

Poetry

A Magazine of Verse

Edited by Harriet Monroe

JUNE 1917

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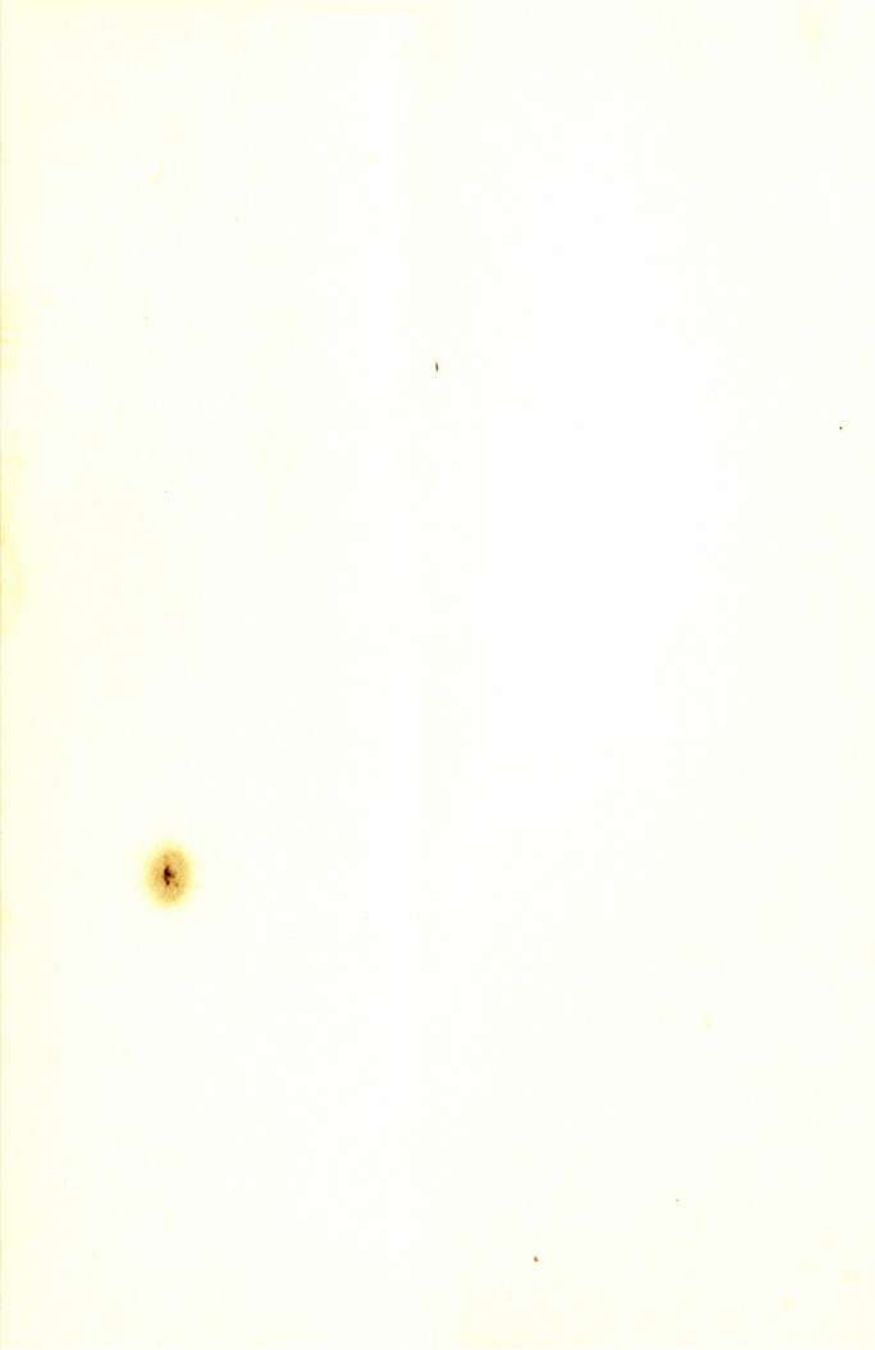
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JUNE, 1917

THREE CANTOS

I



ANG it all, there can be but one *Sordello*!

But say I want to, say I take your whole bag
of tricks,

Let in your quirks and tweeks, and say the
thing's an art-form,

Your *Sordello*, and that the modern world
Needs such a rag-bag to stuff all its thought in;
Say that I dump my catch, shiny and silvery
As fresh sardines flapping and slipping on the marginal
cobblestones?

