Poetry
A Magazine of Verse
Edited by Harriet Monroe

JANUARY, 1917

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THE NEWS

THE buzzer boomed, and instantly the clang
Of hammers dropped, just as the fendered bow
Bumped with soft splash against the wharf;
though now
Again within the Yard a hammer rang—
A solitary hammer striking steel
Somewhere aloft—and strangely, stridently
Echoed as though it struck the steely sky—
The low, cold, steely sky.

She seemed to feel
That hammer in her heart—blow after blow
In a strange clanging hollow seemed to strike
Monotonous, unrelenting, cruel-like,
Her heart that such a little while ago
Had been so full, so happy with its news
Scarce uttered even to itself.
It stopped,
That dreadful hammer. And the silence dropped
Again a moment. Then a clatter of shoes
And murmur of voices as the men trooped out:
And as each wife with basket and hot can
Hurried towards the gate to meet her man,
She too ran forward, and then stood in doubt
Because among them all she could not see
The face that usually was first of all
To meet her eyes.

Against the grimy wall
That towered black above her to the sky,
With trembling knuckles to the cold stone pressed
Till the grit seemed to eat into the bone,
And her stretched arm to shake the solid stone,
She stood, and strove to calm her troubled breast—
Her breast, whose trouble of strange happiness,
So sweet and so miraculous as she
Had stood among the chattering company
Upon the ferry-boat, to strange distress
Was changed. An unknown terror seemed to lie
For her behind that wall, so cold and hard
And black above her, in the unseen Yard,
Dreadfully quiet now.

Then with a sigh
Of glad relief she ran towards the gate
As he came slowly out, the last of all.

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The terror of the hammer and the wall
Fell from her as, a woman to her mate,
She moved with happy heart and smile of greeting—
A young and happy wife whose only thought
Was whether he would like the food she'd brought,
Whose one desire, to watch her husband eating.

With a grave smile he took his bait from her,
And then without a word they moved away,
To where some grimy baulks of timber lay
Beside the river, and 'twas quieter
Than in the crowd of munching, squatting men
And chattering wives and children. As he eat,
With absent eyes upon the river set,
She chattered too a little now and then
Of household happenings; and then silently
They sat and watched the grimy-flowing stream,
Dazed by the stunning din of hissing steam
Escaping from an anchored boat hard by;
Each busy with their own thoughts, who till now
Had shared each thought, each feeling, speaking out
Easily, eagerly, without a doubt,
As innocent, happy children, anyhow,
The innermost secrets of their wedded life.
So, as the dinner hour went swiftly by,
They sat there for the first time, troubled, shy—
A silent husband a silent wife.
But she was only troubled by excess
Of happiness; and as she watched the stream,
She looked upon her life as in a dream,
Recalling all its tale of happiness
Unbroken and unshadowed, since she'd met
Her man the first time, eighteen months ago. . . .

A keen blue day with sudden flaws of snow
And sudden sunshine, when she first had set
Her wondering eyes upon him—gaily clad
For football in a jersey green and red;
Knees bare beneath white shorts, his curly head
Wind-blown and wet—and knew him for her lad.
He strode towards her down the windy street—
The wet gray pavements flashing sudden gold
And gold the unending coils of smoke that rolled
Unceasingly overhead, fired by a fleet
Wild glint of glancing sunlight. On he came
Beside her brother—still a raw uncouth
Young hobbledehoy—a strapping mettled youth
In the first pride of manhood, that wild flame
Touching his hair to fire, his cheeks aglow
With the sharp stinging wind, his arms aswing:
And as she watched, she felt the tingling sting
Of flying flakes, and in a whirl of snow
A moment he was hidden from her sight.
It passed, and then before she was aware,
With white flakes powdering his ruddy hair

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The News

He stood before her, laughing in the light,
In all his bravery of red and green
Snow-sprinkled. And she laughed, too; in the sun
They laughed: and in that laughter they were one.

Now, as with kindled eyes on the unseen
Gray river she sat gazing, she again
Lived through that moment in a golden dream.
And then quite suddenly she saw the stream
Distinct in its cold grimy flowing. Then
The present with its deeper happiness
Thrilled her afresh: this wonder strange and new;
This dream in her young body coming true—
Incredible, yet certain none the less;
This news, scarce broken to herself, that she
Must break to him. She longed to see his eyes
Kindle to hear it, happy with surprise
When she should break it to him presently.

But she must wait a while yet. Still too strange,
Too wonderful for words, she could not share
Even with him her secret. He sat there
So quietly, little dreaming of the change
That had come over her. But when he knew!—
For he was always one for bairns, was John,
And this would be his own, their own. There shone
A strange new light on all since this was true.
All, all seemed strange: the river and the shore,
The barges and the wharves with timber piled,
And all her world familiar from a child,
Was as a world she'd never seen before.

And he too sat with eyes upon the stream,
Remembering that day when first the light
Of her young eyes, with laughter sparkling bright,
Kindled to his; and as he caught the gleam
The life within him quickened suddenly
To fire, and in a world of golden laughter
They stood alone together; and then after,
When he was playing with his mates and he
Hurtled headlong towards the goal, he knew
Her eyes were on him; and for her alone,
Who had the merriest eyes he'd ever known
He played that afternoon. Though until then
He'd only played to please himself, somehow
She seemed to have a hold upon him. Now,
No longer a boy, a man among grown men,
He'd never have a thought apart from her,
From her, his mate. . . .

And then that golden night
When, in a whirl of melody and light,
Her merry brown eyes flashing merrier,
They rode together in a gilded car
That seemed to roll forever round and round,
In a blind blaze of light and blare of sound,
For ever and for ever, till afar

[170]
It seemed to bear them from the surging throng
Of lads and lasses happy in release
From the week's work in yards and factories—
For ever through a land of light and song
While they sat, rapt in silence, hand in hand,
And looked into each other's merry eyes:
They two, together, whirled through Paradise,
A golden glittering, unearthly land;
A land where light and melody were one;
And melody and light, a golden fire
That ran through their young bodies; and desire,
A golden music streaming from the sun,
Filling their veins with golden melody
And singing fire . . .

And then when quiet fell
And they together, with so much to tell,
So much to tell each other instantly,
Left the hot throng and roar and glare behind,
Seeking the darker streets, and stood at last
In a dark lane where footsteps seldom passed—
Lit by a far lamp and one glowing blind
That seemed to make the darkness yet more dark
Between the cliffs of houses, black and high,
That soared above them to the starry sky,
A deep blue sky where spark on fiery spark
The stars for them were kindled, as they raised
Their eyes in new-born wonder to the night;
And in a solitude of cold starlight

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They stood alone together, hushed, and gazed
Into each other's eyes until speech came:
And underneath the stars they talked and talked.

Then he remembered how they two had walked
Along a beach that was one golden flame
Of yellow sand beside a flame-blue sea—
The day they wedded, that strange day of dream,
One flame of blue and gold.

