

# Poetry

A Magazine of Verse

Edited by Harriet Monroe

AUGUST 1916

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AUGUST, 1916

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1777

I—THE TRUMPET-VINE ARBOR



THE throats of the little red trumpet-flowers  
are wide open,  
And the clangor of brass beats against the  
hot sunlight.  
They bray and blare at the burning sky.  
Red! Red! Coarse notes of red,  
Trumpeted at the blue sky.  
In long streaks of sound, molten metal,  
The vine declares itself.  
Clang!—from its red and yellow trumpets;  
Clang!—from its long, nasal trumpets,  
Splitting the sunlight into ribbons, tattered and shot with  
noise.

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I sit in the cool arbor, in a green and gold twilight.  
It is very still, for I cannot hear the trumpets,  
I only know that they are red and open,  
And that the sun above the arbor shakes with heat.  
My quill is newly mended,  
And makes fine-drawn lines with its point.  
Down the long white paper it makes little lines,  
Just lines—up—down—criss-cross.  
My heart is strained out at the pin-point of my quill;  
It is thin and writhing like the marks of the pen.  
My hand marches to a squeaky tune,  
It marches down the paper to a squealing of fifes.  
My pen and the trumpet-flowers,  
And Washington's armies away over the smoke-tree to the  
southwest.  
"Yankee Doodle", my darling! It is you against the British,  
Marching in your ragged shoes to batter down King George.  
What have you got in your hat? Not a feather, I wager.  
Just a hay-straw, for it is the harvest you are fighting for.  
Hay in your hat, and the whites of their eyes for a target!  
Like Bunker Hill, two years ago, when I watched all day  
from the housetop,  
Through Father's spy-glass,  
The red city, and the blue, bright water,  
And puffs of smoke which you made.  
Twenty miles away,  
Round by Cambridge, or over the Neck,  
But the smoke was white—white!

To-day the trumpet-flowers are red—red—  
 And I cannot see you fighting;  
 But old Mr. Dimond has fled to Canada,  
 And Myra sings "Yankee Doodle" at her milking.

The red throats of the trumpets bray and clang in the  
 sunshine,  
 And the smoke-tree puffs dun blossoms into the blue air.

## II—THE CITY OF FALLING LEAVES

Leaves fall,  
 Brown leaves,  
 Yellow leaves streaked with brown.  
 They fall,  
 Flutter,  
 Fall again.  
 The brown leaves,  
 And the streaked yellow leaves,  
 Loosen on their branches  
 And drift slowly downwards.  
 One,  
 One, two, three,  
 One, two, five.  
 All Venice is a falling of autumn leaves—  
 Brown,  
 And yellow streaked with brown.

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“That sonnet, Abate,  
Beautiful,  
I am quite exhausted by it.  
Your phrases turn about my heart,  
And stifle me to swooning.  
Open the window, I beg.  
Lord! What a strumming of fiddles and mandolins!  
'Tis really a shame to stop indoors.  
Call my maid, or I will make you lace me yourself.  
Fie, how hot it is, not a breath of air!  
See how straight the leaves are falling.  
Marianna, I will have the yellow satin caught up with silver  
fringe,  
It peeps out delightfully from under a mantle.  
Am I well painted to-day, *caro Abate mio?*  
You will be proud of me at the Ridotto, hey?  
Proud of being *cavaliere servente* to such a lady?”  
“Can you doubt it, *bellissima Contessa?*  
A pinch more rouge on the right cheek,  
And Venus herself shines less . . .”  
“You bore me, Abate,  
I vow I must change you!  
A letter, Achmet?  
Run and look out of the window, Abate.  
I will read my letter in peace.”

The little black slave with the yellow satin turban  
Gazes at his mistress with strained eyes.



His yellow turban and black skin  
 Are gorgeous—barbaric.  
 The yellow satin dress with its silver flashings  
 Lies on a chair,  
 Beside a black mantle and a black mask.  
 Yellow and black,  
 Gorgeous—barbaric.  
 The lady reads her letter,  
 And the leaves drift slowly  
 Past the long windows.  
 "How silly you look, my dear Abate,  
 With that great brown leaf in your wig.  
 Pluck it off, I beg you,  
 Or I shall die of laughing."

A yellow wall,  
 Aflare in the sunlight,  
 Chequered with shadows—  
 Shadows of vine-leaves,  
 Shadows of masks.  
 Masks coming, printing themselves for an instant,  
 Then passing on,  
 More masks always replacing them.  
 Masks with tricorns and rapiers sticking out behind  
 Pursuing masks with veils and high heels,  
 The sunlight shining under their insteps.  
 One,  
 One, two,

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One, two, three,  
There is a thronging of shadows on the hot wall,  
Filigreed at the top with moving leaves.  
Yellow sunlight and black shadows,  
Yellow and black,  
Gorgeous—barbaric.  
Two masks stand together,  
And the shadow of a leaf falls through them,  
Marking the wall where they are not.  
From hat-tip to shoulder-tip,  
From elbow to sword-hilt,  
The leaf falls.  
The shadows mingle,  
Blur together,  
Slide along the wall and disappear.

Gold of mosaics and candles,  
And night-blackness lurking in the ceiling beams.  
Saint Mark's glitters with flames and reflections.  
A cloak brushes aside,  
And the yellow of satin  
Licks out over the colored inlays of the pavement.  
Under the gold crucifixes  
There is a meeting of hands  
Reaching from black mantles.  
Sighing embraces, bold investigations,  
Hide in confessionals,  
Sheltered by the shuffling of feet.

Gorgeous—barbaric  
 In its mail of jewels and gold,  
 Saint Mark's looks down at the swarm of black masks;  
 And outside in the palace gardens brown leaves fall,  
 Flutter,  
 Fall.  
 Brown,  
 And yellow streaked with brown.

Blue-black the sky over Venice,  
 With a pricking of yellow stars.  
 There is no moon,  
 And the waves push darkly against the prow  
 Of the gondola,  
 Coming from Malamocco  
 And streaming toward Venice.  
 It is black under the gondola hood,  
 But the yellow of a satin dress  
 Glares out like the eye of a watching tiger.  
 Yellow compassed about with darkness,  
 Yellow and black,  
 Gorgeous—barbaric.  
 The boatman sings,  
 It is Tasso that he sings;  
 The lovers seek each other beneath their mantles,  
 And the gondola drifts over the lagoon, aslant to the coming  
 dawn.  
 But at Malamocco in front,

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In Venice behind,  
Fall the leaves,  
Brown,  
And yellow streaked with brown.  
They fall,  
Flutter,  
Fall.

*Amy Lowell*

## PRAISE OF LOVE

In time of hunger and drought Love is glad,  
For Love is food, and wine, and fire.  
The eyes of love are gentle as the doves',  
The face of Love fairer than flowers is.  
Her breasts make challenge mutely for caresses,  
Her loins are hollowed for her lover's rest,  
Her hands make new life spring beneath their touch,  
Her lips are velvet-smooth and made for kisses.  
Her hair like golden serpents writhes about  
Down o'er her flanks, a soft and shining shower.  
Her eyes are pools where violets are drowned,  
Her voice is music, and her mind is wisdom.  
Her odor is a heaven-sweet perfume,  
Sweeter than woods in spring or summer gardens.  
The tired rest themselves against her heart;  
The feast of a thousand vineyards is hers  
And the flowers wherewith she decks herself  
Shall never die—shall never die.  
The gardens of God have their seasons—  
Flowerless and fruitless half the year;  
But the gardens of Love are everlasting—  
Their flowers and fruit are eternal.  
The strong man's power is but for a day;  
When it goes, 'tis but as a tale that's told.  
But the power of Love is mightier than the sword's  
And it stays while life does.

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Riches come hardly and go swiftly, leaving nothing;  
But Love comes early and abides forever.  
A blossom-decked altar is the bed of Love,  
Her festivals the sacraments of life.  
The song of songs is the song of Love—  
Ever sung, yet never ending;  
The song of Love is the song of life.

