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HIGH CHIN BOB

WAY high up in the Mokiones, among the mountain tops,
A lion cleaned a yearlin's bones and licked his thankful chops,
When who upon the scene should ride a trippin' down the slope,
But High Chin Bob of sinful pride and maverick-hungry rope.

"Oh, glory be to me!" says he, "and fame's unfadin' flowers;
I ride my good top hoss today and I'm top hand of Lazy-J,
So, Kitty-cat, you're ours!"

The lion licked his paws so brown and dreamed soft dreams of veal,
As High Chin's loop come circlin' down and roped him round his meal.
He yowled quick fury to the world and all the hills yelled back;
That top hoss give a snort and whirled, and Bob caught up the slack;

"Oh, glory be to me," says he, "we'll hit the glory trail.
No man has looped a lion's head and lived to drag the bugger dead,
Till I shall tell the tale."

'Way high up in the Mokiones that top hoss done his best,
'Mid whippin' brush and rattlin' stones from cañon-floor to crest;
Up and down and round and cross, Bob pounded weak and wan,
But pride still glued him to his hoss and glory drove him on.

"Oh, glory be to me," says he, "this glory trail is rough!
I'll keep this dally round the horn until the toot of judgment morn,
Before I'll holler 'nough!"

Three suns had rode their circle home beyond the desert rim,
And turned their star-herds loose to roam the ranges high and dim;
And whenever Bob turned and hoped the limp remains to find,
A red-eyed lion, belly-roped, but healthy, loped behind!

"Oh, glory be to me," says Bob, "he kaint be drug to death!
These heroes that I've read about were only fools that stuck it out,
To the end of mortal breath."

'Way high up in the Mokiones, if you ever come there at night,
You'll hear a ruckus amongst the stones that will lift your hair with fright;
You'll see a cow hoss thunder by and a lion trail along,
And the rider bold, with chin on high sings forth his glory song:

"Oh, glory be to me," says he, "and to my mighty noose;
Oh, pardner, tell my friends below, I took a ragin' dream in tow,
And though I never laid him low—I never turned him loose!"

Cowboy Song—Author Unknown
SONGS OF MANY MOODS

A SONG OF HAPPINESS

So many folk are happy folk—
The feathered folk and furred!
And many a kindly glance I've had
And many a brisk bright word
From squirrel and from gray fieldmouse,
From cardinal and blackbird.

It's only folk within the wood
Can know my happiness.
I did not tell my secret, but
I heard the robins guess;
The golden minnow knows it
Beneath the water-cress.

MAHHAVIS

There is no flower that would hide from him
The mystic secret that the woodland knows—
Not johnny-jump-ups in the shadows dim,
Not foxglove nor the delicate pale rose,
Nor any smallest forest thing that grows.
For he is lover and interpreter
To all shy life that blooms or sings, or goes
Fur-clad or wingèd. He knows every burr,
That clings to Summer's hem, and each brown insect's whir.

[228]
Mahhavis

He loves the screech-owl and the screaming jay;
His heart is tender to the fleet-winged swallow,
To sea-gulls and to sparrows at their play,
And to the hook-beaked hawks that swiftly follow.
The marsh-hen, building by the sedgy shallow,
Is not more gentle with her brood than he,
Who finds her nest beside the tall rose-mallow,
And lifts aside the fern, that he may see
Her little fledglings there, and woo them cunningly.

For him the forest is shot through with song—
Wren-song and thrush-song thrilling from the trees,
Bee-song shut close in mountain-pink; and strong
Sweet arrowy notes from bugles of the breeze.
With a laughing, curious lover's eyes he sees
The sycamores, nymph-white, shake out their hair,
Green as the locks of lithe-limbed Nereides.
All things we dream of in the forest there
Are real to him, for whom a flower is a prayer.

SHADOWS

I

My dreams of you are sombre in the twilight
As a hedge of bramble growing interlaced—
A straggling little hedge with scarlet berries,
Sharp to the touch, and bitter to the taste.
POETRY:  A Magazine of Verse

II

This is my wrong to you, O man that I love—
   I who had all to give
And would have held back naught thereof,
   I whom love taught to live,

When you asked for a loaf of my baking,
   And a bit of blossomy spray,
Gave only these for your taking,
   And hid the rest away.

WIND-BLOWN

I

My heart
Rooted like the tree,
Like the tree reaches out yearning arms
Clutching at the wind.

II

Out of a universe of things
Two only
Give me any measure of peace:
Rain
That shuts you out,
And wind
That bears me away.

[230]
Shadows

III

If for one hour,
One hour when the sunset is live gold,
I might be a little wind
Running with gray feet along the edge of the world,
Could I not forget
For one hour?

COMPENSATION

I shall not grieve that you are dead.
   I sing to you when the stars hang low;
And though I sang till dawn were red,
   You still must hear, you could not go.

You are contented, being dead—
   You who were used to wander far.
Now I plant flowers at your head,
   And steal out nightly where you are.

Ah, once you wandered far and long.
   And left me waiting hopeless here.
Though I sent you my breaking heart in a song,
   You were too far—you could not hear.

Now it is I could go oversea,
   And though I stayed till years were sped,
You would lie peaceful, waiting me.
   I shall not grieve that you are dead.

Muna Lee
KITES

High on the telephone wires, the paltry pitiful thing
Hangs in rags and tatters and loops of string.
A slight breeze shakes it, but cannot shake it down.
It flutters and flutters forgotten above the town.

I hate a stranded kite,
Picked to the bones where the wind has claws that tear
And the rain has teeth that bite.
A child’s is a great despair!

Such a lot of paste
And twine it took, and wrapping or daily paper,
And twists for its tail, lest it cut too great a caper
Up in the cumulous, out in the bellying, buoying air. . . .
Now it hangs there!

My dreams are gorgeous kites like the kites Chinese.
I can feel them tug and yank at my brain, in a breeze,
Shaped like serpent-dragons and whiskered tigers and other eccentric glories,
Such as knights and goblins and beasts out of fairy stories;
Hung with golden tinsel, and silver, and bright red fire-cracker paper,
Each jumper and twister and japer
That cuts its frolic caper
High in the buoyant blue.
And, high as I fly them, I stand a gaper
At other kites. Do you?

[232]
My kites are great gilt angels in garments of blue,
With white-feathered wings I scalloped from song-book pages.
They dip and romp
In happy pomp
High over the tossing trees, and the houses too;
And afloat through the silver of night they fling bright gages
At the hornèd stars with their luminous, twinkling graces.
They sway on the traces
Of comets, and nudge the moon, and smile all the while
The same untiring and ineffable smile . . .
Is it painted upon their faces?

My kites are huge like elephants, small like mice.
I fly them all in a flock, in spite of advice—
The best advice!
They go up in rainbow brilliance and snow-white storms,
In all shapes and forms.

