in general, and poetry in particular, are regarded as a decoration of life, not as its very pulse and heart-beat, inevitable like a sunrise or a flower. Being a decoration, it becomes a side-issue, something extraneous, a matter of pleasing fancies and pretty patterns, which may be taken conveniently from the past and modified for modern uses. And so each generation imposes its opinion on the next, and the poet, who should be born and brought up to freedom, finds himself shut up in ready-made conventions and prejudices. If he is weakly inspired, his little gleam of the new beauty will be extinguished and forgotten, and he will go along imitating the masters and pottering with inessentials. And even though he is a giant in strength and an apostle in faith, whose vision of the new beauty would lead him through fire and sword, storm and shame, he must yet spend a heavy toll of his precious power in fighting the lords of things as they are, in destroying barriers and winning through to freedom.

If poetry is to have its share of that promised efflorescence which is to be “among the richest” this old world has known; if the signs do not fail, and it is indeed “good

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to live in this time of rude struggle for the capture of the new beauty," then our poets would seem to be in need of courage. They should pay less attention to old forms which have been worn thin by five centuries of English song. They should return rather to first principles, feel as if poetry were new, and they the first to forge rhythmic chains for the English language.

POETRY has given space, and will doubtless give more, to voices and fashions more or less reminiscent, convinced that it is only by such trial ventures that some men can discover their true place. A talent which seems authentic should be encouraged, even if it begins in a thin soprano or a rather raucous bass. The masterpiece is always a rarity, and it blooms not in a desert but in the midst of lesser growth. We have printed sonnets, but always with the *arriere pensée* that the sonnet is an exhausted form, whose every possible shade of cadence has been worked out and repeated until there are no more surprises left in it. Modern drama is waiting to be written, is part of that new beauty to be captured, but it will hardly be caught in classic or Elizabethan garments. Poetic narrative may have a future as great as its past, but it is rather late in the day for sea-dog epics like Mr. Noyes' *Drake*, and buccaneer ballads of blood and fire. Indeed, it may be questioned whether Mr. Masefield captures the new beauty in his tales of present-day squalor and struggle told in swinging Byronic

verse; for his plots strike melodramatic attitudes and his lines have an old familiar stride.

It may be that alien hands will uncover the new treasure, that in this twentieth-century welter of nations the beauty of the English language must be rediscovered by some Russian immigrant or some traveler from Turkestan. Today it is not a poet of Anglo-Saxon race but a Hindoo with divinatory power in English, who has the keenest vision of the new beauty, and the richest modern message, not only for the millions who speak his mother-tongue but also for those far-scattered millions who carry Shakespeare's mother-tongue over the world. If the great achievement of the twentieth century is to be its making friends of East and West, it may be that the one most important episode of England's rule over India will be the teaching of her language to Rabindra Nath Tagore.

It may be premature to express an opinion founded largely upon still unpublished translations from the Bengali. But this Hindoo shows us how provincial we are; England and America are little recently annexed corners of the ancient earth, and their poets should peer out over sea-walls and race-walls and pride-walls, and learn their own littleness and the bigness of the world.

*H. M.*

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REVIEWS

*The Vaunt of Man and Other Poems*, by William Ellery Leonard. B. W. Huebsch.

It is a pleasure to praise this book for the force of its sincere feeling, its emotional earnestness, its large sweep of courageous personality; yet, in doing so, one feels somehow as if one were praising Mr. Leonard rather than the work itself. For the verse forms used, and above all the hackneyed sonnet, are but shells, vehicles merely, which Mr. Leonard has made expressive in spite of themselves by this very intense quality of personal earnestness. It is for the spirit of the book that one has admiration. He does not give us the piquant pleasure of new rhythms or unexpected quantities; for which one cannot help wishing nevertheless; but he does give us new wine, even though it somewhat endangers the old bottles. One might turn against Mr. Leonard himself the closing lines of his *Anti-rococo*.