PRAYER

Many are the cries sent upward to God's throne:  
The cry for justice comes out of the depths—  
The depths of woe;  
The cry for mercy from the depths of sin;  
And mothers of slain soldiers cry for courage—  
Courage to bear the ills that go with life.  
The children pray with souls all innocent  
(Yet mindful of each little trespass wrought)  
They pray for a pure heart; and soldiers pray  
That God may save their dear ones from war's plagues;  
And beggars pray for bread, or pleasant weather.  
But from the high, high places of the world,  
The prayer, when prayer there is, is all for power—  
Power and glory, and honor—forever: nothing more.

*Jean O'Brien*

## SUMMER IN CORONADO

Great sun, why are you pitiless?  
All day your glance is sharp and keen  
Upon the hills that once were green.  
Where summer, sere and passionless,  
Now lies brown-frosted against the sky  
And makes of them her resting place,  
For she has drunk the valleys dry.  
You never turn away your face,  
And I, who love you, cannot bear  
Your long, barbaric, searching look  
Down through the low cool flights of air—  
Your tirelessness I cannot brook.  
For all my body aches with light  
And you have glutted me with sight,  
With flooding color made me blind  
To that which is more soft and kind;  
Till I have longed for clouds to roll  
Between you and my naked soul.  
O great beloved, hide away,  
That I may miss you for a day.

*Marguerite Wilkinson*

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AT THIRTY HE SINGS OF A DAY IN SPRING

Swift as the push of wind could drive me,  
I ran the brookside,  
Curving in and turning out  
Toward the reaches of the distant meadows  
Flaunting in the sun  
Beyond my sight.

I cannot tell you why I ran.

I was ten years old . . .  
And that morning Mother kissed me  
And Father smiled a curious smile;  
Then both of them turned me loose  
Within the meadow,  
White and green and gold  
With the startled color of the May.

Perhaps they knew  
I should find the path  
To the orchard,  
On the sheltered southern hill  
Where peach and apple bloom were mingled.

Perhaps they knew  
That dark would find me  
Waking from my dreams



*At Thirty He Sings of a Day in Spring*

Of meadows infinite and eternal,  
Greener far than the meadows of the earth,  
Where I could run forever.

Perhaps they knew that I would waken  
Dusted over, pollen-scented,  
With my eyes like meadow pools  
Mirroring the stars.

DOWN THE WIND

Down the wind  
The snipes are calling,  
And running fast  
On many gleaming beaches.

And slender birches,  
Flaunting in the wind,  
Are green and silver girls  
Dancing to the calling—  
To the calling of the snipes  
Along the gleaming beaches.

*Clinton Joseph Masseck*

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BRANDED

*To that typical plainsman, L. S.*

The spell of the desert is on me—it's got me fast and sure,  
And I must leave the easy trail to follow the desert's lure;  
I'm marked with the signs of its branding—wild eye, black  
lip, raw skin;  
Through hunger, thirst, through hell I'll go to follow the  
curséd thing!

What is the spell of the desert?—how can a fellow say?  
Is it the sun on the drifting sands of a blinding, burning day?  
Perhaps the hiss of a rattler coiled in a clump of mesquite?  
Or maybe the little dust-devils running on twisted feet?

You say it's the blaze of colors that come when daylight goes,  
Colors that never had a name and only the desert knows;  
And then the sudden drop of night, so still you can hear the  
tread

Of a coyote nosing the water-hole, or the turn of your  
broncho's head.

I tell you, the spell is none of these: it's something a man  
can't see;

But what it is that haunts the place you will never learn  
from me.

I only know it's branded me—this much I can understand.  
And I must leave the easy trail to wander that burning land.

The spell of the desert is on me—it's got me fast and sure,  
And I must leave the easy trail to follow the desert's lure.  
I'm marked with the signs of its branding—wild eye, black  
lip, raw skin.  
Through hunger, thirst, through hell I'll go to follow the  
curséd thing!

*Amy Sebree-Smith*

## QUATRAINS

### THE WOLF AT THE DOOR

The Russian traveler in the story, lest  
The wolf attack, casts out his precious store.  
So we surrender all that we hold best,  
To drive back him who clamors at the door.

### THE ANNIVERSARY

With no observance is my birthday set  
From other times aside.  
But once each year—would God I could forget!—  
Comes back the night I died.

*Ruth Hall*

NIGHT FOR ADVENTURES

Sometimes when fragrant summer dusk comes in with scent  
of rose and musk

And scatters from their sable husk the stars like yellow  
grain,

Oh then the ancient longing comes that lures me like a roll  
of drums

To follow where the cricket strums his banjo in the lane.

And when the August moon comes up and like a shallow  
silver cup

Pours out upon the fields and roads her amber-colored  
beams,

A leafy whisper mounts and calls from out the forest's moss-  
grown halls

To leave the city's somber walls and take the road o'  
dreams.

A call that bids me rise and strip, and naked all from toe  
to lip

To wander where the dewdrops drip from off the silent  
trees,

And where the hairy spiders spin their nets of silver,  
fragile-thin,

And out to where the fields begin, like down upon the  
breeze.

Into a silver pool to plunge, and like a great trout wheel  
and lunge

*Night for Adventures*

Among the lily bonnets and the stars reflected there;  
With face upturned to lie afloat, with moonbeams rippling  
    round my throat,  
And from the slimy grasses plait a chaplet for my hair.

Then, leaping from my rustic bath, to take some winding  
    meadow-path;  
Across the fields of aftermath to run with flying feet,  
And feel the dewdrop-weighted grass that bends beneath me  
    as I pass,  
Where solemn trees in shadowy mass beyond the highway  
    meet.

And, plunging deep within the woods, among the leaf-hung  
    solitudes  
Where scarce one timid star intrudes into the breathless  
    gloom,  
Go leaping down some fern-hid way to scare the rabbits in  
    their play,  
And see the owl, a phantom gray, drift by on silent plume.

To fling me down at length and rest upon some damp and  
    mossy nest,  
And hear the choir of surpliced frogs strike up a bub-  
    bling tune;  
And watch, above the dreaming trees, Orion and the Hyades  
And all the stars, like golden bees around the lily-moon.

. . . . .

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Then who can say if I have gone a-gipsying from dusk till  
dawn

In company with fay and faun, where firefly-lanterns  
gleam?

And have I danced on cobwebs thin to Master Locust's  
mandolin—

Or have I spent the night in bed, and was it all a dream?

*Victor Starbuck*

THE FAERIES' FOOL

Thus spake my faerie sponsors long ago,

Weaving wild spells that I might do their will:

(Laughing they spoke—and yet my mother wept,

Cuddling me closer still!)

“We name thee Fey-heart, little newborn soul—

Go thou and serve the world's most foolish things:

Whistle through thumbs to moldy garden-seeds,

And brush the wood-gnat's wings.

We give thee cobwebs and a reel of dreams

To pay the tavern's score for wine and bread.

Go thou, small soul, and spend thy elfin coin,

And make thy storm-swept bed.”

*Anita Fitch*

## ADVENTURING

There, little swimmer—that was a good, game fight.  
If you'd gone down again . . . . but all's well now—  
The shore is close now, scarce a quarter-mile,  
And we'll be drinking tea before you know it.

Slow work, girlie, it does seem slow, I know—  
But that's no matter, so we're moving in.  
The wind, I think, is holding us back a little.

Odd that there isn't anyone in sight!  
It seems we'll have to make it by ourselves.  
We must keep moving in. My arm, my arm—  
It's all right now, I see it's moving yet,  
But I can't feel it. Strange . . .

This wind . . .

The water

Is fishy—did you notice that? It smells.  
And then it pulls, keeps pulling, pulling . . . . Cold.

No, dear, that's not the way we go, not down.  
That was a strange idea, to go down.

Still, curly-head, it seems quite simple, too:  
You always had uncommon notions, dear,  
And figured out such strange adventures always.  
This new idea may be very fine;

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It may be even wild enough for you,  
My little wild one. For there will be caves—  
You'll pick us out a little wonder-cave  
With golden portals—golden as your hair.  
It will be very cozy, with four rooms—  
And always the clear cool water—you and I  
Will find weird flowers in strange and secret gardens—  
You and I—  
    Yes—you are always right—  
We'll go—my love—we'll go adventuring—

GOLDENROD

Heigh-ho, the proud batallions  
    That tread the gleaming hill,  
That muster for the sun, their king,  
    To do his flaming will.