Well, here's their memento! here's the superb ideal
Clutched by the real!
That frail little skeleton flutters between the wires
Till the eyesight tires. . . .

I turn to go—
Somewhat dashed, somewhat dashed, you know!
But regard that bright
Bulge of gold-lit glory that soars o'er those roofs, so white!
Get a golden cord! I must have that cloud for a kite!

William Rose Benét
KIN TO SORROW

Am I kin to Sorrow,
That so oft
Falls the knocker of my door—
  Neither loud nor soft,
But as long accustomed,
  Under Sorrow's hand?
Marigolds around the step
  And rosemary stand,
And then comes Sorrow—
  And what does Sorrow care
For the rosemary
  Or the marigolds there?
Am I kin to Sorrow?
Are we kin?
That so oft upon my door—
  Oh, come in!

THE LITTLE TAVERN

I'll keep a little tavern
  Below the high hill's crest,
Wherein all gray-eyed people
  May set them down and rest.
There shall be plates a-plenty,
  And mugs to melt the chill

[234]
The Little Tavern

Of all the gray-eyed people
Who happen up the hill.

There sound will sleep the traveler,
And dream his journey's end,
But I will rouse at midnight
The falling fire to tend.

Aye, 'tis a curious fancy—
But all the good I know
Was taught me out of two gray eyes
A long time ago.

AFTERNOON ON A HILL

I will be the gladdest thing
Under the sun!
I will touch a hundred flowers
And not pick one!

I will look at cliffs and clouds
With quiet eyes,
Watch the wind bow down the grass
And the grass rise.

And when lights begin to show
Up from the town
I will mark which must be mine,
And then start down!

Edna St. Vincent Millay

[235]
WHEN I HEARD YOU WERE DEAD

When I heard you were dead,
I had little more than a startled word to give;
We had been too long apart,
And all the years I had been cold to you.
But the pity and pain of your leave-taking filled me with slow resentment.

Once I would have cared to make a song
About a flower you gave me—
An old rose shut in a book that is lost.

I was cruel to you,
And you had nothing better from the rest of the world;
That is what made me angry.

Well, we can love the dead in our own way
And not hurt them;
We can be very tender, knowing well
They will not come back to us.

I have thoughts for you now,
I have words of bereavement;
I see how lovely and rare you were
And cry out after you.

Where are you now, whom I played with on the sands when we both were young?
I remember your girl’s body stocky and strong,
When I Heard You Were Dead

Your little hard hand-clasp,
Your truthful eyes,
Your corn-pale dancing hair
Growing low on your small forehead.
I remember you, wet from the surf, catching ball like a
rough boy.

I know death has you;
That very likely you were glad to die,
Going out lonely and in bitterness,
With your dreams all crunched to black dust . . .
Too strong for life, too honest, too friendly and too tender.

I hope, if the grave has not conspired to hold you,
You have forgotten about all that.
I hope, if I could come to an old sea-beach white and sunny,
Where spirits immortally human played,
I would find you there, O gray eyes—the laughing comrade
of boys!

THE ADVENTURER

I

What is he struggling to say,
With his red, wrinkled face
And clawing hands?

[237]
He has just come out of the darkness,
Its silence is still upon him,
And already he wants to talk about life!

Hush!—
Perhaps he has some great secret of birth and death,
Learned back there in the black womb,
Which he feels life stealing;
And he wants to tell it to us
And cannot.

He is more terrible than funny.

II

Gallop, gallop on my knee—
What a tireless rider!

I didn't think of your doing this
When, in the stillness of night,
We set you stirring.

Now I suppose you must keep on!

If you follow your daddy
You will have a merry and sad time,
Riding a cock-horse
To Banbury Cross.
Arise, child, in the morning!
Go down upon the shining beach,
Find the glinting shells
And the white drops of moonstone.

Gather and toss them away,
Leaping.

Under the towering sky
Be wild as you are white!
Your limbs are light and can dance.

Do you know how far they can dance?
Dance, child, and see.

Wilton Agnew Barrett
COMING OUT OF ETHER

Swish—swish—flash by the spokes of the Wheel of Pain;
Dizzily runs the whining rim.
Way down in the cool dark is slow-revolving sleep,
But I hang heavily writhing in hot chains
High in the crimson stillness of my body,
And the swish-swish of the spokes of the Wheel of Pain.

CLINIC

Square white cells, all in a row, with ground-glass windows;
Tubes treasuring sacraments of suffering, rubber pipes,
apparatus;
Walls maculate with old yellow and brown. . . .

Out of a mass of human flesh, hairy and dull,
Slim shining steel grows, dripping slow pale thick drops,
And regularly, like distant whistles in a fog, groaning. . . .

Young internes, following the great surgeon like chicks a hen,
Crowd in as he pokes, wrenches, and dictates over his shoulder,
And hurries on, deaf to the shuddering spirit, rapt in a
dream of machinery.
OPERATING ROOM

Sunlight floods the shiny many-windowed place,
Coldly glinting on flawless steel under glass,
And blaring imperially on the spattered gules
Where kneeling men grunt as they swab the floor.

Startled eyes of nurses swish by noiselessly,
Orderlies with cropped heads swagger like murderers;
And three surgeons, robed and masked mysteriously,
Lounge gossiping of guts, and wish it were lunch-time.

Beyond the porcelain door, screaming mounts crescendo—
Case 4001 coming out of the ether,
Born again half a man, to spend his life in bed.

John Reed

BEAUTY

Beauty is not the hue and glow of right,
Nor for man's pleasure given.
Even Hell itself is beautiful at night
From the far windows of Heaven.

Alfred Hitch
THE BEGGAR

A little piece of your mantle, kind God...
... to cover me...
Out here in the open
The winds of Time blow death.
The world is a fiery sun
Beating upon my head.
I faint...
A piece of your mantle...
... a scrap ... a single thread
Of the Eternal...
... will keep me...
Thank you, kind God!

THE STATUE

I have left a song—
A strong cry of exultation
Standing under the dome
Of the Great Central.
A cry ... a song...
A long white gesture of love
With upturned lyric palms
Held out to the people...
The nervous ... hurried ... weary ... blind
... deaf people
Passing...
MATINS

The crust of sleep is broken
Abruptly—
I look drowsily
Through the wide crack.
I do not know whether I see
Three minds, bird-shaped,
Flashing upon the bough of morning;
Or three delicately tinted souls
Butterflying in the sun;
Or three brown-fleshed, husky children
Sprawling hilarious
Over my bed
And me.

Jeanne D'Orge

CLOTHES

When the wind chilly blows
I'm glad I wear clothes.
When the sun hath me bak-ed
I wish I were naked

Viola T. Paradise
A DAY

SUN PRAYER

Sun,
Lay your hand upon my head.
I shall be kind today.
Sun, make me kind!
And lovely too—
My eyes
And cheeks. And make me wise.
I bow my head
Low, low—
Lay your hand upon it, so.