The murky stream
Flowed once again before his eyes, and he
Dropped back into the present; and he knew
That he must break the news that suddenly
Had come to him last night, as drowsily
He lay beside her—startling, stern and true
Out of the darkness flashing. He must tell
How, as he lay beside her in the night,
His heart had told him he must go and fight,
Must throw up everything he loved so well
To go and fight in lands across the sea
Beside the other lads—must throw up all,
His work, his home.

The shadow of the wall
Fell on her once again, and stridently
That hammer struck her heart, as from the stream
She raised her eyes to his, and saw their flame.
Then back into her heart her glad news came
As John smiled on her; and her golden dream

[172]
Once more was all about her as she thought
Of home, the new home that the future held
For them—they three together. Fear was quelled
By this new happiness that all unsought
Had sprung from the old happiness. . . .

And he,
Watching her, thought of home too. When he stepped
With her across the threshold first, and slept
That first night in her arms so quietly,
For the first time in all his life he'd known
All that home meant—or nearly all, for yet
Each night brought him new knowledge as she met
Him, smiling on the clean white threshold stone
When he returned from labor in the Yard . . .
And she'd be waiting for him soon, while he
Was fighting with his fellow oversea—
She would be waiting for him. . . .

It was hard
For him that he must go, as go he must,
But harder far for her: things always fell
Harder upon the women. It was well
She didn't dream yet . . . He could only trust
She too would feel that he had got to go,
Then 'twould not be so hard to go, and yet . . .
Dreaming, he saw the lamplit table, set
With silver pot and cups and plates aglow
For tea in their own kitchen bright and snug,
With her behind the tea-pot—saw it all,
The colored calendars upon the wall,
The bright fire-irons, and the gay hearth-rug
She'd made herself from bright-hued rags; his place
Awaiting him, with something hot-and-hot—
His favorite sausages as like as not,
Between two plates for him—as, with clean face
Glowing from washing in the scullery,
And such a hunger on him, he would sink
Content into his chair. . . .
'Twas strange to think
All this was over, and so suddenly—
'Twas strange, and hard. . . .
Still gazing on the stream,
Her thoughts too were at home. She heard the patter
Of tiny feet beside her, and the chatter
Of little tongues. . . .
Then loudly through their dream
The buzzer boomed; and all about them rose
The men and women: soon the wives were on
The ferry-boat, now puffing to be gone;
The husbands hurrying, ere the gates should close,
Back to the Yard. . . .
She, in her dream of gold,
And he, in his new desolation, stood.
Then soberly, as wife and husband should,
They parted with their news as yet untold.

*Wilfrid Wilson Gibson*
A LETTER OF FAREWELL

Mother, little mother,
They will tell you,
After they have shot me at sunrise,
I died a coward.
It is not true, little mother—
You will believe me.

You know how we marched away—
Banners—bright bayonets—the Marseillaise.
I shut up the old chansons—
Ah, my diplome!—
France needed her sons for war.
We waited, aching for the hour.
At last it came—
I had my turn in the trenches.

I won't tell you all—
What it meant to learn the new trade.
A scholar, was I?—and young?
Youth died in me.
And all the old epics, the beautiful songs long silent—
Ah, that was another life.
At first it sickened me—
The torn flesh bleeding, the horrible bodies long dead,
The ruined towns sprawling like toothless hags,
The mud, the lice, the stenches,

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The stupefying noise—
A crashing of damned worlds;
And then the command to kill—
At first the loathing was a vomit in my heart.

Then something rose in me
From the abyss.
Life, the great cannibal,
Killing and feeding on death—
I was his workman through ten million years.
I ran to the slaughter singing.
I killed with a shout.
The red rage sucked me up
In its whirlwind,
Dashed me on dancing feet
Against the enemy,
The enemy everlasting.
And my life, tossed on bayonets,
Blown against guns—
Staked, like a last piece of gold, on the hundredth chance—
Always my life came back to me unscathed.

Was it man to man—
The haughty beauty of war?
I grew numb at last,
I felt no more.
I slipped off man's pride like a garment,
A rotten rag—
It was brute to brute in a wallow of blood and filth.
And so, in that last charge on Thiaumont—
Little shattered city
Lost and won, won and lost
Day after day
In the interminable battle—
In that hot rush I killed three Boches,
Stuck them like squeaking pigs.
The soft flesh sputtering,
The nick of the steel at bones—
I felt them no more than the crunch of an insect under my foot
In the old days.
Then I fell, worn out,
Under a wall.
Hungry, thirsty, listless—
My gun dropped from my hand.
I could not rise;
Perhaps my eyes closed. . . .

When life came back a big Boche was standing over me—
He had my gun, but his face was kind.
"I thought you were dead," he said, and stood looking at me.
Then he unscrewed his canteen—
"Drink," he said, "poor little one—
I won't kill you."

I sprang up, as tall as he, and took his hand,
Babbling, "It's foolish business—why should we?
I'm through with it.”
And a great strength rose in me,
And a white light filled me;
Waves of unbearable love washed over me,
And I knew I could fight no more.

The charge had rolled on—
I slipped away,
Crying, “It is over—over forever—men shall kill no more.”
I shouted the news,
I summoned the soldiers.
The tongues of fire came down upon me—
“Let the guns rot,” I said,
And the cannon rust—
Look in your brother’s eyes
And clasp his hand.”

So they took me and tried me,
And I must die.
But for telling the truth—
Not for what they say.
It will surely be, little mother.
The sin that was little at first
In the savage forest
When men fought with clubs,
The sin we have gorged and glutted
With gases and bombs,
And machine-guns,
A Letter of Farewell

And battle-ships of sea and air—
It has grown heavy and monstrous,
It will be cast off like the plague.
There will be a new nation—
No one shall stop us from loving each other.

So goodby, little mother.
I don't mind dying for it—
That nation.
I see it.

Harriet Monroe

SEEDTIME

Not too deep we plant the grain,
So that it can rise again
To re-green the naked field,
Minting all its golden yield.

But these war-killed men should sleep
Planted deep, planted deep.
They have had their share of pain,
And they would not rise again.

Clement Wood
SUPREME LAUGHTER

Men laugh
When boys stand in the street
And fight because each fears the other—
    For no other reason.

Men—millions—
Stand in the gutter of the world
And fight—

If God has a sense of humor—

THE ULTIMATE

There are people here,
But it is lonely.
I should like to do so many things
And be so many things—

I am tired.
I would give all things
If I could hear your voice say,
“My son—”

Travis Hoke
THE PLOUGHMAN

Under the long fell's stony eaves
The ploughman, going up and down,
Ridge after ridge man's tide-mark leaves,
And turn the hard gray soil to brown.

Striding, he measures out the earth
In lines of life, to rain and sun;
And every year that comes to birth
Sees him still striding on and on.

The seasons change, and then return;
Yet still, in blind unsparing ways,
However I may shrink or yearn,
The ploughman measures out my days.

His acre brought forth roots last year;
This year it bears the gleamy grain;
Next spring shall seedling grass appear:
Then roots and corn and grass again.