(I stand before the booth, the speech; but the truth
Is inside this discourse—this booth is full of the marrow of
wisdom.)

Give up th' intaglio method.

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Tower by tower
Red-brown the rounded bases, and the plan
Follows the builder's whim. Beaucaire's slim gray
Leaps from the stubby base of Altaforte—
Mohammed's windows, for the Alcazar
Has such a garden, split by a tame small stream.
The moat is ten yards wide, the inner court-yard
Half a-swim with mire.
Trunk hose?

There are not. The rough men swarm out
In robes that are half Roman, half like the Knave of Hearts;
And I discern your story:

Peire Cardinal
Was half forerunner of Dante. Arnaut's that trick
Of the unfinished address,
And half your dates are out, you mix your eras;
For that great font Sordello sat beside—
'Tis an immortal passage, but the font?—
Is some two centuries outside the picture.
Does it matter?

Not in the least. Ghosts move about me
Patched with histories. You had your business:
To set out so much thought, so much emotion;
To paint, more real than any dead Sordello,
The half or third of your intensest life
And call that third *Sordello*;
And you'll say, "No, not your life,

Three Cantos

He never showed himself."

Is't worth the evasion, what were the use
Of setting figures up and breathing life upon them,
Were 't not *our* life, your life, my life, extended?

I walk Verona. (I am here in England.)

I see Can Grande. (Can see whom you will.)

You had one whole man?

And I have many fragments, less worth? Less worth?

Ah, had you quite my age, quite such a beastly and can-
tankerous age?

You had some basis, had some set belief.

Am I let preach? Has it a place in music?

I walk the airy street,

See the small cobbles flare with the poppy spoil.

'Tis your "great day," the Corpus Domini,

And all my chosen and peninsular village

Has made one glorious blaze of all its lanes—

Oh, before I was up—with poppy flowers.

Mid-June: some old god eats the smoke, 'tis not the saints;

And up and out to the half-ruined chapel—

Not the old place at the height of the rocks,

But that splay, barn-like church the Renaissance

Had never quite got into trim again.

As well begin here. Began our Catullus:

"Home to sweet rest, and to the waves' deep laughter,"

The laugh they wake amid the border rushes.

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This is our home, the trees are full of laughter,
And the storms laugh loud, breaking the riven waves
On "north-most rocks"; and here the sunlight
Glints on the shaken waters, and the rain
Comes forth with delicate tread, walking from Isola Garda—

Lo soleils plovil,

As Arnaut had it in th' inextricable song.
The very sun rains and a spatter of fire
Darts from the "Lydian" ripples; "*locus undae*," as Catullus,
"*Lydiae*,"

And the place is full of spirits.
Not *lemures*, not dark and shadowy ghosts,
But the ancient living, wood-white,
Smooth as the inner bark, and firm of aspect,
And all agleam with colors—no, not agleam,
But colored like the lake and like the olive leaves,
Glaukopos, clothed like the poppies, wearing golden greaves,
Light on the air.

Are they Etruscan gods?
The air is solid sunlight, *apricus*,
Sun-fed we dwell there (we in England now);
It's your way of talk, we can be where we will be,
Sirmio serves my will better than your Asolo
Which I have never seen.

Your "palace step"?

My stone seat was the Dogana's curb,
And there were not "those girls," there was one flare, one
face.

Three Cantos

'Twas all I ever saw, but it was real. . . .
And I can no more say what shape it was . . .
But she was young, too young.

True, it was Venice,
And at Florian's and under the north arcade
I have seen other faces, and had my rolls for breakfast, for
that matter;
So, for what it's worth, I have the background.

And you had a background,
Watched "the soul," Sordello's soul,
And saw it lap up life, and swell and burst—
"Into the empyrean?"