WIND PRAYER

Tree-wind,
Sea-wind,
Wind that whirls the sand;
Loud wind,
Cloud-wind,
Wind of swaying water—
Let me hold your hand,
Let me be your daughter!
Give me what I need,
Wind of leaf and seed,
Wind of heat and rains!

[244]
Wind Prayer

Say your magic wisdom
Over, slow, to me,
Wind that rules the sea!
Wind that rules the plains!

THE GRAPES

The grapes are round and dark,
Like eyes that mark
Each thing I do.
The sun has made them sweet and round
The wind will pull them to the ground.
—I shall die, too.

DUSK

Dusk
Wrap your mantle
About us both—
I am tired too,
And cold, and full of sleep.
And keep
Your arm around me—day
Is far away
And night has not yet called us. Let us pull
The mantle closer, Dusk, O beautiful!

[245]
I

I have three rings on my hand:
   One is set in blue,
And one has chrysoprase,
   And one I wear for you.
They are friends to me,
They keep me company
   All the white night through.
And when I think of death,
And how without a breath
The house is, and the night,
My three rings clinging tight
   Are warm upon my hand—
My three round rings
They are living things,
   And they understand.
"Don't be afraid," they say, and I
Pretend I would not fear to die.

II

My watch beneath my pillow white
Whispers to me all the night.
My heart beats and my watch ticks,
And the fear of dying prick
Like a pin God holds, and he
Stabs my brain with it gleefully.
My watch ticks and my heart beats,
And cool and smooth are the linen sheets;
And I am alone, and the house is still,
And there are stars past the window-sill.

III

I should like to be a nun
I think sometimes—
To fast, hear chimes,
And wear black gowns with folds; and keys;
And know the words of rosaries.

To have no long hair; and to give
Obedience while I live
To other women; and to walk
As though I were older, and to light
Candles at saints' feet, and talk
About himself to God at night.

Mary Carolyn Davies
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

THREE CANTOS

III

Another's a half-cracked fellow—John Heydon,
Worker of miracles, dealer in levitation,
In thoughts upon pure form, in alchemy,
Seer of pretty visions ("servant of God and secretary of nature");
Full of a plaintive charm, like Botticelli's,
With half-transparent forms, lacking the vigor of gods.
Thus Heydon, in a trance, at Bulverton,
Had such a sight:
Decked all in green, with sleeves of yellow silk
Slit to the elbow, slashed with various purples.
Her eyes were green as glass, her foot was leaf-like.
She was adorned with choicest emeralds,
And promised him the way of holy wisdom.
"Pretty green bank," began the half-lost poem.
Take the old way, say I met John Heydon,
Sought out the place,
Lay on the bank, was "plungèd deep in swevyn;"
And saw the company—Layamon, Chaucer—
Pass each in his appropriate robes;
Conversed with each, observed the varying fashion.
And then comes Heydon.

"I have seen John Heydon."

Let us hear John Heydon!

[248]
"Omniformis

Omnis intellectus est"—thus he begins, by spouting half of Psellus.

(Then comes a note, my assiduous commentator:
Not Psellus De Daemonibus, but Porphyry's Chances,
In the thirteenth chapter, that "every intellect is omni-
form.")

Magnifico Lorenzo used the dodge,
Says that he met Ficino
In some Wordsworthian, false-pastoral manner,
And that they walked along, stopped at a well-head,
And heard deep platitudes about contentment
From some old codger with an endless beard.
"A daemon is not a particular intellect,
But is a substance differed from intellect,"
Breaking in Ficino,
"Placed in the latitude or locus of souls"—
That's out of Proclus, take your pick of them.
Valla, more earth and sounder rhetoric—
Prefacing praise to his Pope Nicholas:
"A man of parts, skilled in the subtlest sciences;
A patron of the arts, of poetry; and of a fine discernment."
Then comes a catalogue, his jewels of conversation.
No, you've not read your Elegantiae—
A dull book?—shook the church.
The prefaces, cut clear and hard:
"Know then the Roman speech, a sacrament,"
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

Spread for the nations, eucharist of wisdom,
Bread of the liberal arts.

Ha! Sir Blancatz,
Sordello would have your heart to give to all the princes;
Valla, the heart of Rome,
Sustaining speech, set out before the people.

"Nec bonus Christianus ac bonus Tullianus."

Marius, Du Bellay, wept for the buildings,
Baldassar Castiglione saw Raphael
"Lead back the soul into its dead, waste dwelling,"

Corpore laniato; and Lorenzo Valla,
"Broken in middle life? bent to submission?—
Took a fat living from the Papacy"
(That's in Villari, but Burckhardt's statement is different)—
"More than the Roman city, the Roman speech"
(Holds fast its part among the ever-living).
"Not by the eagles only was Rome measured."
"Wherever the Roman speech was, there was Rome,"

Wherever the speech crept, there was mastery
Spoke with the law's voice while your Greek logicians . . .
More Greeks than one! Doughty's "divine Homeros"
Came before sophistry. Justinopolitan
Uncatalogued Andreas Divus,
Gave him in Latin, 1538 in my edition, the rest uncertain,
Caught up his cadence, word and syllable:
"Down to the ships we went, set mast and sail,
Black keel and beasts for bloody sacrifice,
Three Cantos

Weeping we went."
I've strained my ear for -ensa, -ombra, and -ensa
And cracked my wit on delicate canzoni—

Here's but rough meaning:

"And then went down to the ship, set keel to breakers,
Forth on the godly sea;
We set up mast and sail on the swarthy ship,
Sheep bore we aboard her, and our bodies also
Heavy with weeping. And winds from sternward
Bore us out onward with bellying canvas—
Circe's this craft, the trim-coifed goddess.
Then sat we amidships, wind jamming the tiller.
Thus with stretched sail