Five times the young corn's pallid green
I have seen spread and change and thrill;
Five times the reapers I have seen
Go creeping up the far-off hill:

And, as the unknowing ploughman climbs
Slowly and inveterately,
I wonder long how many times
The corn will spring again for me.

Gordon Bottomley
MY LADY SURREndERS

How did She abdicate?
Was it with soft sighs,
And pretty feignings of a lover's state?
Or was it solemn-wise,
With altar offerings and rapt vows?
Oh, no!—when Love himself was there
Most housewifely she bound her hair,
And was off across the fields to milk the cows.

THE SILENCE

When I meet you, I greet you with a stare,
Like a poor shy child at a fair.
I will not let you love me—yet am I weak,
I love you so intensely that I cannot speak.
When you are gone I stand apart,
And whisper to your image in my heart.

SENTIMENTS

Windswept from where they grew,
These tender flowers lie dead.
How many things were true
Had they been left unsaid!

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The man is made as a machine,
He is as efficient as a new gun,
And in his light is the full spectrum seen—
He is my God, my lover, and my son.

AFTER ANNUNCIATION

Rest, little guest,
Beneath my breast.
Feed, sweet seed,
At your need.
I took Love for my lord
And this is my reward—
My body is good earth,
That you, dear plant, have birth.

Anna Wickham
A MAN

Often, when I would sit, a dreamy, straight-haired child,
A book held gaping on my knee,
Watering a sterile romance with my thoughts,
You would come bounding to the curb
And startle me to life.
You sat so straight upon your vibrant horse—
That lovely horse, all silken fire and angry grace—
And yet you seemed so merged in him,
So like! At least my thoughts
Gave you a measure of that wildness.
And oh, for many years you seemed to me
Something to marvel at and yet to fear.

But now I know that you resemble most
That growth in nature that you most revere.
You are so like, so very like, a tree—
Grown straight and strong and beautiful,
With many leaves.
The years but add in richness to your boughs,
You make a noble pattern on the sky.
About your rugged trunk
Vines creep and lichens cling,
And children play at tag.
Upon your branches some will hang their load
And rest and cool while you must brave the sun.
But you put forth new life with every year,
A Man

And tower nearer to the clouds
And never bend or grow awry.

I wonder what sweet water bathes your roots,
And if you gain your substance from the earth;
Or if you have a treaty with the sun,
Or keep some ancient promise with the heavens.

RAIN

I have always hated the rain,
And the gloom of grayed skies.
But now I think I must always cherish
Rain-hung leaf and the misty river;
And the friendly screen of dripping green
Where eager kisses were shyly given,
And your pipe-smoke made clouds in our damp, close heaven.

The curious laggard passed us by,
His wet shoes soughed on the shining walk.
And that afternoon was filled with a blurred glory—
That afternoon, when we first talked as lovers.

Jean Starr Untermeyer
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

ANACREONTIC

Do ye mock me, wantons, that I come among ye
Drunken, bedecked with garlands,
Like a white, sacrificial bull?
Laugh, then!
So Cypris, laughing, shake one petal down
From her rose-braided hair!
Honeyed with kisses, be profuse
The glowing purple that brims up this gold!
Laugh then, and mock, but kiss me: for what man
Would come among ye sober?
Wise, I come,
Borne on Silenus' ass to praise Eros.

Frederic Manning
TO A MOUNTAIN PINE

O lonely pine
Upon your granite cliff,
I know your pain—
Tossing your weird arms
To the mighty winds,
Beating your ragged breast
With shrunken hands.
I know your pain,
For I have stood
On such high, dawn-kissed peaks,
And flung my arms
And beat with futile hands,
Because I still was held
To stone and clod
By sullen roots
Of unremembered lives.

Anna Spencer Twitchell
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

SURVIVORS

On a sea island's green and swaying world
Satiric Time heaps treasures, and the shore
Far to the waves echoes an old dismay;
For heavy along it certain moths lie curled:
Weapons and mouths they have, but little more;
And whosoever sees them, looks away.

Yet once that race envied the sky with tears;
And their mornings and their evenings grew
Until the mightiest flashed in wings of light,
Ravished with blood up from the creeping years
To beat against the floor of heaven and through,
And pour down daysprings gloriously bright,

Mad butterflies: that hour a wind prepared
Emptied the air of all, and they were drowned,
And the sea moaned that washed their holy wings.
But these the wingless, these who never dared,
Went warm and safe and fat upon the ground;
And later, in due season, put forth stings.

Ridgely Torrence

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TOWARD CHILDHOOD

Backward, O Time, and for a single hour
Make a small child of him who stands before us
At the advanced age of seventy-five—
Leander M. Coggswell, multimillionaire.

In days when gross wealth drugs the very atmosphere,
It would be vain to guard these present lines from its insidious approach.
Shall I seem to overdo
If I give Mr. C. one hundred millions?
Very well; they’re his.

He lives today in semi-retirement,
And has forgotten partly how the money came;
Completely so, if asked officially.
Others have now bent their backs to the great burden;
He no longer keeps tab, he tells us, on the workings of the vast machine.

He buys now and then a picture, a coronet, a castle;
He smiles impartially on the great and on the small,
On the heedless and on the inquisitive,
Reads detective stories,
And plays croquet.

Now let us make him a little younger.
We strip him first of his bland leisure

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And of his more puerile interests.
Five years ago—yes, even less—
He was aflame to found, to furnish, to fill
His great museum,
He the modern Medici—Cosimo and Lorenzo in one.
Books, manuscripts, madonnas, choked his days;
Art and learning walked captive at his heels.

But Cæsar never grew so great, you say,
Upon such meat as that?
Of course not. There was a previous period;
A phantasmagoric jumble of varied interests
Filled the public air; all was kept aloft
By superhuman skill, and all was juggled
Just a bit too swiftly for the questioning eye to follow—
Even for the interested orb
Of the Uncle of us all:
Banks, foundries, railways, tanks, stock market, state legislatures, what you will;
Everything brought about with suave and Mephistophelean
mien
By the great thaumaturge,
While deft assistants at the lesser tables
Passed on the properties and dressed the scene.

Peeling away still further from our friend
His years, dexterity and grandeur,
We find him on a lower stage,
Toward Childhood

Before a poorer audience,
Doing less skilfully and on a smaller scale
The tricks that made the man—himself.
It seems, viewed retrospectively, a mere rehearsal
Of his immense Performance.
Here, industrious, thrifty and alert
(To give his qualities their better names),
He practiced, in semi-privacy and with no possibility of praise,
The qualities he lauded, later,
In pamphlets and addresses aimed at the nation’s youth.

Back still farther:
No company now; no firm;
Just a lone young individual,
Of parentage blent and non-distinguished, let us say,
With a young helpmate of his own kind;
Both struggling together for a foothold,
Both putting forth their strained endeavors
To feed and clothe a little flock,
And to “get on.”