So you worked out new form, the meditative,
Semi-dramatic, semi-epic story,
And we will say: What's left for me to do?
Whom shall I conjure up; who's my Sordello,
My pre-Daun Chaucer, pre-Boccacio,

As you have done pre-Dante?
Whom shall I hang my shimmering garment on;
Who wear my feathery mantle, *hagoromo*;
Whom set to dazzle the serious future ages?
Not Arnaut, not De Born, not Uc St. Circ who has writ
out the stories.
Or shall I do your trick, the showman's booth, Bob Brown-
ing,

Turned at my will into the Agora,
Or into the old theatre at Arles,

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And set the lot, my visions, to confounding
The wits that have survived your damn'd *Sordello*?
(Or sulk and leave the word to novelists?)
What a hodge-podge you have made there!—
Zanze and *swanzig*, of all opprobrious rhymes!
And you turn off whenever it suits your fancy,
Now at Verona, now with the early Christians,
Or now a-gabbling of the "Tyrrhene wheelk."
"The lyre should animate but not mislead the pen"—
That's Wordsworth, Mr. Browning. (What a phrase!—
That lyre, that pen, that bleating sheep, Will Wordsworth!)
That should have taught you avoid speech figurative

And set out your matter

As I do, in straight simple phrases:

Gods float in the azure air,
Bright gods, and Tuscan, back before dew was shed,
It is a world like Puvis'?

Never so pale, my friend,
'Tis the first light—not half light—Panisks
And oak-girls and the Maenads
Have all the wood. Our olive Sirmio
Lies in its burnished mirror, and the Mounts Balde and Riva
Are alive with song, and all the leaves are full of voices.
"*Non è fuggito.*"

"It is not gone." Metastasio
Is right—we have that world about us,
And the clouds bow above the lake, and there are folk upon
them

Three Cantos

Going their windy ways, moving by Riva,
By the western shore, far as Lonato,
And the water is full of silvery almond-white swimmers,
The silvery water glazes the up-turned nipple.
How shall we start hence, how begin the progress?
Pace naïf Ficinus, say when Hotep-Hotep
Was a king in Egypt—

*When Atlas sat down with his astrolabe,
He, brother to Prometheus, physicist—*

Say it was Moses' birth-year?
Exult with Shang in squatness? The sea-monster
Bulges the squarish bronzes.
(Confucius later taught the world good manners,
Started with himself, built out perfection.)

With Egypt!

Daub out in blue of scarabs, and with that greeny turquoise?
Or with China, *O Virgilio mio*, and gray gradual steps
Lead up beneath flat sprays of heavy cedars,
Temple of teak wood, and the gilt-brown arches
Triple in tier, banners woven by wall,
Fine screens depicted, sea waves curled high,
Small boats with gods upon them,
Bright flame above the river! Kwannon
Footing a boat that's but one lotus petal,
With some proud four-spread genius
Leading along, one hand upraised for gladness,
Saying, "Tis she, his friend, the mighty goddess! Paean!

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Sing hymns ye reeds,

and all ye roots and herons and swans be glad,
Ye gardens of the nymphs put forth your flowers."

What have I of this life,

Or even of Guido?

Sweet lie!—Was I there truly?

Did I know Or San Michele?

Let's believe it.

Believe the tomb he leapt was Julia Laeta's?

Friend, I do not even—when he led that street charge—

I do not even know which sword he'd with him.

Sweet lie, "I lived!" Sweet lie, "I lived beside him."

And now it's all but truth and memory,

Dimmed only by the attritions of long time.

"But we forget not."

No, take it all for lies.

I have but smelt this life, a whiff of it—

The box of scented wood

Recalls cathedrals. And shall I claim;

Confuse my own phantastikon,

Or say the filmy shell that circumscribes me

Contains the actual sun;

confuse the thing I see

With actual gods behind me?

Are they gods behind me?

How many worlds we have! If Botticelli

Three Cantos

Brings her ashore on that great cockle-shell—
His Venus (Simonetta?),
And Spring and Aufidus fill all the air
With their clear-outlined blossoms?
World enough. Behold, I say, she comes
“Apparelled like the spring, Graces her subjects,”
(That’s from *Pericles*).
Oh, we have worlds enough, and brave *décors*,
And from these like we guess a soul for man
And build him full of aery populations.
Mantegna a sterner line, and the new world about us:
Barred lights, great flares, new form, Picasso or Lewis.
If for a year man write to paint, and not to music—
O Casella!

Ezra Pound

(To be continued)

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BERMUDA

Once,
Shoulders bare to the sun,
You carved cameos upon the sea—
Crisp white on milky blue,
Like Wedgwood.

Now
You lie listless,
In a robe of green velvet
Gorgeously flowered—
Fee of the fickle winds.

So,
In a monotony of loveliness,
You dream of the past—
An artist
Who conceived a masterpiece,
Repeated and repeated it;
And has nothing more to give.

QUANDARY

Autumn is moaning;
Yet I thrill with spring.