We went over sea till day's end:
Sun to his slumber, shadows o'er all the ocean.
Came we then to the bounds of deepest water,
To the Kimmerian lands and peopled cities
Covered with close-webbed mist, unpiercèd ever
With glitter of sun-rays,
Nor with stars stretched, nor looking back from heaven,
Swartest night stretched over wretched men there.
Thither we in that ship, unladen sheep there,
The ocean flowing backward, came we through to the place
Aforesaid by Circe.
Here did they rites, Perimedes and Eurylochus,
And drawing sword from my hip
I dug the ell-square pitkin, poured we libations unto each the
dead,
First mead and then sweet wine,  
Water mixed with white flour.  
Then prayed I many a prayer to the sickly death's-heads  
As set in Ithaca, sterile bulls of the best,  
For sacrifice, heaping the pyre with goods.  
Sheep, to Tiresias only,  
Black, and a bell sheep;  
Dark blood flowed in the fosse.  
Souls out of Erebus, cadaverous dead  
Of brides, of youths, and of many passing old,  
Virgins tender, souls stained with recent tears,  
Many men mauled with bronze lance-heads,  
Battle spoil, bearing yet dreary arms:  
These many crowded about me,  
With shouting, pallor upon me, cried to my men for more beasts;  
Slaughtered the herds—sheep slain of bronze,  
Poured ointment, cried to the gods,  
To Pluto the strong, and praised Proserpine.  
Unsheathed the narrow steel,  
I sat to keep off the impetuous, impotent dead  
Till I should hear Tiresias.  
But first Elpenor came, our friend Elpenor,  
Unburied, cast on the wide earth—  
Limbs that we left in the house of Circe,  
Unwept, unwrapped in sepulchre, since toils urged other,  
Pitiful spirit—and I cried in hurried speech:  
'Elpenor, how art thou come to this dark coast?
Cam'st thou afoot, outstripping seamen?' And he in heavy speech:
'Ill fate and abundant wine! I slept in Circe's ingle,
Going down the long ladder unguarded, I fell against the buttress,
Shattered the nape-nerve, the soul sought Avernus.
But thou, O King, I bid remember me, unwept, unburied!
Heap up mine arms, be tomb by the sea-board, and inscribed,
A man of no fortune and with a name to come;
And set my oar up, that I swung 'mid fellows.'
Came then another ghost, whom I beat off, Anticlea,
And then Tiresias, Theban,
Holding his golden wand, knew me and spoke first:
'Man of ill hour, why come a second time,
Leaving the sunlight, facing the sunless dead and this joyless region?
Stand from the fosse, move back, leave me my bloody bever,
And I will speak you true speeches.'

"And I stepped back,
Sheathing the yellow sword. Dark blood he drank then
And spoke: 'Lustrous Odysseus, shalt
Return through spiteful Neptune, over dark seas,
Lose all companions.' Foretold me the ways and the signs.
Came then Anticlea, to whom I answered:
'Fate drives me on through these deeps; I sought Tiresias.'
I told her news of Troy, and thrice her shadow
Faded in my embrace.
Then had I news of many faded women—
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Tyro, Alcmena, Chloris—
Heard out their tales by that dark fosse, and sailed
By sirens and thence outward and away,
And unto Circe buried Elpenor's corpse."

Lie quiet, Divus.

In Officina Wechli, Paris,
M. D. three X's, Eight, with Aldus on the Frogs,
And a certain Cretan's

Hymni Deorum:

(The thin clear Tuscan stuff
Gives way before the florid mellow phrase.)

Take we the Goddess, Venus:

Venerandam,
Aurean coronam habentem, pulchram,
Cypri munimenta sortita est, maritime,
Light on the foam, breathed on by zephyrs,
And air-tending hours. Mirthful, orichalci, with golden
Girdles and breast bands.

Thou with dark eye-lids,
Bearing the golden bough of Argicida.

Ezra Pound
EDITORIAL COMMENT

COWBOY SONGS AND BALLADS

We talk in the east of a public for poetry, and when we use this term we are usually thinking of the public who will, or who will not, be prevailed upon to buy the books of poetry regularly issued by the standard eastern publishers. But poetry existed before the printing press, a platitude none the less important for being so consistently ignored that we are apt to forget that in this country there is a considerable public for poetry of which no account is taken in the yearly summaries of The Publishers' Weekly. I mean the public that enjoys and creates folk-poetry in the United States, a public much larger and more varied than we imagine. And I am thinking particularly of the public that enjoys the folk-poetry of the west and south-west—the cowboy songs, the songs of the rangers, songs of border outlaws, prospectors, hoboes, and other lonely outriders of civilization. To show that this public exists, even though no account is taken of it in the publishers' lists of best sellers, I offer the story I heard recently of a cowboy down on his luck who had printed a collection of cowboy songs which he had heard and remembered, and some of which he had written himself, and sold enough copies of the little paper-bound volume to set himself up in business again. By that I do not mean that he sold enough to buy himself a new outfit—"a forty-dollar saddle
on a twenty-dollar horse”—and start punching cattle again. No, the sum made on the little volume (I have one here at my hand) was very much more than that; it would have made any popular eastern poet envious. And the book was sold, not at bookstores or newsstands, but, like the old-country broadsides, at cow-camps, and round-ups and cattle fairs.

The story is interesting because it shows that this poetry and this public constitute a world quite as distinct as that of Irish balladry, although, unlike many Irish folk-songs, these western songs have no literary ancestry. Moreover, although one may trace, in some instances, survivals of old English or Scotch folk-songs, as one finds them in the mountainous and isolated districts of certain eastern states, these western songs for the most part spring direct from the soil. They constitute perhaps our most indigenous folk-poetry. Too little attention has been paid, indeed, to the purely indigenous folk-poetry of the United States—excepting, of course, negro folk-songs. Perhaps it is because the folk-lore societies seem to pay so much more attention to tracing European survivals that it is commonly assumed that we have none!

Mr. John A. Lomax’s *Cowboy Songs*, first printed in 1910 and soon to be republished by the Sturgis & Walton Company, has done much to correct that impression, in one field at least. In this book he has collected over a hundred and fifty of these cowboy songs and frontier ballads. They have come to be sung, he tells us, in the loneliness of night-herding, of driving the cattle north over the long trails, in cow-camps in winter, or around the camp-fire on the marches.
Cowboy Songs and Ballads

The song-making did not cease as the men went up the trail. Indeed the songs were here utilized for very practical ends. Not only were sharp, rhythmic yells—sometimes beaten into verse—employed to stir up lagging cattle, but also during the long watches the night-guards, as they rode round and round the herd, improvised cattle lullabies which quieted the animals and soothed them to sleep. Some of the best of the so-called “dogie songs” seem to have been created for the purpose of preventing cattle stampedes; such songs coming straight from the heart of the cowboy, speaking familiarly to his herd in the stillness of the night.

The songs of this character are among the best in the book, not only the “dogie songs,” that is, but the songs of a lyric character, such as The Cowboy's Lament, with its naive death-bed repentance,

It was once in the saddle I used to go dashing,
It was once in the saddle I used to be gay.
First to the dram-house, then to the card-house,
Got shot in the breast, I am dying today.

Oh, beat the drum slowly and play the fife lowly,
Play the Dead March as you carry me along;
Take me to the green valley, there lay the sod o'er me,
For I'm a young cowboy and I know I've done wrong.

Or The Old Chisholm Trail:

Feet in the stirrups and seat in the saddle,
I hung and rattled with them long-horn cattle.

Fully half the songs in the book, however, are of a narrative character, recounting the exploits of cowboys, or bandits, or other border heroes, and not a few of them describing with graphic vividness the hardships of the particular job undertaken, whether rounding up cattle, busting broncos, or eluding the sheriff.