Oh be bold, be free!  
Strip off this perfumed fabric from your verse,  
Tear from your windows all the silk and lace!  
And stand man woman, on the slope by me!

His sonnet on *The Express*, for instance, would gain immeasurably if he had allowed its rhythmic impetus to create its own form. Mr. Leonard has something to say, and one reads his book for the sake of it. It is the man who has something to say who commands attention;

but he can only command it authoritatively by uniting what he has to say with its most direct, inherent form of expression. There was no preconceived model for the first vase. And even though Mr. Leonard's power were to undergo a certain lassitude in the transition, there is no doubt but that if he would allow himself greater freedom, his art would gain vitally in the end. At any rate, we are grateful for what he has given us as it is. And we have no fear that he suffers from that super-sensitive egotism of the minor poet—the most serious obstacle to his artistic progress.

And who slays *me* must overcome a world:  
 Heroes at arms, and virgins who became  
 Mothers of children, prophecy and song;  
 Walls of old cities with their flags unfurled;  
 Peaks, headlands, ocean, and its isles of fame,  
 And sun and moon and all that made me strong.

These lines form the preface of Mr. Leonard's volume:

These rhymes record, by quite unconscious plan,  
 What life from year to year may mean to man.  
 Scarce one but had its rise in common-place,  
 In old experience of the human race;  
 And yet not one without some How or When  
 No man on earth can ever feel again.  
 I made the record that I might be free  
 Through mastering art, lest life should master me—  
 Finding in art, creating as I went,  
 A world more luminous and eloquent.

It is impossible to make further quotation, and a mention of titles would only indicate personal choice;

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this may be done better by the individual reader, to whom we recommend the book heartily for the qualities already mentioned.

*The Roadside Fire*, by Amelia Josephine Burr. George H. Doran Co.

It is one thing to give to a work of individual, first-hand conception a title which, as a symbol, connects that work with others expressing the same elemental passion; as Rodin labels his finished marbles with the names of *Pygmalion and Galatea*, or *La Voix Intérieure*, drawn as these are from individual observation or personal experience and yet expressing conceptual emotions as old as the world; but it is quite another thing to weave, about such titles or fragments of traditional situations, an embroidered pattern of reflective phrases. The one process belongs to creative art; the other to the secondary stage of illustrative comment. The first is a classic in the making; the second is a classic in the degenerative process of appreciative imitation—the pseudo-classic. To this second class, unfortunately, almost all the poems in Miss Josephine Amelia Burr's *The Roadside Fire* belong.

There is no need of explaining what explains itself. Michelangelo's *Pieta*, Rodin's *The Hand of God* are sufficiently self-expressive. Neither can one add one jot or tittle to the story of Christ of the Magdalen; and

some strenuous band of poetic Futurists ought to forbid the titular use of *Icarus* or *Lilith* for the space of one year at least. The little that Miss Burr has to say for herself is impeded by the use of trite, worn-out, meaningless phrases, or words of an abstract, generalized significance, and therefore—so far as poetry is concerned—is without value.

“The wasted years,” “false hopes and false fears,” “gods of clay”—such phrases are types of a false poetic currency which neither buys nor sells. Is it any wonder that the mind insensibly locks before such mechanically filled-in metrics? Poetry, which is a refinement, a recreation, an escaping essence liberated only by its own fine excess—this toil demands greater sacrifice and makes greater reprisals.

Miss Burr's poem, *We Have Piped Unto You*, considered apart from its reflective genetrix, would be the best in the book if it were not marred by the line, “The love of Humanity linked with the love of the One.” As it is *Rudel Sings to His Lady* takes first place. This, with some real feeling back of it, and a certain amount of skill in the making, almost achieves genuine expression.

The system of printing each successive stanza with large initial capitals, like a child's primer, is a fault of the book for which Miss Burr is probably not to blame; but it is annoying.

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*The Wife of Potiphar with Other Poems*, by Harvey Maitland Watts. The John C. Winston Co., Philadelphia.