Leaves, that fall to die,
Dance as they pass me.

Music seems to ride
The bluster of sparrows.

Softer than any couch
This ledge of granite.

Mountains rim the horizon:
They cannot hem me in.

Here in a stranger's pasture
All the world is mine.

THE PASSAGE

And men may say of me:
"Yes, he loved beauty,
His songs were sweet;
But his life—
The ripple of a wave,
The twinkling of a dancer's feet."

Richard Butler Glaenzer

SONGS OUT OF STRESS

BARTER

Life has loveliness to sell—

All beautiful and splendid things,
Blue waves whitened on a cliff,
Climbing fire that sways and sings,
And children's faces looking up
Holding wonder like a cup.

Life has loveliness to sell—

Music like a curve of gold,
Scent of pine trees in the rain,
Eyes that love you, arms that hold,
And for your spirit's still delight,
Nearer in his circling flight.

Spend all you have for loveliness,

Buy it and never count the cost ;
For one white singing hour of peace
Count many a year of strife well lost,
And for a breath of ecstasy
Give all you have been or could be.

SPIRIT'S HOUSE

From naked stones of agony
I will build a house for me;
As a mason all alone
I will raise it, stone by stone,
And every stone where I have bled
Will show a sign of dusky red.
I have not gone the way in vain,
For I have the good of all my pain;
My spirit's quiet house will be
Built of naked stones I trod
On roads where I lost sight of God.

LESSONS

Unless I learn to ask no help
From any other soul but mine,
To seek no strength in waving reeds
Nor shade beneath a straggling pine;
Unless I learn to look at Grief
Unshrinking from her tear-blind eyes,
And take from Pleasure fearlessly
Whatever gifts will make me wise—
Unless I learn these things on earth
Why was I ever given birth?

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REFUGE

From my spirit's gray defeat,
From my pulse's flagging beat,
From my hopes that turned to sand
Sifting through my close-clenched hand,
From my own fault's slavery,
If I can sing, I still am free.

For with my singing I can make
A refuge for my spirit's sake,
A house of shining words, to be
My fragile immortality.

WOOD SONG

I heard a wood-thrush in the dusk
Twirl three notes and make a star—
My heart that walked with bitterness
Came back from very far.

Three shining notes were all he had,
And yet they made a starry call—
I caught life back against my breast
And kissed it, scars and all.

Sara Teasdale

BESIDE THE MASTER

God spoke to me to-day,
Clearly I heard Him speak,
And yet I could not understand.

Since death withdrew a hand that lay in mine,
Sad had I been for everything;
For I had seen,
As all men sometime see,
The one dark flaw in rosy dawn.

In need thereafter was I fain
To pluck a comfort from my days:
That I might love what would not die,
In whatsoever I had need to do
I sought for beauty.

But now to-day,
Not many moments since,
I stood where I beheld the birth of moths.
I saw them born in suffering;
I saw their beauty;
I saw them die;
One brief hour passed
Between their birth and death.

Therein God spoke to me:
With how much pain he labors,

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How delicate His workmanship,
How careless He to cast away!

I cannot understand
What He would have me know.

Joseph Wallerer

HOLY LIGHT

Where Life like a candle burns
In the darkness of the night,
Moth-like my lost spirit yearns
Nearer in his circling flight.

Luringly her beauty draws
Onward with each shuddering breath,
Till I flutter, till I pause
In the radiance of death.

I am flaming, I am fled—
All around you reigns the night;
But my agony has fed
You a moment, holy light!

John Hall Wheelock

FIAMETTA

The south wind trembles through the grass—
Let it pass.
You will not come my way
Any day.

A white star trembles through the mist
Purple and amethyst.
But Night lets fall
Her hooded pall,
And I am glad because the white star dies.

*No stars surprise
Your close-shut eyes.*

GREETING

Over the wave-patterned sea-floor,
Over the long sun-burnt ridge of the world,
I bid the winds seek you.
I bid them cry to you
Night and morning
A name you loved once;
I bid them bring to you
Dreams, and strange imaginings, and sleep.

Ella Young

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ONE FACE IN THE CROWD

Where have I seen your face before?
Why does it seem so out of place
In a room with curtained windows
And a closed door?
Ah, lovely face,
That a star has kissed and the sun,
That the wind has touched with loving fingers,
Still the wonder lingers, lovely one.