Next go his wife and children.
We have left now only a young clerk or handy-man,
Of lingo semi-rustic, semi-foreign, semi-citified, quite as you like;
Moling away beneath the surface,
Yet coming up, at intervals,
To see the Main Chance shining in the sky;  
Holding his own, and more, against all youthful rivals,  
And shaping vigorously the grand ideals  
Which, later, were to fire his heart—and ours.

Next we deprive him of his office-stool,  
Or of his chance to labor hardily out in the sheds.  
He's but a boy at school—  
Quick, quick, with slate and pencil;  
Sharp, sharp, among the playground's crowd.

Next knee-trousers go.  
We have a child of four in laughable habiliments  
Preserved by some uncouth disciple of Daguerre,  
And later shown, in half-tones,  
For the derisive adoration of the world;  
But with a look, sly and determined, in the eyes,  
Which promises much.

Now but an infant-in-arms,  
Borne in long convoluted skirts.  
"Oh, what a forehead!" cries a visiting aunt,  
Pushing the frilled cap back.  
And, kissing such brows, mothers have often said with awe,  
"He may be president."

Lastly, a new-born babe,  
Hugged close within a home

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Toward Childhood

On some elm-shaded street,
Or in some slattern village farther west,
Or in some stony cabin far beyond our bounds.

Can we go on?
Yes, with Wordsworth, who has Intimations,
And who may have bestowed on him
Long streamers of supernal—or infernal—glory;
Or with Kant, who has Innate Ideas,
And who may well have packed the baby full
Of pre-accumulated notions and experiences;
Or with Galton, who cracks up Heredity,
And who may have presented a complete outfit
Of traits passed on from linked forefathers;
Or with Taine, who comes out strongly for Environment,
And who perhaps decreed our babe should be
Entirely what Surroundings made him.
Modern opinion and current fashion
May favor this last notion still.

Thus our new-born hero came at once
Within a range of influences and waiting opportunities
Which caused his Life to follow
As easily and inevitably
As a corollary upon a theorem proved—
As naturally as some prepotent cloud,
Careering through the littered heavens,
Helps weave strange, disconcerting patterns on earth’s fields.
H'm! Are we not all clouds together?—
Minor cirri, dumpy cumuli,
Multitudinous shreds of vapor,
Rosy or gray,
That float or drive about in tiny tatters;
And some fixed fault within the national sky
Prevents a proper taming of our thunder-heads.
We wait, and no high Cloud-Compeller comes
To help us master our Preponderates.

Henry B. Fuller
EDITORIAL COMMENT

THE NEW ERA

The air is full of prophecies these days. Through the war the spirit of man is to be reborn, we are told; the costly red fertilizer, so lavishly poured out, is to enrich the soil of the new era, so that souls will grow to nobler stature than is possible from the dry and weedy sod of peace. Materialism and individualism are to be swept away, and society is to unite for the common good, is to organize and function with complete precision and with elimination of waste, so that the rate of its progress will be to the past as a racing automobile is to the mail-coach of our fathers or the ox-cart of our grandfathers.

The arts are to share in this rebirth, we are led to hope. A new purpose will consecrate our poets, painters, musicians, architects; a new glamour will glorify their dreams. They will be caught up by the vast world-encompassing current, and carried along with irresistible force toward a goal of unimaginable splendor. The human race thus far has groped in the dark—divided, confined, chained. Now it is just awaking, rising, casting off its shackles. Freed by this war, all but federated by its sacrificial agonies, men and nations are just about to begin their militant march toward the common goal of a universal state organized for joy and beauty through mutual service and universal brotherhood.
It may be that we should hear some such music as that in the New-Year chimes. For the men in the trenches, for the maimed, the dying, the bereaved, it is perhaps the only adequate consolation—this hope that out of their blood-drenched earth will spring a more glorious world. But one can not help wondering whether the prophets are not led by the modern speed mania to apply to things of the spirit material laws.

What will be the effect—will it be creative or destructive—of all this vast energizing of the race, upon those men and women of genius who must, in the future as the past, be its leaders? Humanity can not move faster or further than its greatest souls: will the great souls of the new era have a chance to develop to full power through a childhood and youth geared up to the highest tension strain? and will they find room for free and adequate action of brain and muscle in the pushing, surging, driven world of the new ideal, designed to ignore, and so obliterate, all power which it can not immediately use? And how will the artists of the future live through the universal roar and rush, and find the quiet place and hour to dream in and grow wise?

Much brooding on these questions seemed to take form and substance at the first Chicago production of *Intolerance*, D. W. Griffith's prodigious new movie which Vachel Lindsay—a movie fan who has written a book on the new art—calls the most wonderful and idealistic and mystical of all
photo-dramas, the climax of cinema achievement. What was it to me, who, not being a movie fan, brought a fresh mind to the contemplation of this climactic, amazing phenomenon?

What was it?—it was a reductio ad absurdum of the speed-mania; it was an insanely de-vitalizing and de-energizing spectacle which jumbled up, in one indigestible mixture, the fall of Babylon, a modern execution, the Crucifixion and the massacre of St. Bartholomew. It ran these four “parallel stories” together at three-second intervals for three hours, making thirty-six hundred jerks from one story to another, thirty-six hundred leaps for each agitated human brain. The process was so athletic for at least one of the audience that the three crosses, the imposing Babylonian walls, Catherine de Medici, and the modern trains and motors (these last on a mad chase to save the virtuous hero from the scaffold) were all plunging together down into the abyss, not only that evening but for two three nights thereafter in the form of nightmare.

Is this the art of the future? Will there be any consecutiveness, any coherence, in the life which it expresses? any creative power in the minds which it spirals like a whirlwind? Will the new era be an age of perpetual motion, with the cinema—audaciously, sublimely efficient—reeling off art and literature?

In that case what will become of poetry—and Poetry? It is with some perturbation of spirit that we salute the new age, and wish our readers a Happy New Year.

H. M.
APPRECIATION

One of the privileges of working in a center of poetic influence like POETRY is that we are constantly made aware of the ever-growing and deepening love of beauty that is stirring in the American people. Through a hundred incidents, great and small, it comes to us daily. There are times when beauty, in this case the specific beauty of the written word, seems almost visibly present with us, and we can feel it spreading its slender leaves in the sun and striking strong white roots deep into the lives of the people.

This feeling has been awakened in us of late by a movement which is springing up all over the country, a movement whose results can hardly be estimated, but which may well be a harbinger of the true golden age of American poetry.

This movement goes back to the fountain head, to the schools where the new generation is being formed. Children are being taught more and more that poetry is something to be loved unquestioningly, not something to be dissected, pulled to pieces and hated. And one of the means by which this is accomplished is the giving of time in school to the writing of verse by the children. They are given pencil, paper, and the assurance that they will not be laughed at—something which all too often has not been given in the past—and no further restrictions. If the result is seldom, perhaps we should say never, really poetry, the after effects in love and appreciation of the art are incalculable. Whatever we have ourselves tried to do, even unsuccessfully, is ever after a source of keen pleasure, and the creation of an
Appreciation

audience, such as these children will be in a few years, may well call forth the great American poet whose wings have not yet lifted.