Mr. Lomax says that he has in some instances selected and put together what seem to him the best lines in several ver-
sions of the same song, but he has left out one very telling line, the third, in the version of Jesse James published in the American Folk-Lore Journal:

It was on Friday night the moon was shinin' bright,
An' Jesse was standin' fore his glass.
Robert Ford's pistol ball brought him tremblin' from the wall,
An' they laid poor Jesse in his grave.

In rhythm and movement the songs follow for the most part a simple ballad structure, and their diction is full of the vitality of the soil, of the life that has produced them. We regret, with Mr. Lomax, that so much picturesque profanity has had to be left out, and we wonder if he and his publishers are wholly justified in doing so—if he needed to tone down the phrasing as much as he thought. As for those songs that could not be printed at all, we regret them too. Personally I do not believe that the American public is as puritanical as the press would have us believe. It is an advantageous form of advertising at times for work that requires advertising. Of course the Comstocks and their successors exist, but they are no gauge of the public, and I hardly think that cowboy profanity or descriptive epithet is the kind of immorality, supposedly, that would give the Comstockians a thrill. However that may be, we hope that in a later edition Mr. Lomax will feel that he can avail himself of a little more liberty in this respect, and not give us songs with the edge taken off.

Incidentally it has occurred to me to wonder why there are no songs of sheep herders in Mr. Lomax's book, but I suppose it is because so large a majority of the sheep herders are Mexican, and sing in Spanish. It would be interesting
to have their songs transcribed and translated, as another contribution to the national fund of folk-poetry.

We are fortunate this month, through the courtesy of Mr. H. H. Knibbs, in being able to present a cowboy song, *High Chin Bob*, which is not included in Mr. Lomax's book, and which has never been published so far as we know. Mr. Knibbs found the song in southern Arizona, the "Mokiones" being a corruption of the Mogollons, the mountains in the southern part of New Mexico and Arizona. This song of the cowboy who "belly-roped" a lion, and who never left the "glory trail" although he found it rough, is certainly a classic of the southwest. It has a swing, and a precision of phrasing rare enough in any poetry. Whoever the unknown author may be, on whichever side of the Great Divide, he is to be congratulated.

A. C. H.

TO THE WILDERNESS

In the *Yale Review* for July Mr. Henry Seidel Canby discusses "the American impulse to take to the woods," an impulse reflected by American writers. He thinks that this "survival of the pioneering instinct" springs from a deep subconsciousness in the heart of the people. He says:

Since our writing ceased being colonial English and began to reflect a race in the making, the note of woods-longing has been so insistent that one wonders whether here is not to be found at last the characteristic "trait" that we have all been patriotically seeking. . . . It represents a search for a tradition, and its capture.

We all remember the first Thanksgiving day of the pilgrim fathers—they decreed a feast because they had so nearly
starved before the gathering of their first harvest. I had always read the story with solemn sympathy for the pilgrims until that hardy woodsman, Hamlin Garland, pointed out how absurd it was to starve in those forests filled with game. "The fools," he said, "they hadn't sense enough to learn of the Indians—they couldn't eat until they had cleared some land and grown grain! But their sons learned," he added reflectively.

And their sons have been learning ever since. The early settlers, who hadn't much art, had to go to nature for beauty; and their children, whose art is largely derived—not a spontaneous self-expression but an inheritance or the imitation of an inheritance—their children still go back to nature for the most simple and direct communion with beauty. Confused and wearied by bad art—for poor design in architecture, poor color and form in house interiors, furnishings, dress, etc., poor literature in current books and prints, poor music in clattering rhythms of vicious noise, are all bad art, and therefore infinitely confusing and wearying—their children throw on civilization the blame for ugliness, and go to the wilds to satisfy their unconquerable need of beauty. And out of this refreshment, this re-creation in nature, may indeed spring, as Mr. Canby suggests, an art more indigenous and original, more truly our own, than all the feudal operas we sing or the Doric-temple railway stations we build.

I sometimes think that the race will be saved through love of nature, saved at last from the collective rapacity of greed and the collective violence of war. Such anachronisms can
not long survive among people who continually test their living and thinking by immediate contacts with wild beauty and primitive simplicity. Our own inheritance of vast areas of mountain and desert, forest, lake and sea-coast—areas which can never be civilized, and which, in some cases, the government is preserving as national parks—may be regarded as our most precious possession, an ever-flowing fountain of youth for the nation.

And what will our poets do with this inheritance? At the beginning of the nineteenth century, after two hundred years of pioneering, they had learned less from the Indian than those early Mayflower pilgrims, and so strong was the colonial instinct that it took another half-century to "get the lark out of American song." Even when the poets began to be aware of the out-of-doors, it was rural nature, not the wilderness, which appealed to them, as in these home-bound lines from the hymn which we all sing to a foreign air:

I love thy rocks and rills,  
Thy woods and templed hills.

Here the poet's vision was limited by a gentle village slope with granite out-cropping by the stream and a church half hidden among the trees. Emerson went further, but even his woodland poems are rural, not wild. Whittier had one or two instants of a keener thrill, also Bryant in his youth; but none of that sheltered group journeyed far from his cottage, or ever felt the keen agonies and glories of nature in her own domain.

Thoreau and Whitman were the first to shake off the dust of civilization—with them the new era begins; but Thoreau
never went west of Walden (how he would have grown in Arizona!), and Whitman, deep lover that he was of sea and sky and the plains, yet always peopled his great spaces, be it with no more than a bird calling its mate.

The Anglo-Saxon voyagers of six to eight centuries ago knew and loved and hated the sea, and in their sea songs is the power and grandeur of the wilderness beyond anything since attained in English poetry. Who that has read Mr. Pound’s marvelous translation of The Sea-farer has not felt in it a deep and bitter sense of nature missed by even the masters of English song? Shakespeare has some wonderful lines about the sea; he felt it as England’s protector and possession. Byron hurled some magnificent rhetoric at not only the sea but the mountains—the first English poet to be intimately moved by mountains, which is not strange since there are no mountains in England. And Swinburne loved the sea as well as a landsman can, gave it long odes of rhythmic praise. But the unknown author of The Sea-farer knew and sang the sea as his lover and enemy, slave and master, as the vastness immeasurable out of which he was born and into which at last he would sink like a spent seagull in a storm.