With golden pennants streaming,  
    With myriad brazen spears,  
They drive the fleeing summer  
    Over the fallen years.

*John Russell McCarthy*



## ISAAC AND REBEKAH

### I

In the cave, which he had paid for with his gold,  
Had Abraham laid Sarah unto rest;  
And, being past the ordinary old,  
Sent forth his steward on a far behest—  
To bring from out his fatherland a wife  
Of their own kindred for his son. But life  
Ebbd from him ere the man had long been gone.  
Yet died he calmly, dreaming all was done  
Because he wished it and so loved his son.

Isaac was gentle; his full beard was soft;  
His eyes were often on the sky, and oft  
They wandered o'er the grass, for much he mused  
Though rarely spoke; in ample robes was used  
Reserved to walk. A long slow summer dawn,  
His youth had stretched beyond the usual bound;  
Most men are fathers ere his heart had found  
Preluding stir, desire that to be born  
Grows urgent. Now one afternoon he went  
To sigh out in lone fields the sadness pent  
By the day's toil; for they had been his friends  
Who were his parents. Age at times descends  
As youth to fill her place grows ripe when, though  
Offices be mutually transferred, yet no  
Breach ever yawns, though he tend who was tended.

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Fresh start they never made, since nothing ended,  
Till even the last parting had proved kind.  
And, underneath a sycamore reclined,  
Isaac thought of them till he ceased to think;  
For all the cordial stillness of the weather  
Had passed into his soul, and, link by link,  
Had melted sorrow's chain. Attuned together,  
The fields, the trees, the dipping dales and tops  
Russet and mellow with their ripening crops,  
The far-off stretches where rich aliens dwelt,  
The sky's vast peace, worked through him till he felt  
So happy that he laughed there to himself—  
A governed laugh of sound uneager health,  
The warm content of every wholesome limb.  
Then, when at sundown hints were borne to him  
Of tinkling camel-bells and dogs that barked,  
He backed his ear with hollow hand and harked,  
Saying, "A coming of much folk is clear!"—  
Rising, "'Tis from the north-east that they near!"—  
Then smiled: for all at once his mind awoke;  
With bliss poured in, as red wine brims a cup,  
Swam richly round, conceiving beauty's charm,  
The presence of a person sooth as balm  
Perpetual in his tent. So he walked on  
To meet them with wild heart. Shapes wound anon  
Up from the vale, where deepened more and more  
The phantom dusk. 'Twas Eliezer sate  
The foremost camel; but the next in state

*Isaac and Rebekah*

Surpassed all others ; to her whom it bore  
The trusty steward, questioned, prompt replied ;  
She veiled herself forthwith. Holding his side,  
Isaac was forced to stop ; and they stopped then,  
While down she lighted 'mong the serving-men,  
Who parted ; and half-running forth she came.  
Surely, though soft, a new voice called his name ?  
He waited to make sure. She was so young. . . .  
But lo ! her veil hung in her way ; his tongue  
Seemed tied ; she tripped, tripped, stumbled, fell—too soon  
Was touching to the earth her brow in sign  
She owned him lord. Mute at portent malign  
He sobbed, ran, raised, and saw her face—a boon  
For utter wonder. She was very fair,  
And seemed but frail to carry so much hair ;  
Strung pearls, looped round her brow by tens and twelves.  
From tapping soft-brown temples scarce had ceased ;  
Her eyes abashed looked up despite themselves—  
They did so long to see ; and were so pleased,  
Seeing, to rest on him. He did not kiss ;  
She kissed him—curbed the impulse, forward rushed  
And gasped, while he blushed even as she blushed ;  
For thought grew purple with conceiving his  
Strange backwardness to kiss. Suffered to doubt,  
Hangs she in two minds or to cry or pout ?  
There is not time ; their lips are mutually met,  
Till laughter part both radiant faces wet ;  
Since joy robs grief of tears, has all and wants more yet.

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At length he found that his held both her hands,  
Straight to be worshipped—gently smoothed of dust,  
For she had soiled them falling. Who would thrust  
On such absorption? Eliezer stands  
And waits till they are speckless; then is heard,  
But hardly listened to, though, duties said,  
He has commenced his tale—stopped, when a word  
The first time uttered turned his master's head  
With "Ah?—Rebekah? Is thy name so sweet?  
Methinks I heard it broken at my feet,  
Stooping to raise thee? Pieced again at last,  
'Twas slow in coming; for it came too fast,  
Even as thou didst, late to come to me. . . .  
Yet am I grown? . . . . for such felicity  
I feel still childish." Thus, with many a break  
Toward the roused tents, they, through the gloaming, make;  
The steward tells his tale, is questioned now,  
And oft ignored before the time allow  
A perfect answer. So to Sarah's tent  
They came, though stopping all the way they went.

She was inside; he had not longed for this  
And yet it seemed to pass the bounds of bliss;  
Enraptured he could neither act nor think.  
But the whole weary journey forced her sink  
Upon a camel's saddle draped with skins,  
All of a heap—bead-work and quilted things  
Bunched up about her languid form, her head

*Isaac and Rebekah*

Seeking with droop and loll a needed bed.  
Two heavy lids had shut him from her eyes,  
But one hand warm in his kept paradise  
About her spirit, while the novel scent  
Of new surroundings nourished its content.  
Her nurse saw now and understood her case;  
Calling for water, which his hand-maids brought,  
Softly she bathed the almost sleeping face.  
Isaac, by this made capable of thought,  
Ordered the daintiest feast his stores could yield;  
Sent for soft cushions, built a pillow throne  
Before which, all devotion, down he kneeled,  
Pressing choice morsels to her drowsy lips,  
Wooing their toil as rivals of his own;  
Or in the pure milk dipped her finger-tips  
To please himself, which pleased her most of all.  
But still the head would obstinately fall,  
Fain of those pillows. So her nurse must plead  
That sleep, not food, is now the crying need.  
Like one who doth receive unlooked-for gift,  
While friends uncord it, sits, and cannot lift  
Finger to help them—he, whose full veins beat,  
Whose eyes swim, kneels, while care uncases feet,  
Plunges them in a basin of bright gold,  
Despite their timid shrinking from the cold.  
His worship of their beauty freed the tongue  
Of the old crone, as she the towels wrung,  
To tell how at a stream that morning they

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Had halted, when, by parasol green-shaded,  
Her mistress traced its windings some short way  
To where, supported by each arm, she waded  
Over worn hummocked rock. "Pools floored with sand  
She lingered at—for pleasure, paced alone;  
But out flew, like a scared bird, either hand  
Soon as her toes encountered the least stone,  
With 'Ah! Oh!' frightened—laughing at her fear  
To find help still so opportunely near.  
A special toilet afterward went through  
To please thee—please *her*, all that we could do  
Might barely that, my lord; the water failed  
And, for it would distort her, was assailed  
With numberless rebukes, half-laughing things  
Which wed the rippling mischief that it sings."  
All this, as flowers the dew, he mute receives;  
Watches lithe arms glide forth from quilted sleeves,  
Watches two women lift her up and hold  
Her off the ground while, broidered fold on fold,  
Rich skirts creep down the white-stoled tender form,  
Till her feet droop above an emptied nest  
As some young almost mother bird's, whose rest  
Deserts her there, till she can lay her eggs.  
She hovers just above with pendant legs  
Until her time be come, and will not stray;  
Thus speakingly suspended those feet sway  
Helplessly there. Then at his breast he caught;  
They moved her as a corpse is moved, he thought.

*Isaac and Rebekah*

Straight, as by fresh disaster overtaken,  
He sees her tresses, from their pearly net shaken,  
Come tumbling forth in downy deluge black.

A bed had been preparing at the back;  
Beyond the region of the lamp's warm glow,  
Whispering maids glid dimly to and fro;  
Till, called at last, they round their mistress bent,  
Then bore her o'er hush carpets through the tent,  
And gave her leave to sleep "long as she could",  
Laughed and withdrew to share the dainty food.  
Isaac sat long on through the night, aloof  
From the rich bed where that soft breather slept.  
Though she was near him, under the same roof,  
He like a bodiless soul one station kept:  
External things usurped him through and through;  
His lips burned not to kiss, his voice to woo,  
Nor for a great embrace did his arms ache;  
Sheer bliss retained only his eyes awake,  
Only his ears alert, only this thought,  
Which could to clearness by no means be brought—  
How, weighed with his good fortune, he was naught.