From all over the country indications come to us of this movement. From the High School of Pasadena has come a little printed volume of the work of the boys and girls, compiled by Miss Isabel Frazee. From a little town in the south-eastern Cumberlands in Kentucky, twenty-odd miles from a railroad, a town called Hindman, has come an account by Miss Berenice K. van Slyke of similar work in her English classes, which has produced unusually good results from these isolated, and so unsophisticated, children. At least two schools in Chicago, the Francis Parker and the Chicago Latin Schools, are doing similar work with their youngsters, and there are of course many more of whom no word has reached us.

Another movement which represents a different phase of the question, but which is also sure to have wide-spread results, is the recent appointment by the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, a federation which includes among its members over three million women, of a new committee on poetry. Mrs. Martha Foote Crow is chairman of this committee, which is planning a nation-wide campaign for study and appreciation of poetry among the women.

The potentiality of the American people, both in the creation of poetry and in appreciation of the art, is only now beginning to be realized, and we who were among the pioneers are feeling the great joy of seeing our work advance among the people at large.

E. T.

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The difference between poetry and oratory is, shortly, this: The poet aims at using language in an intense way and intensity is his product, while the orator aims at using language in an exalted way and exaltation is his product. Of course there is exaltation in poetry, and there is intensity in oratory; but the poet is not seeking for exaltation and the orator is not seeking for intensity. The use of language in an exalted way, however, is always associated with the office of the poet, and so it is easy to make oratory appear as poetry—it is especially easy to make it appear as poetry when the orators deliver their addresses in verse. Pope and Byron lived in an age of great orators, and what they wrote in verse is amongst the great orations of their time:

Lo, the poor Indian whose untutored mind
Sees God in clouds or hears him in the wind.

That is the opening of a great oration. And in Byron's long poems we get the very gestures of the orator:

Stop! for thy tread is on an Empire's dust—
An earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below.
Is the spot marked by no heroic bust,
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?

"Oratory is the thing heard, poetry is the thing overheard"—this aphorism suggests, better than a whole chapter of analysis, the difference between poetry and oratory. Oratory deals with public things; poetry deals with the secret things in the life of man. Poetry, to make use of a phrase of Turgenev's, is "the innuendo by which the soul makes known its enormous claim." Oratory asserts the less
enormous claim for country or for friends. We are made to feel that the poem could exist without an auditor, but we know that the oration, whether in prose or verse, could not exist without the audience.

Here is part of an oration from a volume I have been reading, *Irish Oratory*. The speaker, John Philpot Curran, is defending a man against whom the government has brought informers for witnesses. Curran speaks of the informer as "the wretch that is buried a man, lies till his heart has time to fester, and is then dug up a witness"; and then goes on:

Have you not seen him, after his resurrection from that tomb, after having been dug out of the region of death and corruption, make his appearance upon the table, the living image of life and death, and the supreme arbiter of both? Have you not marked when he entered, how the stormy wave of the multitude retired at his approach? Have you not marked how the human heart bowed to the supremacy of his power, in the undissembled homage of deferential horror? How his glance, like the lightning of heaven, seemed to rive the body of the accused, while his voice warned the devoted wretch of woe and death—a death which no innocence can escape, no force resist, no antidote prevent.

After reading this fine passage of oratory, I think of Curran's single poem, *The Deserter's Meditation*—the poem which suggested to Byron the Gaelic measure that he used in one of his best lyrics:

If sadly thinking, with spirits sinking,  
Could more than drinking my cares compose;  
A cure for sorrow from thought I'd borrow,  
In hopes to-morrow would end my woes.  
But as in wailing there's nought availing,  
And Death unfailing will strike the blow;  
Then for that reason, and for a season,  
Let us be merry before we go.
To joy a stranger, a wayworn ranger,
In every danger my course I've run;
Now joys all ending, and Death befriending,
His last aid lending, my life is done.
No more a rover nor hapless lover,
My days are over, my glass runs low:
Then for that reason, and for a season,
Let us be merry before we go.

In this song there is no audience in view and no exaltation is sought. The poem has intensity, and through the lines comes something of the secret of a life.

*Padraic Colum*

**REVIEWS**

**FROST AND MASTERS**


In Kipling's story of primitive men the bard becomes a thing of awe because he can "tell the tale of the tribe," can save the tribe from engulfing oblivion by "making words run up and down in men's hearts"—words that move too grandly to be forgotten. In the final accounting perhaps this is the first function of the bard, even more his office than the setting of dreams to magic measures.

These two poets, Frost and Masters, are telling the tale of the tribe, the varying tales of their separate tribes; and the simultaneous appearance of their latest books tempts one to comparison and contrast. Reading the two books as a whole, without stopping for details, one gets an overpowering impression, not only of two different individuals
but of two different crowds. In Frost Puritan New England speaks with a voice as absolute as New Hampshire's granite hills. Whittier wandered there once, singing a few songs, and Emerson from those slopes looked inward and outward for truth. But neither of these felt New England as Frost feels it.

In the same way Masters tells the tale of his tribe. We have had—we have now—other poets of the Middle West. Whitman of course included this vast pioneer-peopled plain in his sublimated vision of These States as a cosmic democracy. Riley and Eugene Field—both town-lovers hardly aware of Mother Earth—delighted in, and to a certain extent individualized, the traditional rural types of this region, types handed down from Mark Twain, Bill Nye and other great humorists. Vachel Lindsay loves the Middle West like a big brother, pleads with it, sings of and to it, glorifies it with troubadour poems, making it picturesque, weaving a glamour around it. And Carl Sandburg loves Chicago and its sea-hearted lake, knows it intimately, as a cosmopolis. But perhaps none of these has got this particular region into his blood and bones so deeply as Mr. Masters, who was "raised" in one of its typical villages and who lives in its typical great city.

"Yankees are what they always were," sings Mr. Frost. His New England is the same old New England of the pilgrim fathers—a harsh, austere, velvet-coated-granite earth, bringing forth rigid, narrow, heroic men and women, hard but with unexpected softnesses. Their religion has been
modified since Cotton Mather, but not their character, at least not the character of those who stay on their farms, resisting the call of the West and the lure of towns. To present this earth, these people, the poet employs usually a blank verse as massive as they, as stript of all apologies and adornments. His poetry is sparing, austere, even a bit crabbé at times; but now and then it lights up with a sudden and intimate beauty, a beauty springing from lifelong love and intuition, as in these images of trees from two different poems:

A resurrected tree,
A tree that had been down and raised again,
A barkless spectre—he had halted too,
As if for fear of treading upon me.

She had no saying dark enough
For the dark pine that kept
Forever trying the window-latch
Of the room where they slept.