From the formation of the English language this note of wildness is rarely heard. A few of the old ballads have it, but rarely the great English masters. We get the tang of it from Ireland—from Synge especially, from Yeats and Colum—with a special Celtic flavor, but coming as it were from dells and clearings, not from great spaces.
To the Wilderness

Perhaps it remains for our poets to feel wild immensities on land as the old Anglo-Saxon poet felt them at sea. They made a good beginning with Whitman, and we feel the authentic note in scattered songs from a few of the later nineteenth-century poets, less often from Bret Harte and Joaquin Miller, "the poet of the Sierras," than from Hamlin Garland and poets more obscure. And we feel it today in many varying voices: in the poems from Indian motives of Dr. Gordon, Miss Skinner, Mrs. Austin, Alice Corbin and others, as well as in direct translations by Natalie Curtis and other students; in John Gould Fletcher's poems of Arizona and other wild places; in C. E. S. Wood's *Poet in the Desert*; in Edith Wyatt's spacious poems of the Great Lakes and the western heights; in Vachel Lindsay's poems of Kansas and the plains. And the spirit of it, though not precisely the locale, one finds in such a poem as Mr. Frost's *Snow*; in certain things by Mr. Masters, Mr. Sandburg, Mr. Johns; and in H. D., who, however preoccupied with Greek symbols, is essentially a poet of wild nature, a daughter of the pioneers and more closely related to them in feeling than many whose locale is more obviously theirs.

American poets may bear great gifts to the mother tongue and those who speak it—perhaps before this century is over. If they can bring the art "back to nature" they will achieve a real refreshment, perhaps a re-creation, of the race.

H. M.
REVIEWS

T. S. ELIOT


Il n'y a de livres que ceux où un écrivain s'est raconté lui-même en racontant les moeurs de ses contemporains—leurs rêves, leurs vanités, leurs amours, et leurs folies.—Remy de Gourmont

De Gourmont uses this sentence in writing of the incontestable superiority of Madame Bovary, L'Éducation Sentimentale and Bouvard et Pécuchet to Salammbo and La Tentation de St. Antoine. A casual thought convinces one that it is true for all prose. Is it true also for poetry? One may give latitude to the interpretation of rêves; the gross public would have the poet write little else, but De Gourmont keeps a proportion. The vision should have its place in due setting if we are to believe its reality.

The few poems which Mr. Eliot has given us maintain this proportion, as they maintain other proportions of art. After much contemporary work that is merely factitious, much that is good in intention but impotently unfinished and incomplete, much whose flaws are due to sheer ignorance which a year's study or thought might have remedied, it is a comfort to come upon complete art, naive despite its intellectual subtlety, lacking all pretence.

It is quite safe to compare Mr. Eliot's work with anything written in French, English or American since the death of Jules Laforgue. The reader will find nothing better, and he will be extremely fortunate if he finds much half as good.

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The necessity, or at least the advisability of comparing English or American work with French work is not readily granted by the usual English or American writer. If you suggest it, the Englishman answers that he has not thought about it—he does not see why he should bother himself about what goes on south of the channel; the American replies by stating that you are “no longer American”, and I have learned by long experience that this is the bitterest epithet in his vocabulary. The net result is that it is extremely difficult to read one’s contemporaries. After a time one tires of “promise”.

I should like the reader to note how complete is Mr. Eliot’s depiction of our contemporary condition. He has not confined himself to genre nor to society portraiture. His lonely men in shirt-sleeves leaning out of windows are as real as his ladies who

come and go

Talking of Michaelangelo.

His “one night cheap hotels” are as much “there” as are his four wax candles in the darkened room,

Four rings of light upon the ceiling overhead,

An atmosphere of Juliet’s tomb.

And, above all, there is no rhetoric, although there is Elizabethan reading in the background. Were I a French critic, skilled in their elaborate art of writing books about books, I should probably go to some length discussing Mr. Eliot’s two sorts of metaphor: his wholly unrealizable, always apt, half ironic suggestion, and his precise realizable picture. It would be possible to point out his method of conveying a
whole situation and half a character by three words of a quoted phrase; his constant aliveness, his mingling of very subtle observation with the unexpectedness of a backhanded cliché. It is, however, extremely dangerous to point out such devices. The method is Mr. Eliot's own, but as soon as one has reduced even a fragment of it to formula, someone else, not Mr. Eliot, someone else wholly lacking in his aptitudes, will at once try to make poetry by mimicking his external procedure. And this indefinite "someone" will, needless to say, make a botch of it.

For what the statement is worth, Mr. Eliot's work interests me more than that of any other poet now writing in English. The most interesting poems in Victorian English are Browning's *Men and Women*, or, if that statement is too absolute, let me contend that the form of these poems is the most vital form of that period of English, and that the poems written in that form are the least like each other in content. Antiquity gave us Ovid's *Heroides* and Theocritus' woman using magic. The form of Browning's *Men and Women* is more alive than the epistolary form of the *Heroides*. Browning included a certain amount of ratiocination and of purely intellectual comment, and in just that proportion he lost intensity. Since Browning there have been very few good poems of this sort. Mr. Eliot has made two notable additions to the list. And he has placed his people in contemporary settings, which is much more difficult than to render them with mediaeval romantic trappings. If it is permitted to make comparison with a different art,
let me say that he has used contemporary detail very much as Velasquez used contemporary detail in *Las Meninas*; the cold gray-green tones of the Spanish painter have, it seems to me, an emotional value not unlike the emotional value of Mr. Eliot’s rhythms, and of his vocabulary.

James Joyce has written the best novel of my decade, and perhaps the best criticism of it has come from a Belgian who said, “All this is as true of my country as of Ireland”. Eliot has a like ubiquity of application. Art does not avoid universals, it strikes at them all the harder in that it strikes through particulars. Eliot’s work rests apart from that of the many new writers who have used the present freedoms to no advantage, who have gained no new precisions of language, and no variety in their cadence. His men in shirt-sleeves, and his society ladies, are not a local manifestation; they are the stuff of our modern world, and true of more countries than one. I would praise the work for its fine tone, its humanity, and its realism; for all good art is realism of one sort or another.

It is complained that Eliot is lacking in emotion. *La Figlia che Piange* is sufficient confutation to that rubbish.

If the reader wishes mastery of “regular form”, the *Conversation Galante* is sufficient to show that symmetrical form is within Mr. Eliot’s grasp. You will hardly find such neatness save in France; such modern neatness, save in Laforgue.

De Gourmont’s phrase to the contrary notwithstanding, the supreme test of a book is that we should feel some unusual
intelligence working behind the words. By this test various other new books, that I have, or might have, beside me, go to pieces. The barrels of sham poetry that every decade and school and fashion produce, go to pieces. It is sometimes extremely difficult to find any other particular reason for their being so unsatisfactory. I have expressly written here not “intellect” but “intelligence.” There is no intelligence without emotion. The emotion may be anterior or concurrent. There may be emotion without much intelligence, but that does not concern us.

Versification:

A conviction as to the rightness or wrongness of vers libre is no guarantee of a poet. I doubt if there is much use trying to classify the various kinds of vers libre, but there is an anarchy which may be vastly overdone; and there is a monotony of bad usage as tiresome as any typical eighteenth or nineteenth century flatness.