II

Ah! wakes she? Nay, but in her slumber speaks;  
For back in Haran, gladdening friends, her mind

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Goes through its smiling kingdom like a queen,  
Bestowing praise and finding all things well.  
At even, now, wends staidly down to draw  
The water duly; and perchance, these words  
Confused beyond his skill, once blessed the ear  
Of faithful Eliezer—smiled she thus?  
Ah, time goes fast with her, if it be so!  
For now at last her words are audible:  
“Thou art our sister, be thou mother fair  
Unto a thousand million!”—so they said.”  
She smiles, “O nurse! and it may be I shall!”  
With that appears content and journeys on—  
And happy journeys doubtless—all the way  
A second time from Haran thitherward.

He knelt enraptured at so gracious sign.  
Lay there no wonder here?—this virgin come  
So far and trustfully for his content?  
From inward question, overwhelmed, he ceased,  
Yet marvelled in believing—borne to awe,  
Yearned, stranded on that utmost shore of thought.  
Half-drowned, thus, some exhausted seaman (late  
Sport of proud crests on the high-running sea)  
Scans long, with still bleared eyes, deep-wooded slopes  
Close-folded up at dusk, where ocean ends.  
So his mind fed not yet, but gazed and gazed,  
By slow degrees assured of what it saw  
Lie curled together, hugging ease. Rich forms,



Prepared for motherhood and ready now,  
Wait 'neath warm wraps, as under snow the glebe,  
Lowly and safe. She lies with face laid soft  
To nest in both her hands, which hollow down  
The pillow, while her hair mingles with night;—  
One darkness, one deep odor, one repose  
Divine with promise. Evenly breathe her lips:  
Her face set to cleave the gulf of sleep,  
As on tense rigid wings the kite high up  
Holds its own way through limitless blue noon.  
To watch her silent progress through an hour,  
Real, yet a vision, drew him through flown days  
And sucked him down like a grown plant shrunk back  
Within its earliest compass green and fresh.  
Till, in his brooding trance diminished, he,  
Transformed into a lightsome child once more,  
Found native just that way of settling down  
To slumber which her weary limbs re-found.  
Yet not to sleep; to hide is thus crouched low,  
Ishmael bidding him. They are alone,  
Strayed from the tents in bright discovery  
Of common things and neighbor banks and trees.  
He then, as bidden, 'neath a boulder curled,  
Watches his elder, planted firm, await,  
On sturdy legs among stout thistle-clumps,  
A goat that butts full tilt—and all too weak  
For such suspense, loses the feel of it.  
Ishmael, triumphant, "Not afraid?" had laughed.

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Himself then smiled, from absence coming back;  
Nor tried to explain why he was found so calm.  
Again, shrunk up with fear, bound hand and foot,  
Upon an altar laid at noon, he aches;  
A knife arrests its plunge—so long that fear  
Escapes him; thus lies on in sweet content,  
Even as she does, till the angel-voice  
Cries "Abraham, Abraham!" bringing him his soul  
Truant, as seemed, a long while—strange with awe.  
The servants laugh outside; his dreams disperse;  
But still he kneels spell-bound beside the bed  
His need of prayer frustrating utterance.  
Yet, sensible what stars watch oe'r the tent,  
Silence and stillness give him strength to feel  
His babyhood and boyhood, manhood, one  
With her to be possessed soon, with his bride.  
In attitude, relation and resource  
One under heaven, one in peace and hope.  
He knows his father's wealth lies round him safe;  
His mother's life had used this furniture;  
Unto his offspring for unnumbered years  
These pastures, wells and pleasant distances  
Are pledged by Elohim. It seems enough:  
His spirit feels indeed—too much, too much!

A joyous wedding theirs in the old days;  
No stint of cheer; to welcome limit none.  
Yet tardily the promise worked for them:

Rebekah waited long ere she grew great,  
Then went with twins who strove within her womb.  
Made anxious thus, enquiring of the Lord,  
To her was straight returned, for comfort, this:  
"Two nations are within thy womb, and from  
Thy bowels shall two peoples separate:  
The one people shall be stronger than the other,  
And the elder he shall serve the younger brother."  
Now when the day of her deliverance was,  
Red and all over as an hairy coat  
Forth came the first child: "Esau" called they him.  
But since his brother grasped him by the heel  
As he came forth the second, him they named  
"Jacob", for that he held him by the heel.  
Her women had much mirth to witness it.  
Bringing the sturdy boys for her to see,  
When eased of pain, yea, merry were their hearts  
Yet more; for that meek mother fears her babes  
And shrinks from having them laid close to her,  
So timid she. But when the younger yearns  
And stretches both precocious greedy hands  
Towards the fairest face yet seen, him swift  
She takes, and holds henceforward next her heart.  
For thus her soul had taken bent to love  
Those who lay claim to service, but to dread  
Those who in self-reliance ask for naught—  
Even since, a child, she first had wended out  
At herding-time, down to the village well,

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Holding her mother's hand ; had picked her way  
(Warned to avoid the puddles, choice of shoes  
Silk-broidered by maternal love and pride)  
And seen the poorer children splash and wade,  
And not been bold, and learned no daring ways,  
But had grown patient, sage, a nurse of dolls :  
Who, late at length, was Jacob's fond, fond nurse  
But could not love her hardy Esau so.

Thus those whose life was peace, gave birth to strife.  
Out of the meek came greed, and by content  
Were clamoring nations reared to age-long war.

*T. Sturge Moore*

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

### NEW BANNERS



WHAT are we to do with war—all these wars and rumors of wars which absorb man's interests and energies, waste his treasure, and interrupt his proper modern business—the business of making a more habitable world, and more beautiful and noble men and women to live in it? What are we to do with this stupid and violent interruption, which fills our eyes with ruin, our ears with noise, our nostrils with sickening stench, and our minds with pompous and brutal melodrama? War which, as it destroys and maims and kills, is in no other detail so disgusting as in its monstrous pretense of heroism. Heroism!—the big bully merely shows us how many heroes we have by destroying them; merely brings out tragic evidence of the heroism which existed in its victims before the guns mangled them, heroism which should have been preserved for the slow struggles of peace.

“Europe will be born again through this war”—thus I have heard people rhapsodize; “she will rise purified and illumined”—etc., etc., in minute detail. Ah, when the artificial stimulus ceases that produced all the bitter rapture and agony, will not men and nations have to resume their old tasks, their old lives, but with heavier burdens to carry, and under harsher conditions than before? As Bernard Shaw's war hero says in *O'Flaherty, V. C.*:

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I see no great "differ" myself. It's all the fight and the excitement, and when that quiets down they'll go back to their natural devilment and be the same as ever.

Or, as Gaudier-Brzeska, the young French sculptor of genius who died in the trenches, said more nobly:

With all the destruction that works around us, nothing is changed, even superficially. Life is the same strength, the moving agent that permits the small individual to assert himself.

The bursting shells, the volleys, wire-entanglements, projectors, motors—the chaos of battle—do not alter in the least the outlines of the hill we are besieging. It would be folly to seek artistic emotions amid these little works of ours—this paltry mechanism which serves as a purge to over-numerous humanity.

So there is more joy in heaven over one little sweat-shop sewing girl who rebels than over ninety-and-nine V. C.'s won at the point of a bayonet. And there is more hope for humanity in the present very definite movement for increase of beauty and joy in our lives, than in the triumphant march of a thousand armies.

One conspicuous phase of this movement—the many-sided struggle to abolish poverty—may not be in POETRY's province; but another phase, the impulse toward civic beauty, is the beginning of a richer life in this country which will bring a renaissance of all the arts. Therefore the sense of joy, of spiritual expansion, which came to me during a recent visit, one fine summer Sunday, to Chicago's new Municipal Recreation Pier, seemed to bear a direct relation to POETRY. Here, in this beautiful assemblage of vast halls and towers, out-door courts and colonnades, reaching out into the cool blue lake as a spacious refuge from dust and heat, from toil and struggle and ugliness—here was the proof

of a new movement in our democracy, proof that the people are beginning to express in definite, concrete form their demand for beauty.