Nature is always thus an integral part of Mr. Frost’s human dramas—not a mere background but one of the cast. It is wonderful how he builds up the terrific winter tempest in Snow, for example, and does it, not by mere statement, but through the talk of those delicately contrasted characters, the dry skeptical wife, the slower matter-of-fact husband, and the deep-breathing, deep-dreaming evangelist, lover of life and the storm. And “a springtime passion for the earth,” with human life—yes, and brute life—as a part of it, burns in such poems as In the Home Stretch, Putting in the Seed, Birches, and The Cow in Apple Time.
It is appropriate, no doubt, that Masters should be less selective than Frost—the West is less reserved than New England. Against Frost's one hundred pages we have nearly three hundred from Masters, and *The Great Valley* is his second book of this year. The watchful critic must regret much of it; especially he must wonder, to the extreme of amazement, why the poet should have reverted to *Marsyas* and *Apollo at Pherae*, which are in the mood of those early books whose academic unexpressiveness will always be one of the curiosities of literature. But one must take a poet as he is, and this poet has to pour out whatever is in his heart, and leave his readers, or Father Time, to do the sifting. He has to do this, moreover in a spirit of careless abundance which throws off magic lines in a mass of coarser texture—flowers, grasses and weeds together under a brilliant and generous procreative sun.

But this is the prairie's exuberant way—one must look at this poet, not in close detail, but in the mass. Thus one may get from him, as from the prairies themselves, a sense of space and richness. One feels in him too the idealistic vision of a man accustomed to far horizons—that impatience with things near, things more or less faithless to the imminent beauty, and that relief in the contemplation of things remote, beauty's survivals or prophecies.

This chaotic half-baked civilization, growing up out of these broad and fruitful plains into dull little towns and mad great cities, all fitfully, inadequately spiritualized—this one feels in Mr. Masters' books. One feels also a deep
and tragic love of it, a thwarted but rooted faith in it, which cannot be destroyed by all the messy materialism, the soul-wasting "efficiency," which he sees around him. His "great valley" is dominated by the gigantic sombre figure of Lincoln, the Autochthon of his dream—Lincoln, who ever renews his power in the imagination of the people, growing greater, like the elder Titans, through the mists of time.

How much of all this Mr. Masters presents with adequate poetic magic no critic can define as yet. We, his neighbors and contemporaries, find—most of us—the very essence of it in Spoon River, which will surely tell something of the tale of our tribe to those who come after us. We find something of its atmosphere also, its light and shade and space, in the longer monologues of the later books, though here the theme is more consciously and as a rule less creatively presented. But in all one is carried along by a wave of power—the cumulative effect, like a geometrical progression, seems out of proportion to the separate steps that make it. This is the reader's tribute, no doubt, to the poet's rich and generous personality—that of a deeply informed man of the modern world, something between Chaucer and Rabelais, but burning darkly in his heart a little secret candle to some mediaeval saint.

One can not leave Mr. Masters without protesting against the new edition of Spoon River, now unfortunately the only one on sale. The so-called "illustrations" by Oliver Herford are pitiful beyond words. So embellished, the book looks like the typical ornamental volume on Reuben's parlor table.
To return to our parallel—it is important that two rich districts of this country, each an individual and powerful personality, are finding modern interpreters. Who will speak as well for the South, and for the Far West between sea and mountains?

H. M.

A DECORATIVE COLORIST


In his book the dramatic monologues in the section called The Overgrown Pasture are perhaps the most keenly alive of the stories in various forms which compose it. Their free-verse presentation of the harsh Yankee dialect, and of the hard, stript Yankee character, is poetry as crabbéd as a barbed-wire fence, but it attains at times a certain tragic dignity by expressing with fit harshness the psychology of lonely New England rural women hurt to the point of madness or violence by solitude, silence, lack of sympathy and love. It is a generation gone to seed which she gives us here, an “overgrown pasture” which the hardy souls have deserted, and in which only ghosts, thwarted and wistful of life, remain.

The rest of the book might be called Decorations, for it is essentially a series—or, rather, several series—of decorative paintings. As becomes an artist in that kind, Miss Lowell has a really vital sense of color; and she keeps her planes intact, and holds her vivid tones to the key and the pattern. The only trouble is, she is tempted to become too much involved with her decorative scheme. Her form, whether it be rhythm royal or polyphonic prose, is in danger
of becoming too formal, holding not only the characters of
the story, but the poet herself, in too tight a mesh. In the
Figurines in Old Saxe this may be sufficient for her pur­
pose—a close eighteenth-century mesh, with gesticulated lovers
moving back and forth to a delicately shadowed fate. Yet
that purpose is not quite enough to give a living soul to the
work of her hand. In Pickthorn Manor and The Cremona
Violin one can scarcely observe the clever psychology, analyz­
ing women's involuntary infidelities, because of a certain over­
neatness in the design; and it is a great relief when the
heroine of Patterns cuts the mesh with the sword of tragedy,
and lifts the poem to a higher plane with her poignant cry,
“What are patterns for!” Patterns is, indeed, not only the
most effective of the Figurines in decorative quality, but the
most human and convincing as well. And one cannot leave
this group without a word of praise for the old-Venice
atmosphere, like tarnished gold, in The City of Falling
Leaves.

Similarly the War Pictures—such pieces in polyphonic
prose as Bombardment and Lead Soldiers—are too con­
sciously designed; one cannot forget the pattern, and it has
not enough spontaneity and violence for the subject. It is
only when the pattern exactly fits the theme that we get
such an admirable dramatic suite as Malmaison—if one may
borrow a musical term for this kind of choric movement,
or such an adorable grotesque as Red Slippers. These are
both in polyphonic prose, a pattern which hardly lacks in­
tricacy, but which in these cases does not obtrude itself.
A Decorative Colorist

The book ends with a group of grotesques, a mood in which Miss Lowell delights as deeply as any Chinese wood-carver. They range from the delicate attitudinizing of The Dinner-party to the fiercely jerky gesticulation of the Stravinsky imitations. The art in these is very deliberate, no doubt, but that is the way with the grotesque, always a deliberate, mocking exaggeration.

It is a relief to find a poet who is always an artist. Miss Lowell may have too much art at times, but that is much rarer than too little.

H. M.

CELTIC SONGS

Singing Fires of Erin, by Eleanor Rogers Cox. John Lane Co.

Songs of the Fields, by Francis Ledwidge. Duffield & Co.

Into a mold of conventional verse Miss Cox has turned moments from ancient stories of Ireland. Her lines are trimmed with a sprinkling of Celtic images, and a handful of immortal names—Deirdre, Aengus, Cuchulain, Emer and others. But the statement that Miss Cox follows in the footsteps of Yeats is misleading. Distinctly she bears no relation to him, not even the doubtful one of imitator.

Francis Ledwidge, on the other hand, in Songs of the Fields, is truer to his heritage of Irish poetry. A sense of beautiful language and a deep sense of fields and woods and waters meet in his poems. Lord Dunsany, who introduces him, explains that he found him, where he has long looked for a poet, among the Irish peasants. The only pity is that

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Mr. Ledwidge has not looked much for himself there, but instead has too often sought expression in borrowed language. Especially his poems of Irish heroes draw from the magic of Yeats. Yet, in a sense to justify them, they have beauty of their own too:

The gray sea-fogs above them are unfurled
At evening when the sea walks with the moon.