In a recent article Mr. Eliot contended, or seemed to contend, that good vers libre was little more than a skilful evasion of the better known English metres. His article was defective in that he omitted all consideration of metres depending on quantity, alliteration, etc.; in fact he wrote as if metres were measured by accent. This may have been tactful on his part, it may have brought his article nearer to the comprehension of his readers (that is, those of the New Statesman, in which the article appeared, people who are chiefly concerned with sociology of the “button” and “unit” variety). But he came nearer the fact when he
wrote elsewhere: “No vers is libre for the man who wants to do a good job.”

Alexandrine and other grammarians have made cubbyholes for various groupings of syllables; they have put names upon them, and have given various labels to “metres” consisting of combinations of these different groups. Thus it would be hard to escape contact with some group or other; only an encyclopedist could ever be half sure he had done so. The known categories would allow a fair liberty to the most conscientious traditionalist. The most fanatical vers-librist will escape them with difficulty. However, I do not think there is any crying need for verse with absolutely no rhythmical basis.

On the other hand, I do not believe that Chopin wrote to a metronome. There is undoubtedly a sense of music that takes count of the “shape” of the rhythm in a melody rather than of bar divisions, which came rather late in the history of written music and were certainly not the first or most important thing that musicians tried to record. The creation of such shapes is part of thematic invention. Some musicians have the faculty of invention, rhythmic, melodic. Likewise some poets.

Treatises full of musical notes and of long and short marks have never been convincingly useful. Find a man with thematic invention and all he can say is that he gets what the Celts call a “chune” in his head, and that the words “go into it,” or when they don’t “go into it” they “stick out and worry him.”
You can not force a person to play a musical masterpiece correctly, even by having the notes correctly printed on the paper before him; neither can you force a person to feel the movement of poetry, be the metre “regular” or “irregular.” I have heard Mr. Yeats trying to read Burns, struggling in vain to fit the *Birks o’ Aberfeldy* and *Bonnie Alexander* into the mournful keen of the *Wind among the Reeds*. Even in regular metres there are incompatible systems of music.

I have heard the best orchestral conductor in England read poems in free verse, poems in which the rhythm was so faint as to be almost imperceptible. He read them with the author’s cadence, with flawless correctness. A distinguished statesman read from the same book, with the intonations of a legal document, paying no attention to the movement inherent in the words before him. I have heard a celebrated Dante scholar and mediaeval enthusiast read the sonnets of the *Vita Nuova* as if they were not only prose, but the ignominious prose of a man devoid of emotions: an utter castration.

The leader of orchestra said to me, “There is more for a musician in a few lines with something rough or uneven, such as Byron’s

> There be none of Beauty’s daughters
> With a magic like thec;

than in whole pages of regular poetry.”

Unless a man can put some thematic invention into *vers libre*, he would perhaps do well to stick to “regular” metres, which have certain chances of being musical from their form, and certain other chances of being musical through
his failure in fitting the form. In *vers libre* his sole musical chance lies in invention.

Mr. Eliot is one of the very few who have brought in a personal rhythm, an identifiable quality of sound as well as of style. And at any rate, his book is the best thing in poetry since . . . (for the sake of peace I will leave that date to the imagination). I have read most of the poems many times; I last read the whole book at breakfast time and from flimsy and grimy proof-sheets: I believe these are "test conditions." Confound it, the fellow can write—we may as well sit up and take notice. 

E. P.

**WAR POEMS**


The number of volumes of war verse now offered to the public show that the poets are making an effort, at least, to express the fever in men's blood. And most of these books are deeply touching, they make a poignant appeal to the heart. Their authors, whether born poets or not, are
sincerely moved by the passion of the time; the immensity of the crisis tends to sweep away self-consciousness and affectation.

To try to sift out the poetry from these throbbing outcries is perhaps our business—a business which, once begun, time will continue without our aid. A magic magnet would pick up out of the mass only a small percentage of pure metal, and that often from hidden and humble sources. For example, I had a curious experience with Mr. Service's book. After noting Mr. Witter Bynner's praise of it in the Dial, his generous acclaim of this adventurous Yukon trailer as a poet of a high order, I read the book through, almost persuading myself the while that I agreed: perhaps Mr. Bynner was right, perhaps Mr. Service's large public was right—here was indeed a younger Kipling, racing through war's marching rhythms and rising to lyric flights of song. Could it be?—was this Red Cross man from the Yukon the real thing? Then I happened to open Soldier Poets and turn to a chance song of a soldier now dead, Captain Grenfell of the Royal Dragoons; and as I read Into Battle (quoted below), part of it as lyric as the song of a thrush, Mr. Service's deliberate rhyming fell to its own lower place. Poignant and sympathetic as he is, keen and racy, pathetic and humorous, in his presentation of the life and feelings of the rank and file, his poems are, after all, talk about it and about—in none of them does he utter the very heart-cry of the emotion.

On the lower plane, of poetry made rather than sung, some of the Red Cross Rhymes are very good indeed. Here,
for example, is half of The Call, which rings brazen bells:

Far and near, high and clear,
Hark to the call of War!
Over the gorse and the golden dells,
Ringing and swinging of clamorous bells,
Praying and saying of wild farewells:
War! War! War!

High and low, all must go:
Hark to the shout of War!
Leave to the women the harvest yield;
Gird ye, men, for the sinister field;
A sabre instead of a scythe to wield:
War! Red War!

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
Everywhere thrill the air
The maniac bells of War.
There will be little of sleeping to-night;
There will be wailing and weeping to-night;
Death's red sickle is reaping to-night:
War! War! War!

We have also the touching Fleurette, the tragic On the Wire; or those dialect pieces which seem almost the very Kipling—The Red Retreat especially, and My Prisoner, and The Stretcher-bearer. The book gives us, if not quite the ultimate tragedy and mystery, if not the agony and wild humor and fearful rapture of war, at least popular versions of all these things, versions which tell about them convincingly and pass current.

Mr. Frankau's book is a slighter essay of the same kind; also in rhyme and written on the spot, out of an Englishman's personal experience. I wish I could quote the whole of Gun-teams, which has a heart for the suffering dumb brutes of battle, poor relations of Job's war-horse. It begins like this:

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Their rugs are sodden, their heads are down, their tails are turned to the storm.

(Would you know them, you that groomed them, in the sleek fat days of peace—
When the tiles rang to their pawings in the lighted stalls and warm—
Now the foul clay cakes on breeching strap and clogs the quick release?)

The blown rain stings, there is never a star, the tracks are rivers of slime.

(You must harness up by guesswork with a failing torch for light,
Instep-deep in unmade standings, for it's active-service time,
And our resting weeks are over, and we move the guns to-night.)

Lawrence Binyon's book is rhymed eloquence rather than poetry, turgid eloquence in formal odes like Thunder on the Downs and The Antagonists, but more simple and effective in a few of the short poems, like these lines from The Fourth of August:

For us the glorious dead have striven,
    They battled that we might be free.
We to their living cause are given;
    We arm for men that are to be.