I remember. Summer came
With a heart of song and flame.
Boughs were swaying, winds were playing
Little lutes that knew your name—
On a hillside where the grasses
Waved into the waves of sea

And the sea waved into skies . . .
Now it all comes back to me,
As I look into your eyes
As I looked into them then. . .
Wonder goes to come again.

Long ago, long ago,
On the hillside near the sea,
What did we talk of?
Was it love?

One Face in the Crowd

Or did we stand there silently?
So it seems to me
As I look on you today.
Wonder comes, words go away.

TWO SONGS

I

When my dream-robe is tattered,
If ever it is so,
And one may seem to scorn it,
Oh, I shall let him know
That it was torn on points of stars
And gold of the rainbow!

II

When I am dead, oh, speak to me
No words that I have heard,
Lest to my peace come misery,
Lest my calm sleep be stirred
With want of mortal love again!
But bring a drop of April rain,
The dawn-song of a bird,
The leafy lyric of a tree,
A slender flower with its dew—
That I may dream, and seem to be
Dead to all but you!

Glenn Ward Dresbach

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NOTES

I

When in the spring
I go forth at morn
A-quiver with life I sing:
The world and I, new-born.
Then when I see all rampant growing
Beds of tulips o'er the plain,
Like pools and lakes of color glowing,
I would fain
Outstrip all speed, run
Naked in the sun,
Plunge, riot, be immersed,
Quench this color-thirst!

II

Where go the birds when the rain
Roars and sweeps and fells the grain,
When tortured trees groan with pain,
And the storm-worn night is old—
Driven forth from their slumber cold,
Where go the birds?

Jane Heap

DEAD QUEENS

"There come not now . . . such gold-giving lords."

Women of large hips, small breasts,
And high white shoulders,
Red hair plaited
And pale steadfast eyes,
You are the high romance—
Lilith, Iseult and Guinevere;
You were fierce lovers,
Not caring to be loved.

Always your lovers fared the perilous quest.
Patiently maybe you waited,
Maybe loved another—
What mattered it?

All passion was in you, all sweetness.
Your lovers in the far-off courts of kings,
Feasted . . . tarrying with many women.

Patiently you waited,
Maybe loved another—
What mattered it?

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Dead queens, dead queens,
Your lovers left you
When cheeks grew pale, lips faded—
Yet you'd not tie them to you
With their pity.
Dead queens!
In that twilight
Where you lived when love had left you,
Often the rumor came
Of Tristrem and of Lancelot
Riding afar . . .
Yet that was nought to you. . . .
Time flies, love dies and must die,
Why weep then?
In your king's beds
You'll not remember
The sweet or bitter of love.

Lilith laughs at the old Adam,
Caught serpent-wise by the swart eastern woman
God gave him to his sorrow!
Her sorrows are his sorrow,
Her thoughts his thoughts;
For she has bound him to her
With the strong toils of his pity—
His heart would burst to break them.

BECAUSE SOME LOVER

Because some lover in some darkened place
Leaned brooding towards the face of his dear,
Till after a long silence her white face
Would droop towards him, and lip to lip
Half touching, fearful lest their senses slip
Bonds and whelm them in a clear
White flood of passion, they remain
Lips touching, yet apart, a fierce strain
On interlocking fingers—

Some poet wrote it down,
And that old story lingers,
Your only crown,
Lancelot, Abelard, Paolo and Pelléas:
To too many women have you brought undoing.

Too many women have been read
The stories of your fates,
And always when was said:
“. . . leaned brooding towards the face of his dear,
Till after a long silence her white face
Would droop towards him, and lip to lip
Half touching . . . fearful lest their senses slip
Bonds and whelm them in a clear
White flood of passion they remain

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Lips touching, yet apart . . . fierce strain
On interlocking fingers. . . .”
Then leaning towards each other
On limb and separate feature the glance strays and lingers,
And, drooping each to other,
Half kiss, half droop apart
Under intolerable strain.

Too many lovers have you brought undoing:
Sick heart
And great pain.
You, Lancelot and Guinevere,
Paolo and Francesca;
You, Abelard, Heloise,
Pelléas and girl Mélisande,
And that first lover in some darkened place
Drooping to a white face.

IN A GARDEN

There was a paved alley there,
Apple trees and a lush lawn—
And over the gray wall where the plums were
Stood the red brick of the chapel.
While over the long white wall

In a Garden

Where the green apples grew
And the rusted pears
Hung the gray tower of the church;
So high, you couldn't see the top
From that narrow garden.