In other cities I should have found other motives for this train of thought; even in Chicago I might have taken my text from the long chain of playground parks, or the new architectural framing-in of Grant Park, both prophetic of the future beauty of one of the great cities of the world. Everywhere the public impulse toward city planning, toward more open spaces and park areas, more free music and dancing, more masques, pageants, expositions, and other festivals of peace—all this is part of the real forward march of modern armies, the real struggle of our time toward the light.

The organization of society for rapid, effective and beautiful movement in peace, as hitherto it has frequently been organized for such movement in war—that is the modern problem, a problem worth the devotion of our best minds, our richest treasure. Such devotion will destroy war at last by stripping it of its ancient glamour. Men live by dreams, by the ever elusive dream of beauty. Give them dreams more beautiful and heroic than their long-cherished vision of the glory of war, and they will put away war like a worn-out garment, and unite for conquests really glorious, for the advance toward justice and beauty in the brotherhood of nations.

*H. M.*

## CORRESPONDENCES

The annoyance of being forever coupled with something or somebody that has gone before, is a part of the artist's reward for creating something worth while; one is never curious about the ancestry of mediocrity. And yet it is inevitable that a work of genius should start a train of associations. The mind instinctively searches for the thing that is "like": a function that is in itself creative is only set in motion by an active, creative source; that death which is mediocrity is incapable of imparting any such impetus. And this is one reason why one never cares to trace the parentage of bad work; in fact it has no lineage. As I once heard a painter say: "Good pictures are alike; only the bad ones are different." Certainly this is equally true of poetry, irrespective of all distinctions of "school," creed, or form.

Yet the novelty of work truly creative always excites suspicion—the suspicion that it must have been taken from somewhere, or copied from something! In the search for correspondences, one is too apt to trace exact sources, to apply the epithet "derivative" to work which has been done quite independently of all knowledge of that from which it is supposed to be derived. The over-zealous critic who insists upon this method of pigeon-holing needs to be told that the creative mind *is* creative: it has no need of a copy-book; it does not need to stem directly from this or that influence. Artistic achievements may be as accidental, and as independent, as scientific discoveries. At least the seed from which the flower blossomed was not sown overnight.



## Correspondences

On the other hand, this constant reiteration of influences and correspondences should not annoy the artist overmuch. He must remember, even though he be given fifty-seven different varieties of forebears, that there is a long tradition to the effect that the poet or artist is "myriad-minded." He must in all truth, be a complex, rather than a simple, creature, and it is not at all surprising that he should shelter many diverse spirits under the cloak of an inclusive personality.

A. C. H.

## REVIEWS

### TWO ANTHOLOGIES

*Some Imagist Poets: 1916.* Houghton Mifflin Co.

*Georgian Poetry: 1913-1915.* Poetry Bookshop, London; and Putnam, New York.

If we could only forget schools and labels now and then, and assume an Olympian attitude toward modern poetry, the superior attitude of the high gods who look before and after, and who inhale beautiful words as eagerly as the scent of flowers—beautiful words, and fleet emotions which outrun the words, or sail up and away! What would the gods find in these two books—what keen and perfumed air?

It does not make much difference what instrument a son of the gods sings to, so long as it fits his song. He may cut his own reed by the river, or find an old violin in a junk-shop, or play the church organ, or pound the bass-drum, or whisper through the elusive piccolo—anything so long as he chooses

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the right mood for his lingering or leaping or dancing words, the right music for the feeling that outruns them. Or, in the words of the late Remy de Gourmont, *à propos* of the *symbolistes*, translated in the preface of *Some Imagists*:

The sole excuse which a man can have for writing is to write down himself, to unveil for others the sort of world which mirrors itself in his individual glass. . . . He should create his own aesthetics; and we should admit as many aesthetics as there are original minds, and judge them for what they are and not for what they are not.

If these two books represent two tendencies in modern poetry—the conservative and the liberal—they do not include either the extreme radicals on the one side or the extreme formalists on the other. If the imagists are less elliptical than the “choric school,” the “spectrists,” etc., the Georgians are less rhetorical than the Victorians. And in both volumes one finds now and then some poet creating, if not quite “his own aesthetics,” at least his own mode, his own personal magic.

I find this—to mention two extreme instances—not only in H. D.’s lithe nude lyric, *The Shrine*, so wonderful in its bright stark purity; but also, to a certain degree, in Gordon Bottomley’s brief tragedy, *King Lear’s Wife*, which marches in Elizabethan draperies. H. D., using a new manner with perfect virtuosity, perhaps succeeds in “creating her own aesthetics”. Throughout her group there is, in her feeling for sand-dunes and rocky sea-swept headlands a completeness of sympathy which reminds one of Emily Brontë’s love of the moors. She is not outside of them but a part of them, a spirit informing them; wild and free and fleet,

like some nymph of long ago. And her art is the fit vesture of her spirit; it falls in straight sculptural lines, like the drapery of certain archaic statues. *The Shrine* tells the formidable allure of beauty as the very winds and waves might tell it:

You are useless,  
O grave, O beautiful.  
The landsmen tell it—I have heard  
You are useless.

And the wind sounds with this  
And the sea,  
Where rollers shot with blue  
Cut under deeper blue.

. . . . .  
You are not forgot,  
O plunder of lilies—  
Honey is not more sweet  
Than the salt stretch of your beach.

Mr. Bottomley uses an instrument more familiar, but he strikes it in his own way, and forces us to confess at last that he has achieved the impossible by setting up beside Shakespeare's figure of Goneril a darkly vivid portrait of that sinister princess in youth. And in doing this with all the old aids of the tragic muse—a stately long-accepted measure, an ancient legendary tale and scene, royal characters and violent deeds—he yet plays the rich old instrument for his own purposes, achieves his own personal style.

If these are cases in which the special magic is achieved, one finds in both volumes more than one instance of too self-conscious experiment, which, however interesting, still retains signs of effort, remains a study rather than a poem. A conspicuous example among the radicals is Miss Lowell's

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much talked-of rhapsody in polyphonic prose, *Spring Day*, whose brightly colored pattern of interwoven rhythms, set with glittering rhymes, achieves an admirable virtuosity, if you will, but not quite the authentic magic of perfect art. And at the other end of the scale, Lascelles Abercrombie's two-act play, *The End of the World*, is a too deliberate effort to adjust the talk of modern peasants to blank verse, high-flown poetic language, soliloquies, and other trappings more or less artificial and unconvincing.

If we go through the two anthologies in search of the achieved personal style, the special magic, where shall we pause?

The imagist volume perhaps tempts us first, because these poets have stripped off many old impedimenta. They are at least more simple and direct in presentation than the Georgians, and their cadenced rhythms are less bound by metrical rules. Of them all, H. D. is no doubt the perfect imagist, the only danger which besets her stark style being that which assails all perfection—the danger of becoming too keen and cold, too abstract, too inhuman. John Gould Fletcher has more warmth, though he also is always the artist. Sensitive, vibrant, aware of strange colors in nature, and of the wildness of humanity against them, he finds in Arizona, our wonderland, a congenial subject. In the work of D. H. Lawrence one feels always an abiding sorrow, an agony of sympathy with suffering men and women expressed in low, far-sounding music, as of wood-winds. No one has felt each bitter wound of this war more cruelly than he, no one has touched the subject with more tragic beauty than he in

## Two Anthologies

*Erinnyes*. And Amy Lowell gives us a beautifully patterned poem in *Patterns*, a finely composed decorative picture, rich in color, and rhythmic in its handling of background and draperies, so to speak, its movement of repeated lines, around a little eighteenth-century figure whose passion is held by the poet admirably in tone. Richard Aldington has two or three fine poems, especially the filmy rhymed lyric, *After Two Years*, but nothing so bewitching as *Lesbia*. Nor is F. S. Flint quite at his best.

Of the Georgians—we find Rupert Brooke in his most high-spirited mood of joy, reaching its climax in the immortal sonnet, *The Soldier*, now so much quoted that people forget it was first printed in POETRY. We find Walter de la Mare attaining, in *Full Moon* and *Off the Ground*, almost the gaiety and intangible grace of certain earlier poems. And William H. Davies, in *The Moon*, *Thunderstorms* and *Sweet Stay-at-Home*, gives us that kind of eighteenth-century clarity and grace, more like Goldsmith than anyone else, which distinguishes his best work. In the group of James Stephens is one poignant little masterpiece, *Dierdré*.