And later in the same poem, *The Death of Laeg*:

Sleep lays his heavy thumbs upon my eyes,
Shuts out all sounds and shakes me at the wrists.

For the rest this poet, who for a living was in turn farm laborer, miner and scavenger on the roads, seems to have been seduced by the bright idiom of Keats, and of the Elizabethans perhaps. Though he wears this garment of another day with a poet's instinct, it cannot help giving too much of his verse that unessential air of costumed quaintness. Possibly he himself would find it hard to say just why he has used words and phrases like 'tis, 'neath, 'thwart, dost, nought, the while, I thought to.

Mr. Ledwidge is now lance corporal in an Irish regiment of the Mediterranean force, in the face of which fact criticism seems cold. One hopes, however, for other poems from him, more native, more intrinsic in character, that the inherent music of his verse may gain edge and savor. Already verses here and there make a sudden image, the way these lines do from *A Twilight in March*:

A gipsy lit a fire, and made a sound
Of moving tins, and from an oblong moon
The river seemed to gush across the ground . . .
Celtic Songs

And then three syllables of melody
Dropped from a blackbird's flute, and died apart.

Sometimes his words have the amber quality of honey,
and with all their indirectness seem to distil, almost as in a
Greek idyl, the sweetness of the earth:

And I will meet her on the hills of South,
And I will lead her to a northern water—
My wild one, the sweet beautiful uncouth,
The eldest maiden of the Winter's daughter.

And now and then one comes on lines with no lack of
directness, like these from two different poems:

The brown
Nude beauty of the autumn sweetly bent
Over the woods across the little town.

Where I shall rest when my last song is over
The air is smelling like a feast of wine.

Dorothy Dudley

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

SIR ORACLE

Mr. William Stanley Braithwaite has delivered once more
his annual pronunciamento in the Boston Transcript. We
note with due humility his statement that "the influence of
POETRY has waned."

If POETRY's influence has "waned," we may still rejoice
that it seems to retain full power over Mr. Braithwaite him-
self: for in his list of the year's "poems of distinction" he
mentions sixty-five from POETRY, against thirty-five from
Others, and thirty-three from the Century, the two maga-[211]
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zines next in favor; also a POETRY poem, *Night for Adventures*, by Victor Starbuck, is one of the four spread out for special honor on the valuable Transcript page.

Moreover, this is the first time the Boston dictator, in these annual reviews, has even mentioned POETRY or its influence. We should be duly grateful that he has finally discovered us, though—alas!—with polite deprecation, as "the organ of Ezra Pound's radicalism," and with the long-delayed admission, not yet intended as a compliment, that "the point of departure from conservatism"—he should have included his own conservatism—"may be dated from the establishment of POETRY, A MAGAZINE OF VERSE."

Mr. Braithwaite's tardy and reluctant recognition of our "influence" is perfectly comprehensible. POETRY has from the first taken exception to his autocratic tone and criticized his somewhat provincial opinions. Opinions are always individual, of course; but when they are solemnly enunciated with the aid of lists (starred and unstarred for greater or less "distinction") in a newspaper of long-established literary reputation like the Transcript, they assume an authority quite out of proportion to their value, and therefore demand scrutiny.

Last year Mr. Braithwaite was almost a convert to "radicalism." This year his mind is at sea, wondering whether it should venture further out into the unknown, but on the whole steering shorewards, reverting to type. He decides that although "the influence of the innovators has been felt," so that "strength, independence and more daring execution have resulted from contact with the new forces," yet now,
"with the elimination of a great deal that sounded false, and which was very much in evidence a year ago, American poetry looks good to progress with fewer distractions." Et cetera, in a valiant effort to face gracefully in both directions.

A mind so unsure of its ground necessarily moves freakishly. Thus we remain untroubled by Mr. Braithwaite’s libellous assertion that “Mr. Sandburg, a much-heralded POETRY production, was a failure”; or by his inference of failure, in the case of Ezra Pound, from the statement that “the collected poems of Pound have so little interested the American public that they find it difficult to discover an American publisher; and the magazine Others, largely supported by his disciples, has ceased publication.”

Mr. Sandburg (who, by the way, was the Lord’s “production,” not POETRY’s)—Mr. Sandburg, stimulated by heavy sales and by the good opinion of critics like Francis Hackett, Louis Untermeyer, George Sterling, Floyd Dell, and many others of quality, can easily get along without Mr. Braithwaite’s. As for Mr. Pound, we doubt if he is seeking “to discover an American publisher,” or if immediate public response is the ultimate criterion of a poet’s fame. But both these gentlemen are muscular, intellectually as well as physically, and abundantly able to take care of themselves. The thrust at Others is less valiant. No one can fail to regret the cessation of that brave little magazine, which was founded without a cent of capital, and carried on for twelve or more experimental and adventurous months through the devotion and personal sacrifice of its editor. It may be a surprise to both editor and contributors to learn that they are “disciples
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

of Ezra Pound," though no doubt many of them are his admirers.

In conclusion, we may be permitted to inquire why Mr. Braithwaite is reprinting, in his forthcoming anthology of the year's magazine verse, eight poems copyrighted by this magazine, without so much as asking permission of its editor, or, in at least one case, of the poet. H. M.

THE SEVEN ARTS

The Seven Arts is the ambitious title of the new magazine, published in New York, of which James Oppenheimer is the editor, Waldo Frank the associate editor, with an advisory board including Kahlil Gibran, Louis Untermeyer, Van Wyck Brooks, Robert Frost, Edna Kenton, David Mannes and Robert Edmund Jones. The ideal magazine is perhaps only another Utopian dream, but none of the many now before us does just what The Seven Arts proposes to do—to furnish a vehicle of expression for the artist in any or all of the seven arts, and particularly for "that portion of his work which is done through a joyous necessity of the artist himself." This is a fine project. We will not say that it deserves to succeed, for desert is based not upon propaganda but upon accomplishment, and nothing is so barren as a slogan unfulfilled. But we shall watch the outcome with anxiety and hope.

At first sight one fears that there may be more breadth than depth to the magazine, that the ground to be covered may preclude the possibility of printing contributions of any
length. This would be a pity, as the fragmentariness of many of our periodicals makes one's mind feel like a scrap-bag, full of diverse remnants of information, with hardly so much unity as a patch-work quilt. This is but a fear, however.

The outstanding contribution to the first number is perhaps Romain Rolland's *America and The Arts*, although I confess that Allen Upward's fable, *The Saints of San Atoll*, gives me most pleasure. The Frenchman's message seems to me very largely rhetoric. I don't know what M. Rolland means when he says that we are "free of traditions," that we are by this very lack of tradition "isolated from the vast load of thought, of sentiment, of secular obsession, under which the old world groans." If it is possible, as he says, that "the intellectual fixed ideas, the dogmas of politics and art, that grip Europe, are unknown to us," is it not possible that we have our own fixed ideas, our own dogmas and obsessions? And are we not just discovering that we may not "go forward, unhampered, to our future while Europe sacrifices hers to quarrels and rancors and ambitions that should be dead?"—that our freedom depends upon Europe's and Europe's upon ours?