In that narrow garden, on that lush lawn,
We found a ball left from some croquet game.
It had a blue stripe girdling it,
And, "Ah," I thought,
"It is your soul about me,
And we are flung
Between our separate desires."

In that narrow garden
On the lush lawn,
We flung this ball each to other.
My eyes were only for your legs, your arms,
Under that hot sun.
The hard ball hurt my hands,
Made them hot and prickly,
And I'd have stopped
But feared losing you
While you too stayed on playing—
"Ah, if I'd but known
Because you would not have me go."

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We played so long,
I'd ceased to think—
All thought, each sense,
Rapt in the shimmering circumference;
The blue stripe girdling it
Shone in the sky.

Then I seemed looking down
From some far field,
With this ball as one of worlds
Scorned
And cast from each to other,
Blue water girdling them—

By and by the tea-bell rang.

John Rodker

RESURRECTION

Now all the hosts are marching to the grave;
The hosts are leaping from the edge of life
In a cascade of souls to sorrowful death.

And I am just awakened from the tomb,
And whither they are going, I have been
In timelessness laid by, in noiseless death.

Now, like a crocus in the autumn time,
My soul comes lambent from the endless night
Of death—a cyclamen, a crocus flower
Of windy autumn when the winds all sweep
The hosts away to death, where heap on heap
The dead are burning in the funeral wind.

Now, like a strange light breaking from the ground,
I venture from the halls of shadowy death—
A frail white gleam of resurrection.

I know where they are going, all the lives
That whirl and sweep like anxious leaves away
To have no rest save in the utter night
Of noiseless death; I know it well—
The death they will attain to, where they go,
I, who have been, and now am risen again.

Now like a cyclamen, a crocus flower
In autumn, like to a messenger come back
From embassy in death, I issue forth

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Amid the autumn rushing red about
The bitter world, amid the smoke
From burning fires of many smouldering lives
All bitter and corroding to the grave.

If they would listen, I could tell them now
The secret of the noiseless, utter grave,
The secret in the blind mouth of the worm.
But on they go, like leaves within a wind,
Scarlet and crimson and a rust of blood,
Into the utter dark: they cannot hear.

So like a cyclamen, a crocus flower
I lift my inextinguishable flame
Of immortality into the world,
Of resurrection from the endless grave,
Of sweet returning from the sleep of death.
And still against the dark and violent wind,
Against the scarlet and against the red
And blood-brown flux of lives that sweep their way
In hosts towards the everlasting night,
I lift my little pure and lambent flame,
Unquenchable of wind or hosts of death
Or storms of tears, or rage, or blackening rain
Of full despair—I lift my tender flame
Of pure and lambent hostage from the dead,
Ambassador from halls of noiseless death,
He who returns again from out the tomb
Dressed in the grace of immortality,

Resurrection

A fragile stranger in the flux of lives
That pour cascade-like down the blackening wind
Of sheer oblivion.

Now like a cyclamen, a crocus flower
In putrid autumn issuing through the fall
Of lives, I speak to all who cannot hear,
I turn towards the bitter, blackening wind,
I speak aloud to fleeting hosts of red
And crimson and the blood-brown heaps of slain,
Just as a cyclamen or crocus flower
Calls to the autumn, *Resurrection!*
I speak with a vain mouth.

Yet is uplifted in me the pure beam
Of immortality to kindle up
Another spring of yet another year,
Folded as yet: and all the fallen leaves
Sweep on to bitter, to corrosive death
Against me, yet they cannot make extinct
The perfect lambent flame which still goes up,
A tender gleam of immortality,
To start the glory of another year,
Another epoch in another year,
Another triumph on the face of earth,
Another race, another speech among
The multitudinous people unfused,
Unborn and unproduced, yet to be born.

D. H. Lawrence

EDITORIAL COMMENT

WHAT MAY WAR DO



IN THIS bold cohesion of atoms which we call a world, the miraculous association of cells which we call human life takes on an illusory appearance of stability. We are born into an ingenious mechanism of flesh, we develop into some fiery essence which thinks and feels, we make things which seem solid and enduring, we set going currents of power which circle the earth, we do deeds and dream dreams which seem to transcend time and command future generations. And thus we persuade ourselves that all is as it seems, that a scheme of things which, from the electron-fused atom to the remotest nebula of whirling stars, is flux and motion, vibration in vastness—that such a scheme may become, for our convenience, a civilization fixed and permanent, may become the immutable laws of the Medes and Persians or of these federated states, may become a social system complete and inexorable, a perfectly built mosaic of carefully mechanized human parts.