John Masefield is represented by *The Wanderer*, one of the best of his briefer narratives of ships and the sea, done in sounding quatrains of long eloquent lines. And another poet who swings all the old conventions with the strength of an athlete and the skill of an adept—Ralph Hodgson—appears with the two poems which have made him famous, *The Bull* and *The Song of Honor*.

Students of modern poetry will require both these books.

H. M.

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NEW BOOKS OF VERSE

*Cadences*, by F. S. Flint. The Poetry Book-shop, London.

On first going over this beautifully printed little volume I asked myself, was this all Mr. Flint had to say? But after reading it again and again, I found that he had much to say—much that was worth saying.

There is an unsensational artistic courage in almost the whole book which can hardly be overpraised. The poet faces his heart, his soul, and his mood. He faces one or the other in *Chrysanthemums*, in *Fragment*, in *To a Woman*, and in the beautiful and rhapsodic *The Star*.

In *Malady*, the author has achieved vision. It is a faithful rendering of a vision; done with artistic refinement and economy. I believe it will rank with the better work of the sensual-visionists—Cézanne, Brancusi, etc., in the present renaissance.

Not everything in the book is artistically satisfactory. Beautiful as *The Swan* is, it is nevertheless tainted with a slight affectation—an unconscious imitation of the French symbolists. This is more true of *Roses*, and less of *London*. I believe that even in *Accident* Mr. Flint does not speak freely in his own voice. "You see beyond us and you see nothing" really means, "You look at me and pretend not to see me." And part of *April* is not convincing—"The roots hear and they quiver," etc. I have an impression also that the pessimistically-toned poems, with the exception of *Regret*, are not quite sincere; which of course does not mean

that Mr. Flint may not be a sincere pessimist outside of his poems.

Taken as a whole this poet's gift of artistic courage clothed in beauty wins him a place near Pound, H. D., Aldington and Fletcher. It will help build the poetry of the future, to which Masters has brought his gift of fire, Sandburg that of social vision and protest, and Amy Lowell the important gift of strong color—yes, of gaudiness. I believe that the art of the future, including poetry, will be simple, fresh, and strongly colored; and will be understood and loved by the ignorant as well as by the most cultivated. It will be a popular art in the finest sense of the word.

I am afraid I have not implied sufficiently how much I like most of the poems in the little volume. But most of the reviews of imagists' books by sympathizers have been so one-sided that one is inclined to emphasize the other side for a change.

The readers of POETRY are of course familiar with many of Mr. Flint's poems. Here is a new one—*Melody*—in which the slight vagueness actually helps the poem, as it emphasizes the writer's deep emotion:

I was making melody of my love,  
Knowing what it was to be  
A nightingale—  
In the dead stillness of the night  
Among the apple boughs.

I was making melody of my love,  
Even though the organ of my voice  
Could scarcely follow.  
Yet it was melody  
That leaped and soared,  
Gliding from note to note.

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It trembled in her ears,  
And she was moved  
To cling to me more closely.

And then she raised her golden head  
And laughed,  
Not knowing how to take the day and hour—  
The sun shone and the birds were singing  
In the new-budded trees—  
Nor why it gave relief.

*Max Michelson*

*In the Town* and *On the Road*, by Douglas Goldring. Selwyn & Blount, London.

A few poems in these two volumes qualify Mr. Goldring as a poet, and are reason enough, perhaps, for the serious mention given him by Mr. Ezra Pound in his *Status Rerum* of April. For the rest, I think, he is a victim of a kind of false facility which may defeat even unusual talent, and is never to be taken for the real ease of beauty—the elemental coveted ease of a poem by Blake or Verlaine, for example.

*On the Road* and *In the Town* offer some new poems, and some reprinted from earlier volumes, one of which, *Streets*, POETRY reviewed two years ago, with the criticism that his portrayal of London streets came “dangerously near to photography”. That opinion seems relevant here—for hasn’t the camera just this vice of facility? It plays the trick, but too cheaply—thus the anomaly of the movies as an art.

Mr. Goldring’s poems, however, have too much the charm of life to be completely and efficiently photographic. And one quarrels with him not for this charm, which in life might suffice, but because, having it, he is content so often



to stop short of the rigor of style, which in art is essential. One quarrels with him, because, having in a few instances obeyed the sterner demands of style, he is content far too often with a triteness of word, of rhyme, of rhythm, and even of thought, that gives to his lines the effect of jogging along in the manner of what is quaintly known as "society verse":

The lamp gives a softened glow that is like a caress,  
And the fire gleams cozy and red in the open grate,  
Warming your bosom and neck and your shimmering dress;  
And the people begin to arrive, for it's five to eight.

I'm not very near you at dinner—it wouldn't be wise.

And so he goes on to "eyes", and then clucking to the horse, and flapping the reins a little, he reaches the end of the third quatrain, and calls the three *Dinner Time*.

Now that is as bad as any, though not so satirically clever as some, or so graceful as others; but its faults, I think, are too prevalent in the work of a poet who, in a more expensive effort, tells us he has "the moon under his arm". He should harness, then, to the horses of the moon or of some proud sphere, that he may give more often that sense of restraint, of curb, as of skill in league with impetuosity. This greater elegance, this austerity in company with grace, exists in the lovely poem, *Calle Memo O Loredan*, which represents Mr. Goldring in the *Catholic Anthology*, and which I should like to quote here, had it not already appeared in *POETRY*. And there are traits in other poems, too, that make one resent keenly the less distinguished aspects of his verse.

*Dorothy Dudley*

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*The Middle Miles and Other Poems*, by Lee Wilson Dodd.  
Yale University Press.

This book of quiet poems has a certain grace and charm. Its soft music conveys the soliloquies, the patterned meditations, of a man sensitive to the more delicate aspects of comedy and pathos. Neither the tragic nor the comic is here, but the smile and the sigh are sincere, and the voice has a low sweet resonance. The poet's light touch, his individual way of saying things, and his sense of the permeating and underlying humor of this earthly scheme, make him a good companion.

His subjects are varied, but nearly all are chosen from modern life. Even *Maitre Arouet's Complaint* is not only a vivid sketch of Voltaire—as his own father sees him—but suggestive of many another wayward son of genius who

bleeds quicksilver  
From any casual scratch.

*The Lament of a New England Art Student*, *Mirella Dances*, *Was It a Leaf?* and others are also studies of temperament; the war brings out a few protests, and a number of poems, especially *The Temple*, probe into the mystery of life. Indoor poems all, no doubt; poems of “a scholar and a gentleman,” but a real man nevertheless.

The book suffers from a helter-skelter succession of subjects, and a confusing arrangement of page-headings, though certain details of make-up, especially the paper cover, are in excellent taste. Some of its best poems are familiar to our readers. Here is a new one, *Night Armies*:

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The street is gray with rain,  
The gutters run surcharged. All night  
I heard war-chariots sweep the plain  
In one long-rolling wave of fight.  
Now it is dawn, and I can see  
No battle wreck, no littered plain:  
Where do wild night-armies flee?—  
The street is gray with rain.  
And down the street an ash-cart jolts  
Ponderous, and I turn away.  
God, how the ghost in man revolts  
Against the day!

H. M.

*The Jew to Jesus and Other Poems*, by Florence Kiper  
Frank. Mitchell Kennerley.

With this modern Jewess intense vitality and passionate conviction demand utterance in a kind of solemn chant, as with some of the ancient prophetesses of her race. She was born too late for Deborah's heroic simplicity of mood and divine splendor of lyricism, but something of Deborah's spirit is in her.

The book is largely juvenilia, and even the best things in it are more remarkable for their promise of power than for what they actually achieve. One feels the drive of a big nature in them, of a passion for beauty and justice which forces the muses' citadel, and rebukes them for idling, and lays violent hands on their banners. The poet's fervor becomes really lyric in triumphant moments; again, when the power wanes, it spends itself in more or less rhythmic eloquence.