The dramatic episode giving the book its title, and another dramatic poem of satirical turn, have a certain direct terseness of expression which is not in evidence in the rest of the poems in the book. These are wordy, wooden; the legs are of cork, and the features, if they can be discerned at all, too thickly varnished with the theatrical poetaster's paint. Mr. Watts should make a clean sweep and begin again. Apparently he has not realized that a confusion of all things upon which his eye may light, in the weaving of his fancy, will not give the reader any clarity of vision—the focus changes every moment.

A nodding smile, at every turn,  
Hardest of hearts unlocks  
Where croziered fronds of silvery fern  
Shepherd the violet flocks;  
And mid-air dogwood drifts of snow  
Repeat the bluets' spread below.

One may choose examples at random, all equally entangled in wordy insignificance, and all equally far from that immediate spontaneity of perception, that projective reciprocity, which make poet and audience one.

*In Vivid Gardens*, by Marguerite Wilkinson. Sherman French & Co.

These *Songs of the Woman Spirit*, published in 1911, are feminine in the larger sense of the word, a rich con-



tralto voice singing out of the deepest experiences of life. The poet does not always get her keen message into poetic cadences; sometimes it weakens into prosaic statement. But again it becomes a clear strong chant welling out of hidden reserves of feeling and attaining rhythm as naturally as a mountain stream or a child.

*Who is She that Waits?*, *The Present*, *The Woman of Now*, *Fulfilment*, etc., are phases of the same subject which is most rapturously expressed in the ten quatrains of *Betrothal*:

I have found me a man, I have held and made him,  
What first was good, I shall make complete;  
No other woman like me hath swayed him,  
Nor bowed his shoulders to kiss her feet.

I have found me a man, from himself I bought him,  
Gold from the dross and better from worse;  
No other woman like me hath taught him  
The great white law of the universe.

*The Star-Treader and Other Poems*, by Clark Ashton Smith. A. M. Robertson, San Francisco.

This Californian has extreme youth in his favor, so it would be idle to complain that his subjects are chiefly astronomic. Life will bring him down to earth, no doubt, in her usual brusque manner, and will teach him something more intimate to write about than winds and stars and forsaken gods. Meantime he shows an unusual imaginative power of visualizing these remote splendors

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until they have the concrete definiteness of a personal experience. These lines *To the Sun* for example:

Thy light is an eminence unto thee,  
And thou art upheld by the pillars of thy strength.  
Thy power is a foundation for the worlds;  
They are builded thereon as upon a lofty rock  
Whereto no enemy hath access.  
Thou puttest forth thy rays, and they hold the sky  
As in the hollow of an immense hand.  
Thou erectest thy light as four walls  
And a roof with many beams and pillars.  
Thy flame is a stronghold based as a mountain;  
Its bastions are tall, and firm like stone.

In spite of the sophomoric quality in many of these poems we have here a rare spirit and the promise of poetic art.

NOTES

Of the contributors to the present number, Mr. Yeats needs no further introduction, and Mr. Pound and Miss Monroe are too closely identified with the magazine to introduce themselves. Mr. Yeats' poem is especially significant because of its rare autobiographical mood. It is seldom that this poet speaks of his attitude toward his art, or the world's attitude toward him.

The May number of POETRY will be devoted to Mr. John G. Neihardt's brief three-act tragedy, *The Death of Agrippina*.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