And then comes War.

War topples over the fixed and permanent things and breaks the immutable laws. It crashes through social systems and makes a chaos of the human mosaic, arranging a new one of its own and destroying that. At first it seems merely a murderous violator, hideously interrupting all the

What War May Do

good works of the world: every hero of peace, laboring for some cause of justice, some humane reform, finds his path blocked by the caving-in of ruins around him—masses of broken prejudices, shaken ideals; every artist, striving to reveal truth and beauty, finds his vision veiled by the smoke of battle and violated by the scent of blood. And the world seems mad, lost for its sins, bent upon extinction, upon suicide.

And yet war is a builder. Out of the ruins of eras it tumbles together foundation-stones for new ones. Dead souls it quickens with its searching and devastating fires. "Better Belgium in her agony than New England comfortably asleep!" cried a man of light and leading, telling of a great manufacturer who, after making contracts for his product on the basis of higher wages, refused his workmen the advance thus paid for, and fought every inch of the strike they made to get what was their own. "Better war, devastating war, the enemy's heel on our throat, than that kind of self-righteous perversion—and that is common."

If we have war, devastating war that shall relieve us of surplus billions and drain some of our most precious hearts' blood, its huge and irresistible flood may wash away much of the accumulated materialism which clogs our souls. It is not enough that we fight, as of old but in a larger, more generous sense, for liberty; not only our own but the liberty of all men—for the freedom of the seas and the democratizing of the world. We must fight first and most persistently for freedom of the spirit—that clear vision and stript athletic

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strength of mind and soul which alone will enable us to achieve our purpose and advance the freedom of the world.

If war does this for us it will be, not a relapse into mediævalism, not a devastating interruption of the arts and of every forward-looking cause, but a renewer, a vitalizing force, a reorganizer. "Patriotic war sets everything back," cries Max Eastman in *The Masses* (I quote from memory). Ah, but that may be an effect only immediate and apparent; the inward and ultimate effect of war may be, as it often has been, to set everything forward, and to do it with a rapidity, an overwhelming force, which the creeping movements of peace can never achieve. Was not Russia only yesterday an autocracy? Would anything short of the violence and agony of war have given her courage at this moment to assert her freedom—to dethrone a czar whose first thought in entering this war was to strengthen, not destroy, his dynasty? And may not the German autocrat be as bitterly surprised in the end?

It would require a far prophetic vision to foresee the effects of war—the effects upon us, upon our nation, of entering, after long forbearance, into this most terrible of wars. But if we fight ourselves first, if we purify our spirits in this flame, the effect can not fail to be a great strengthening, a great renewal. We may be leaving youth behind, attaining full maturity at last. We may be sweeping away old accumulations of falseness and ugliness, clearing the ground and the air for great artists, great poets, great leaders, who shall see and reveal. We may be fighting for greater issues than

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now appear: for the federation of the world, for that dream of all great hearts—the brotherhood of man.

“In the presence of eternity I see that patriotism is not enough,” said Edith Cavell before she was shot for patriotism. Perhaps we shall all see beyond what we have lived for, and die at the frontier of a new and more glorious promised land. Our most fixed ideas, our most cherished institutions, may float away on new tides; and we may laugh to see them go, knowing that “nothing is permanent excepting change” in this bold cohesion of atoms which we call a world.

“The planet is shaken,” writes Carl Sandburg in a letter of last month. “We are in the most vivid era of all human world life to date. All the forces of hope, democracy, laughter, beauty and poetry are beginning to feel more songs tugging at their hearts than any time since August, 1914. It’s getting so bad it’s good.” And he quotes a word uttered by Woodrow Wilson before the war, even before he became President: “We live for our own age—an age like Shakespeare’s, when an old world is passing away, a new world coming in—an age of new speculation and every new adventure of the mind; a full stage, an intricate plot, a universal play of passion, an outcome no man can foresee.” *H. M.*

FROM A NOTE BOOK

It is not necessary to express oneself encyclopædically; nor is it important to exhibit to one’s readers the fact that one

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has had thoughts on all subjects proper to a man. The few things that one has felt more keenly and more illuminatingly than anyone else should be the central points of one's labor. Explore all fields that are to be explored, certainly; but put your faith into the sinking of one narrow shaft to the very center of the earth. Mere scope is futile.