The well-known sonnet, *The Jew to Jesus*, published six or eight years ago in *The Century*, is a tender expression of

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inborn racial sympathies. And *The Song of the Women*, *City of Huge Buildings*, *We Have Done Him to Death*, are equally fervent expressions of social sympathies. But perhaps *The Movies*, *You* and *Night-mood* are keener, more finely tempered poems. The last ends thus:

Closer! Closer! What are we? A shifting breeze  
That the winds of the world will gather. Yes, and these  
Our souls are separate. Oh, as a little breeze  
We shall blow into the darkness. Shelter me from space.  
The night is too vast a place!

H. M.

*Today and Tomorrow*, by Charles Hanson Towne. George H. Doran Co.

A letter from the publishers calls this book "a volume of soundly worthy American verse on modern native themes."

Of course the author is not responsible for the damning phrase, but he is in danger of falling into line with tendencies, noticeable in much magazine verse, which it describes with unconsciously delightful accuracy. With some men poetry is a mood of youth, or of a certain stage of experience and emotion—a mood which passes. Surely Mr. Towne touched it in *Beyond the Stars*, and in the present volume we have evidence of it in *Mysteries*, *Johnny Valentine* and one or two others. He may reach it again—there is always a chance that some new experience will bring it back, even though most of these poems are too "soundly worthy".

The brief lyric *After* is perhaps one of the best:

Drenched, after rain,  
The lilacs tremble again  
In the cool wind, and pour  
Their fragrance round my door.

*New Books of Verse*

Crushed, when Love dies,  
Bravely her spirit cries;  
But through Life's empty room,  
Oh, the perfume!

H. M.

*The Nameless One*, by Anne Cleveland Cheney. Frederick A. Stokes Co., New York.

How should a modern poet write a sixteenth-century tragedy? Of course it is possible to say "Don't!" like Punch to certain other adventurers. But that advice would not be final—there should be a way.

Of one thing, however, I feel sure: it should not be written in a futile imitation of Elizabethan English, like this:

Beshrew me now, a-gadding it must go,  
To see a limb o' Satan in his cell,  
Whatever hap;—the evil eye to 'em all!  
I'll to my business—dangle an' who may!

Such a diction artificializes whatever it tries to express. The truest, most dramatic story could never be convincing in it.

H. M.

THE SPIRIT OF '76 IN POETRY

*The Spirit of the American Revolution, as Revealed in the Poetry of the Period*, by Samuel White Patterson, A. M., Ph. D. Richard G. Badger.

This is an excellent study and compilation of American verse from 1760 to 1783, beginning with Philip Freneau. It was a period which produced full-grown patriots, but its poets were extremely sophomoric.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE DEAD IRISH POETS

I

Dear Editor: As a friend of each of the three poets who were executed in Dublin, I should like to thank, through you, the poets of America for the demonstration of sympathy and protest they made in Central Park, New York, on the afternoon of 28th June. Particularly I should like to thank Mr. Markham who presided, Mr. George Sterling and yourself for clear messages of sympathy, Mr. Joyce Kilmer and Miss Margaret Widdemer, who spoke and read poems for the occasion, and especially Mr. Louis Untermeyer, who read a very powerful poem of protest.

The three poets who were shot in Dublin in May were of the clan of Byron and Shelley and Walt Whitman—they committed themselves to liberty even unto death. Thomas MacDonagh, speaking of his country and his country's hopes in a book which has just been published, *Literature in Ireland*, said:

It is well for us that our workers are poets and our poets workers . . . and it is well too that here still that cause which is identified, without underthought of commerce, with the cause of God and Right and Freedom, the cause which is the great theme of our poetry, may any day call the poets to give their lives in the old service.

Irish literature, as he wrote in the same book, begins with humanity and nature: "Later, after the English are settled in our land, not humanity but the nation, Kathleen ni Houlihan, is our heroic theme." That is true; and no men

ever handled an heroic theme more heroically than they did—Pearse, MacDonagh and Plunkett.

I understand that my good friend Joseph Campbell is writing you about Padraic Pearse. So I shall say nothing here about him beyond sending you a translation of a little poem of his I discovered lately. It is a cradle song from his single volume, *Sleep Songs and Sorrow Songs*, and the translation is by MacDonagh.

O little head of gold! O candle of my house!  
Thou wilt guide all who travel this country.

Be quiet, O house! And O little gray mice,  
Stay at home to-night in your hidden lairs!

O moths at the window, fold your wings!  
Cease your droning, O little black chafers!

O plover and O curlew, over my house do not travel!  
Speak not, O barnacle-geese, going over the mountain here!

O creatures of the mountain, that wake so early,  
Stir not to-night till the sun whitens over you.

“The monotonous repetition of the one rhyme throughout,” said MacDonagh, speaking of the original, “and the swaying flow of the verse, help to make this poem a perfect lullaby.”

I shall speak a little of MacDonagh and Plunkett.

Search, eagerness, devotedness—these are the words that spell out Thomas MacDonagh's spirit for me. His life was an eager search for something to which he could give the whole devotion of his being. He was a poet and a scholar, an eager friend, a happy-hearted companion. His dream was always of a lofty action. It is terrible to think that we shall never see again that short figure with the scholar's

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brow and the dominating nose, and never listen again to his flow of learned, witty and humorous talk. I have one deep regret about MacDonagh—it is that he left so little in poetry of the happy-hearted and humorous part of his nature. He knew popular life in the Irish country and the Irish country town intimately, but he has put his feeling for popular and humorous life into only one poem quite completely, the unique and masterly *John-John*. He has left his testament in the poem *Wishes for my Son*, addressed to his first child Donnachd, born in 1912 on St. Cecilia's day.

God to you may give the sight  
And the clear undoubting strength  
Wars to knit for single right,  
Freedom's war to knit at length,  
And to win, through wrath and strife  
To the sequel of my life.

But for you, so small and young,  
Born on St. Cecilia's Day,  
I in more harmonious song  
Now for nearer joys should pray—  
Simple joys: the natural growth  
Of your childhood and your youth,  
Courage, innocence and truth:

These for you, so small and young  
In your hand and heart and tongue.

When one saw Joseph Mary Plunkett for the first time one was inclined to think that illness had made inroads on all his powers. But he had a conqueror's will. His and MacDonagh's friendship was one of the finest things I know of. MacDonagh's influence brought him from the study into affairs, continually adding to his qualities of decision and command. The family of Joseph Mary Plunkett had al-



*The Dead Irish Poets*

ready their martyr—the venerable Oliver Plunkett, of the seventeenth century, for whom a process of canonization has been set up in Rome. Joseph Plunkett published one book of verse, *The Circle and the Sword*, and he has left the manuscript of another book. The poem I regard as our proudest piece of national defiance is called *Our Heritage*:

This heritage to the race of kings:  
Their children and their children's seed  
Have wrought their prophecies in deed  
Of terrible and splendid things.

The hands that fought, the hearts that broke  
In old immortal tragedies,  
These have not failed beneath the skies:  
Their children's heads refuse the yoke.

And still their hands shall guard the sod  
That holds their fathers' funeral urn;  
Still shall their hearts volcanic burn  
With anger of the sons of God.

No alien sword shall earn as wage  
The entail of their blood and tears.  
No shameful price for peaceful years  
Shall ever part this heritage.

It is stupid to think that the pride that is behind this poem can be quelled by machine guns.

Another Irish poet has been condemned to death but has not been executed—Sir Roger Casement. Casement's life has been all action, but he has left a few fine poems. His *Hamilcar Barca* is one of the finest sonnets I have ever read—it gives the figure of an unconquerable man who stands lonely against an empire.

May I ask the sympathy of the poets of America for one who has been the discoverer of a great body of fine poetry,

## POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

one who has edited and published the authentic Ossianic poetry—Professor Eoin MacNeill? Professor MacNeill was president of the Irish Volunteers, but he used all his influence to prevent the insurrection of Easter. Yet he has been sentenced to penal servitude for life. At this moment a distinguished scholar is actually enduring hard labor and solitary confinement in a British prison, for doing no more than that for which another man, Sir Frederick Smith, was made a member of the Cabinet, an Attorney General and a prosecutor of rebels. Let me ask sympathy too for another Irish poet and distinguished critic, Darrell Figgis, who has been deported and lodged in a prison camp, although he had no hand in the insurrection.