And I wish the editors of *The Seven Arts* would explain what they mean when they say that "we have no traditions." We have living traditions, summed up in certain representative Americans—statesmen or artists. We have many traditions, in the air, so to speak, waiting for artists to synthesize them. The artist creates "a school of style"; he does not necessarily follow one. To say that we have no traditions is to say that we have had no artists, no writers,
no poets, no statesmen. It is perhaps due to the very nature of our democracy that our genius has been so largely individual and initiative. Our writers have not run in schools, it may be; but to say that we have no traditions is to deny all that makes the American spirit, which is certainly distinct enough to have a name and to be traditional. It is to deny Lincoln, Lee, Washington, Jefferson, Hawthorne, Poe, Whitman and many others; it is to deny ourselves—the air we breathe and the ground we walk on.

"Do not copy foreign models," says M. Rolland, an injunction also repeated recently by Theodore Roosevelt, who is suddenly alive to the need of nationalism in art as well as in politics; although in his Sorbonne lectures on good citizenship six or seven years ago he made no mention of the artist's share in statehood. It is surprising how much the discussion of respective cultures incident upon the war has done to awaken interest in the arts and artists—though not enough to form any national commissions or create any endowment funds, or take the tariff off books.

"Be careless of form," too, says M. Rolland; but is not mastery of form the road to freedom, and what form of art is foreign once it is assimilated? The surest road to art is through an international understanding of art. Of course M. Rolland means that we should not slavishly copy foreign models; but we should not so use any model. Particularly we should not wait, as I pointed out several years ago, to copy our own models after they have been assimilated by France or England or Germany and so returned to us. Indeed what we chiefly need, I think, is to recognize our

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own individuality, our own traditions. Perhaps we do not lack the tradition so much as the power of recognition. No one yet, I believe, has pointed out a certain kinship between Hawthorne’s realism and that of the Russian novelists who are now so much admired. And Hawthorne flourished in the despised Victorian era. A. C. H.

THE NEW DIAL

We hope that The Dial under its new management may prove not only a “journal of opinion,” but a pathfinder. It is the function of an organ of criticism to create opinion, as well as to record it; to project itself into the future as well as to explore the past. If it does not do this, it is of no more value than a card index, useful enough in its way, but not very stimulating. The trouble with The Dial under the old management was that it seemed to live too much in the past. It was authoritative on established subjects—the only good poet was a dead one. We are very sure that this will not be the editorial conception of the new Dial.

We hope that, in the heat of controversy, we may not have seemed to belittle the achievement of the founder of The Dial, the late Francis Fisher Browne, who for many years devoted his fine abilities to the promotion of the higher culture in America. If we have criticized the paper’s attitude, it was The Dial which commenced the quarrel. We herewith bury the hatchet, and extend our hearty good wishes to the present publisher, Mr. Martyn Johnson.

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Dear Editor: Two slight poems of recent print are worth reappearance in brevier in the back part of POETRY for the benefit of those who missed them at the première. One is by Percy Hammond in the Chicago Tribune, and reads:

The entourage of the American Derby was a bit blowzy. Weeds, long grass, dust and grime and a melancholy prairie landscape. A jaz band played Pretty Baby and My Country, 'Tis of Thee. Most of us sat in our shirt sleeves and drank beer out of bottles.

The other is titled The Elephant, and is by Carmen Cerelli, who is ten years old, going on eleven, and a pupil in a New York grade school where this piece was written in a school competition:

There stands the elephant, Bold and strong— There he stands chewing his food. We are strengthless against his strength.

Carl Sandburg

Dear Poetry: I must out with it—my

LAMENT OF A POETRY EDITOR:

Heigh-ho, how many songs they write, The great ones and the small! Although I sit from noon till night I cannot read them all.

They write of most important things, Of wisdom old and new. But oh, the little words with wings They are so few—so few!

E. T.
NOTES

The Helen Haire Levinson Prize of two hundred dollars, and the prize of one hundred dollars offered by another guarantor, will both be continued for our fifth year. Each will be awarded for a poem or group of poems published in POETRY from October, 1916, to September, 1917. The prize for a lyric poem will not be continued this year.

The donor of the Levinson Prize requests that no poet shall be considered ineligible because of having previously received it.

Mr. Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, the well-known English poet, has just arrived in this country for a lecture tour under the Pond Lyceum Bureau. His new book of verse, Livelihood (Macmillan Co.) will soon appear.

Mr. Frederic Manning, another English poet, is also familiar to our readers. He is now a private in the trenches, and a book of his verse will soon be published in England.

Mr. Gordon Bottomley and Anna Wickham (Mrs. Hepburn), who appear for the first time in POETRY, are also English. The former is represented in Georgian Verse, which recently printed his play King Lear's Wife. Another play is Laodice and Danae (Four Seas Co.); and Elkin Mathews has published his two small pamphlets of verse, Chambers of Imagery. Anna Wickham's first book of verse, The Contemplative Quarry, was published in 1915 by the Poetry Bookshop.

Of the American poets Mr. Ridgely Torrence, of Xenia, Ohio, and New York City, has appeared in POETRY. Also Mr. Henry B. Fuller of Chicago, whose free-verse satires will soon be published by the Houghton Mifflin Co. Also Mr. Clement Wood, of New York.

Jean Starr Untermeyer (Mrs. Louis U.) of New York, has contributed verse to various magazines, but has not yet published a volume. Ditto Anna Spencer Twitchell (Mrs. D. S. Person), who is a native of Louisville, Ky., and now resident in Colorado Springs. Mr. Travis Hoke, formerly of Chicago, is a mystery as yet to this editor.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:
**POETRY: A Magazine of Verse**


*Dust of the Stars*, by Danford Barney. John Lane Co.

*Things as They Are*, by Berton Braley. Geo. H. Doran Co.


*Spoon River Anthology*, by Edgar Lee Masters. Illustrated by Oliver Herford. Macmillan Co.


*New Belgian Poems*, by Emile Cammaerts; with English translations by Tita Brand-Cammaerts. John Lane Co.

*Something Singing*, by Margaret Perry. Sherman, French & Co.


*Geraint of Devon*, by Marion Lee Reynolds. Sherman, French & Co.

*Cat's Cradle*, by H. Stanley Haskins. Sherman, French & Co.


**ANTHOLOGIES, TRANSLATIONS AND COLLECTED WORKS:**

*Selected Poems of Thomas Hardy*. Macmillan Co.


*Songs of Ukrania*, Translated by Florence Randal Livesay. E. P. Dutton & Co.

**PROSE:**


*John Webster and the Elizabethan Drama*, by Rupert Brooke. John Lane Co.

*Appreciations of Poetry*, by Lafcadio Hearn. Dodd, Mead & Co.
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