Endure, O Earth! And thou, awaken,
    Purged by this dreadful winnowing-fan,
O wronged, untamable, unshaken
    Soul of divinely suffering man.

All's Well, by John Oxenham, an English poet of wide circulation, belongs obviously to journalism. Its motive is frankly didactic and religious: all is well, the war will bring men back to God, to Christ. For the Men at the Front is a good sonorous hymn, as hymns go, and now and then some poem—Christ's All or A Little Te Deum—almost persuades
one that Mr. Oxenham might be a poet if he were not so eager to drive his lesson home.

Mr. Underwood's book, *War-flames*, is on a higher plane than most of these, accomplishing perhaps everything but the miracle. It is, as the slip-cover says, "a poetic panorama of the war"—a crowded frieze showing the marching of all nations through the terrors and agonies of the cataclysmic struggle. It has processional feeling, largeness of plan, breadth of sweep; like the moving pictures from the various fronts, it should bring home to our sheltered and peace-stubborn people the bitter meanings of war. The poet has felt them from afar, he presents his impressions with descriptive power; and his limitations are those of many decorative painters of our time who are camera-tempted to crowd their canvases and systematize their impressions, and who lack the magic touch, the final rhythmic instinct for selection and composition.

The book moves through all the twelve war-riven countries, from Belgium to Roumania, with *Our Share* for an *Envoy*; but its plan is too monotonous, missing the epic love of shape and climax. Its free verse rolls along sonorously, as a rule, with an effect of biblical rhythms, as in these lines from *Atrocities*:

> Into Belgium in a gray-green flood the marching regiments are pouring.  
> They sweep with the surge of a tidal wave, filling and wrecking villages and cities;  
> For behind them a void of greed and hatred has been stirred as the sea stirs when volcanoes vomit from the ocean's bottom;  
> And old and abysmal shames and horrors are spewed from the slime of sixty sunken centuries.
The little anthology *Soldier Poets* collects wandering songs of men actually at the front, many of whom are now dead. Whether good or bad, such poems have a poignant appeal, and it is astonishing how often their simplicity and candor becomes lyric, rising beyond the reach of more deliberate art. I have felt flashes of this quality in five or six of these poets, but especially in two—Geoffrey Howard and Julian Grenfell. From the former, who is fortunately still alive, we have the proud and soul-stirring hymn of war, *Without Shedding of Blood*, of which we quote the beginning:

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God gave us England from of old,
   But we held light the gift He gave;
Our royal birthright we have sold,
   And now the land we lost for gold
Only our blood can save.

Not till thousands have been slain
Shall the green wood be green again;
Not till men shall fall and bleed
Can brown ale taste like ale indeed.
Blood and blood must yet be shed
   To make the roses red.
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As a finale, we must offer our readers *Into Battle*, by Julian Grenfell, who died of his wounds in May, 1915. This young dragoon officer was a mighty hunter in India, a champion boxer in Africa, and a rather poor poet until the martial muse inspired him with one of the finest songs of war ever written. It has weak places, but we quote it entire:

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The naked earth is warm with spring,
   And with green grass and bursting trees
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Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
    And quivers in the sunny breeze;
And Life is Color and Warmth and Light,
    And a striving evermore for these;
And he is dead who will not fight,
    And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun
    Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
    And with the trees to newer birth;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
    Great rest, and fulness after dearth.

All the bright company of Heaven
    Hold him in their high comradeship—
The Dog-Star, and the Sisters Seven,
    Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,
    They stand to him each one a friend;
They gently speak in the windy weather,
    They guide to valley and ridge's end.

The kestrel hovering by day,
    The little owl that calls by night,
Bid him be swift and keen as they,
    As keen of ear, as swift of fight.

The blackbird sings to him, "Brother, brother,
    If this be the last song you shall sing
Sing well, for you may not sing another;
    Brother, sing."

In weary, doubtful, waiting hours,
    Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers;
    O patient eyes, courageous hearts!

And when the burning moment breaks,
    And all things else are out of mind,
And only Joy of Battle takes
    Him by the throat and makes him blind.
Through joy and blindness shall he know,
Not caring much to know, that still
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
That it be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air Death moans and sings;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

Who will make up the final anthology of this war, the
one which time will ratify? Will any of us, even the
youngest, be here to read it? And how many of the names
would we know?  

H. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

Our correspondence is enriched this month by two com­munications in verse:

UNBOUND

Tired
Of procrustean
Regulation,
Verses disport
In eurythms.

Meanings,
Too long thwarted,
Throw aside their stays.

Rhyme
No longer
Beats
Time.

While Metaphors
Mix
In the obscurity
Desired.

Louis Gilmore

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Correspondence

TO CARL SANDBURG

My clever defences—
Shams,
Conceits,
Hypocrisies—
Go down before the impact of your beefy lunge.
Your hairy fist,
Like a ton of rock,
Smashes me in the face.
I take the count—
One, two, three, four—
To come back bloody,
Laughing:
Every time you hit me
I get a stronger hold on myself.

Egmont Hegel Arens

NOTES

POETRY and its readers would welcome information about the author of High Chin Bob.

Three of the other poets in this number are new to our readers:
Miss Edna St. Vincent Millay, recently a student at Vassar, first became known through her beautiful poem, Renascence, published nearly five years ago in the Kennerley anthology, The Lyric Year. Since then she has appeared in various magazines.
Miss Jeanne D'Orge, of Newton Centre, Mass., has appeared in Others. Miss Viola P. Paradise lives in Washington, D. C.

Of the poets who have appeared before in POETRY:
Mr. William Rose Benét, of New York, one of the editors of The Century, has published several books of verse, the latest being The Great White Wall (Yale Univ. Press).
Miss Muna Lee, of Oklahoma City, received last November from POETRY Mrs. Julius Rosenwald's prize of one hundred dollars for a lyric.
Miss Mary Carolyn Davies has appeared in various magazines, and will soon publish her first book of verse.
Mr. John Reed, the radical author and journalist, first appeared as a poet in the third number of this magazine, with the ballad Sangar, which was afterwards privately printed in a large-paper edition.
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

Mr. Wilton Agnew Barrett, of New York, will soon publish his first book of poems.
Mr. Alfred Hitch is an Arizona poet.
Canto III of Mr. Pound's Three Cantos does not finish the poem, which will be much longer, but it completes our serial publication of that section which is now ready for the public.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:
The Omega and Other Poems, by Edward Shillito. B. H. Blackwell.
Saber and Song, by William Thornton Whitsett. Whitsett Institute, Whitsett, N. C.
An Irish Day and Other Poems, by Katharine Adams. Privately printed.

PLAYS:
Two Plays and a Rhapsody, by Katharine Howard. Privately printed, San Diego, Cal.

PROSE:
Community Drama—An Interpretation, by Percy Mackaye. Houghton Mifflin Co.

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