*Padraic Colum*

### II

Padraic Pearse, who on May 1st met his death at the hands of a British firing-party, was a writer of distinction both in English and Gaelic. His English prose has a nervous intensity of style that was but an *epiphaneia*, a showing-forth of the spirit burning within the man himself. Connacht-nurtured, he had a profound knowledge of modern Gaelic. His anthology of Gaelic poetry which appeared serially in the pages of *The Irish Review*, now defunct, is the best thing of its kind that has yet been done. The following lyric, which I have translated from *Suantraidhe agus Golt-raidhe (Sleep-Songs and Laments)*, 1914, his only book of original verse, shows that he had for a long time been in love with death:

## The Dead Irish Poets

A rann I made in my heart  
For the knight, for the high king,  
A rann I made for my love,  
For the king of kings, for old Death.

Brighter to me than the light of day  
The darkness of your clay-black house;  
Sweeter to me than the music of doves  
The quiet of your house, and its everlasting silence.

Joseph Campbell

### NOTES

Mr. T. Sturge Moore, the distinguished English poet, appears this month in POETRY for the first time. His more recent books of verse are: *Poems*, *Mariamne*, *A Sicilian Idyll and Judith*, and *The Sea is Kind*. Duckworth is Mr. Moore's publisher in England; an American edition of *The Sea is Kind* was published by the Houghton-Mifflin Co. in 1914.

Other poets who have not hitherto been published in the magazine are:

Mr. Clinton Joseph Masseck, Instructor in English in Washington University, St. Louis, has strongly influenced his students toward appreciation of modern poetry; and as Director of the Little Playhouse he has been an equally progressive influence in the drama.

Miss Amy Sebree-Smith, of San Diego, Cal.; Miss Ruth Hall, of Catskill, N. Y.; and Miss Jean O'Brien, of New York but now resident in Habana, Cuba, have published little as yet.

Of the poets familiar to our readers, Miss Amy Lowell, of Brookline, Mass., needs no introduction. Her latest book of verse, *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed*, has had several printings, and *Six French Poets* will soon be in its second edition (both published by Macmillan).

Marguerite Wilkinson (Mrs. James W.) is still conducting the poetry department of the Los Angeles *Graphic*, although she is no longer living on "the Coast." Her books of verse are: *In Vivid Gardens* (Sherman, French & Co.), *By a Western Wayside* and *Mars: a Modern Morality Play*.

Mr. Victor Starbuck, a young lawyer of Orlando, Fla.; Mr. John Russell McCarthy, a journalist of Huntingdon, Pa.; and Mrs. Anita Fitch, of New York, have printed no volumes of verse as yet.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:

- Songs of a Vagrom Angel*, by Elsa Barker. Mitchell Kennerley.  
*Songs of Armageddon and Other Poems*, by George Sylvester Viereck. Mitchell Kennerley.  
*Epitaphs of Some Dear Dumb Beasts*, by Isabel Valle. Gorham Press.  
*Thursday's Child*, by Elizabeth Rendall. B. H. Blackwell, Oxford, England.  
*Bohemian Glass*, by Esther Lillian Duff. B. H. Blackwell.  
*Contacts and Other Poems*, by T. W. Earp. B. H. Blackwell.  
*The Escaped Princess and Other Poems*, by W. R. Childe. B. H. Blackwell.  
*Poems of Panama and Other Verse*, by George Warburton Lewis. Sherman, French & Co.  
*Poems*, by Chester Firkins. Sherman, French & Co.  
*Plantation Songs and Other Verse*, by Ruth McEnergy Stuart. D. Appleton & Co.

PLAYS:

- The Pipes O' Pan—a Wood Dream*, by Sylvia Sherman. Richard G. Badger.

ANTHOLOGIES AND TRANSLATIONS:

- The Rime Nuove of Giosué Carducci*. Translated from the Italian by Laura Fullerton Gilbert. Richard G. Badger.  
*A Harvest of German Verse*. Selected and Translated by Margarete Münsterberg. D. Appleton & Co.  
*A Collection of Nursery Rhymes*. Printed by C. L. F. for the Poetry Bookshop.

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And the wind comes and goes  
Bearing them into the silence—  
For each of my dreams a rose.

The door to the house is bolted  
And on the hearth no fire!  
And my heart keeps burning, burning  
With the live coals of Desire.

Yet here when the roses were blooming  
I turned from their thorns in pain,  
And here when the door was open  
I dreamed of a palace in Spain.

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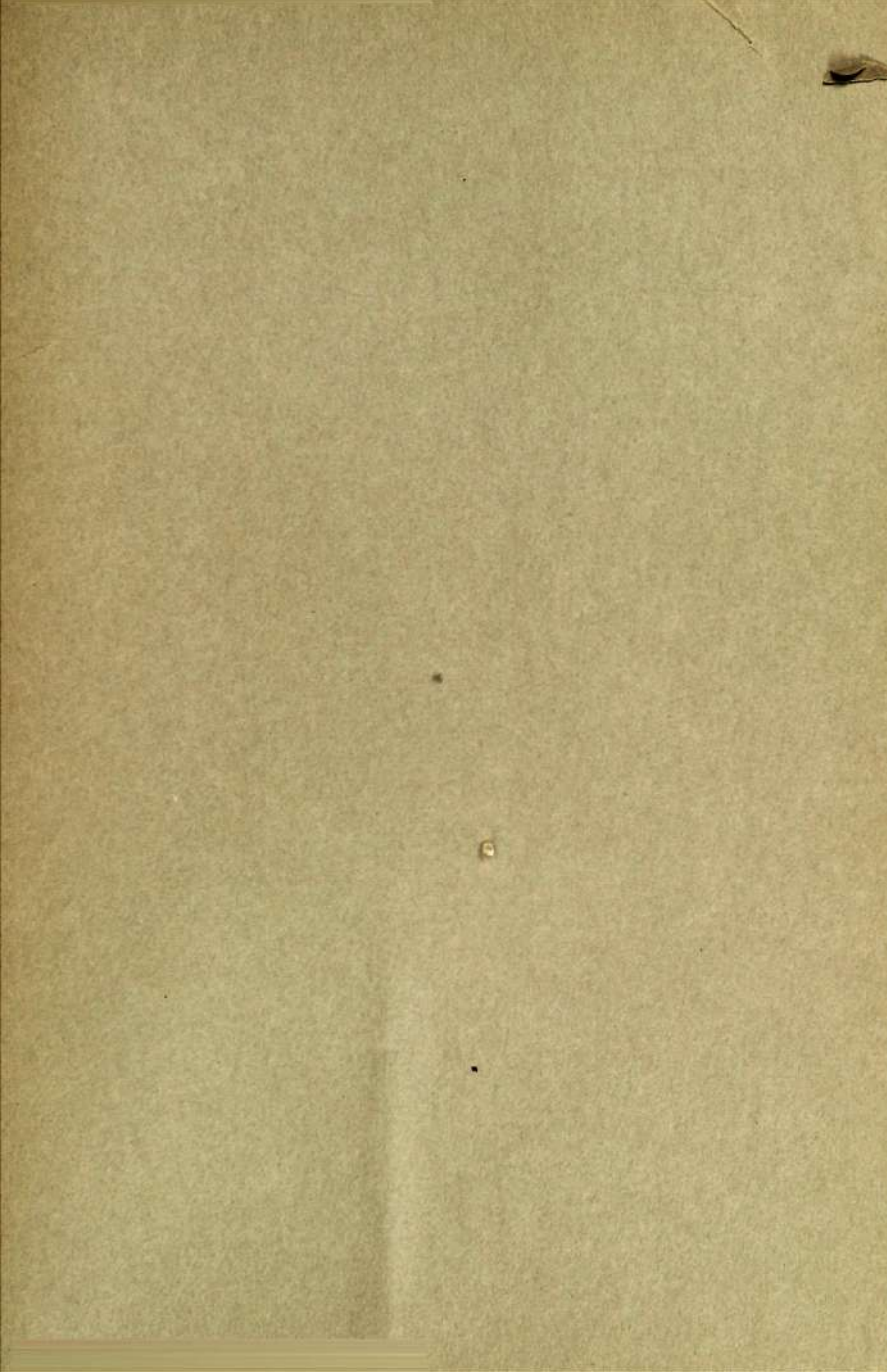
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