- A Modern Alchemist and Other Poems*, by Lee Wilson Dodd. Richard G. Badger. The Gorham Press, 1906.
- The Star-Treader and Other Poems*, by Clark Ashton Smith. A. M. Robertson, San Francisco, California, MCMXLL.
- The Agate Lamp*, by Eva Gore-Booth. Longmans, Green & Co., 1912.
- Civic Songs*, by David C. Nimmo.
- A Hundred Years*, by Anna May Woodhead.
- Poems of the Dawn-Light*, by Elizabeth Howland Wheeler.
- An Evening Revery in the Cemetery at Woodlawn*, by John Arnold Keyes.
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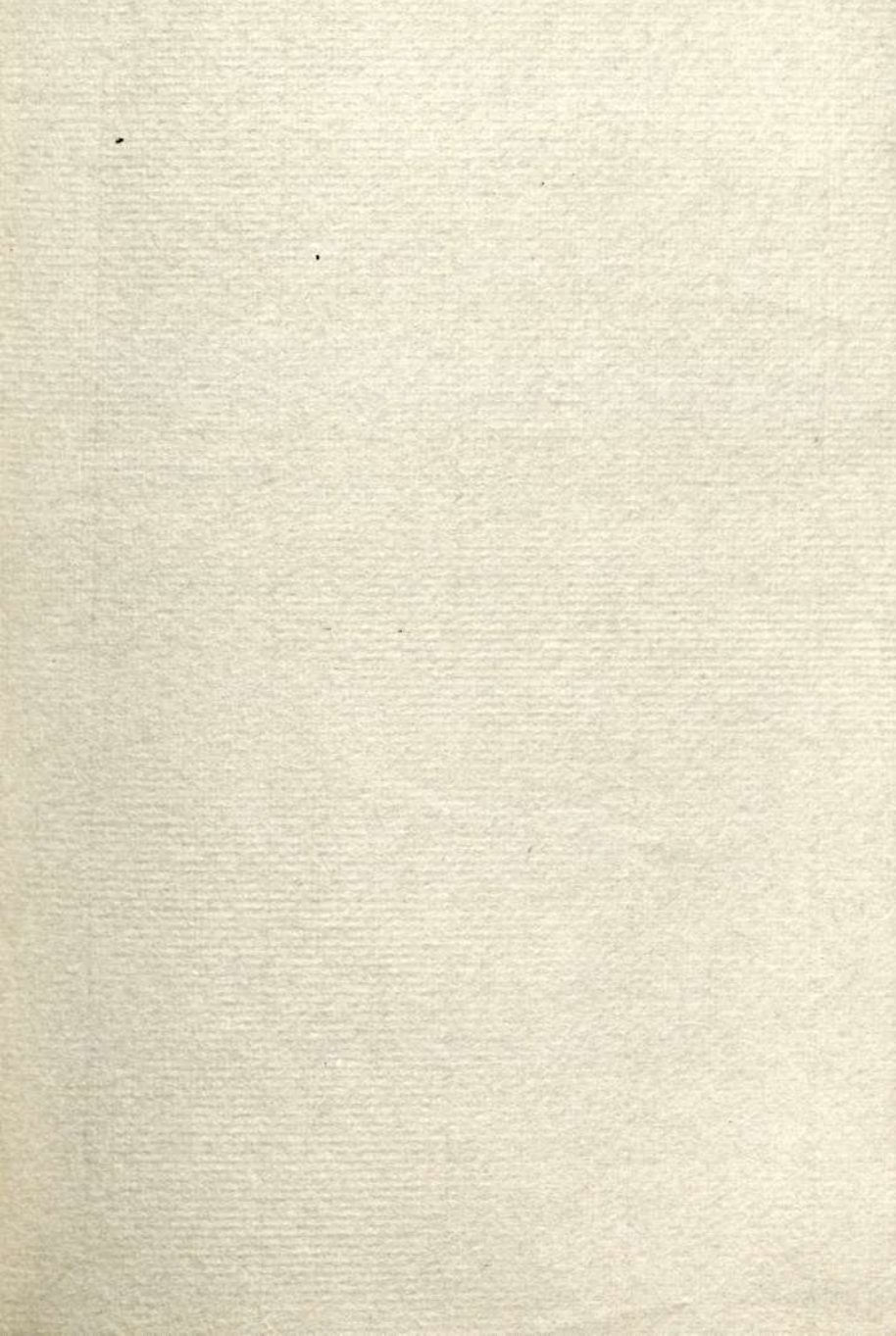
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