Put a brake on facility of composition. Discard the words that come debonairly, trailing no meteor-flame of passion behind them.

It is not safe to trust at all to the beauty or nobility or truth of the theme one has chosen. These qualities, if they exist in a poem, do not have their dwelling-place in the mere theme. If they did, prose would serve.

Adjectives are the most lazy and loutish of words; never let them congregate in a mob, or they will start a riot and break windows. Always regard them as the most dangerously seductive elements of speech. They have somewhat the quality of a cloak: they color, but impede; they hang inert, however beautiful, deriving their play of light from the vigor of other supporting words—nobler words that bear within them their own power of movement and strength.

Obviously the world exists solely for the benefit of the poets; nevertheless, it is only courteous for the poets to work and act as if they existed for the benefit of the world.

There is no such thing as realism, in the sense in which most people understand the word. Realism, meaning stenographic restatement, simply does not exist. The idea of it is

From a Note-book

a grotesque figment of a prosaic imagination suddenly frightened on being confronted with new combinations in art. Art could not reproduce life if it tried; and fortunately it seldom tries.

To write of the hopes and destiny of man does not make one a great poet. But the great poets will always write of the hopes and destiny of man.

When a great poet writes an *Ode to a Tomato Can*, look out! His real theme is probably *The Immortality of the Soul*.

The subtlest problem of every art is the problem of planes. A plane is one of those peculiar levels to which, as to a common denominator, art reduces all the factors of any piece of work. Art aspires to produce not the illusion of actual life, but a proportioned dream which has a certain harmonious life of its own. If this process is to be successful, every part of the work must be brought into one single imaginary universe, one sphere, one plane, governed by its own laws. This little world obeys its own laws so consistently that we accept its existence without skepticism. Thus a fairy-tale, if the problem of planes has been well solved, need not arouse any sense of unreality. But the most faithfully reportorial of novels will seem utterly incredible if the writer shifts planes in the middle of it. There are planes of intensity, of time, of ethics, of realism, of beauty—an infinite number of planes in each one of these and many more classes. Shakespeare stands out as the greatest master of planes. The *Midsummer Night's Dream* is the classic example. Here his rustics

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are raised to a level of exaggerated unreality and fancifulness that makes them possible denizens of the same unreal and delightful world as Theseus and Titania. If one were to introduce the Nurse of Juliet and let her speak a single word, the whole fabric would shatter like a tower of glass. She would produce the effect that Bottom aims at in his marvelous project to soothe the frightened ladies of his audience: "Write me a Prologue; and let the Prologue seem to say we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the Weaver: this will put them out of fear." A statuette of Bottom should stand on the desk of every poet as perpetual warning to him to mind his planes.

The world, which is always forgetting its older knowledge, needs the illusion and enthusiasm of the young poet who comes crying, with the glad voice of a discoverer, some one of the ancient verities. The new bottles sometimes help to sell the old wine.

It is perilous for the poet to put all his faith in the conscious intellectual processes of his mind—in his reasoned conclusions, his logical ideas. The scientist may be bounded by this region, but not the poet. Beyond all this, in the subconscious tracts of the spirit, lies a world of mysterious combinations and great forces, where strike the roots of many of the profoundest repulsions and attractions of our being. The mind analyzes and judges; but the feelings leap and clasp. Far beneath the surface of consciousness lie the

powers that created *Kubla Khan* and *La Belle Dame*. Therefore it is not well for the poet to march too confidently and rudely ahead, following the clear light of his working mind. Let him perhaps pause, waver, drift—wait expectant for the divine prompting, the mysterious guidance—tarry at the cross-road with eyes subdued to receive a sign—that thus the faint voices of his buried self may perhaps become audible, and direct him toward an achievement which shall astonish him like a thing not his own. *A. D. F.*

LIVING HISTORY

Perhaps it is only the Russians who, at the bottom of some corner of their hearts, could ever possibly understand America as it is today. For we would scarcely ask any intelligent Russian, however patriotic and devoted to his country's cause, to offer us a panegyric on, say, the first Nicholas. America today is in a position somewhat similar to that in which Russia was at the time of the first Nicholas. It is incoherent and seething with discontent. It is explosive with energy, but finding no outlet on which to spend that energy. It cries aloud for a true and abiding nationality, but it finds that nationality cramped and fettered in a dozen ways by artificial politics, artificial religion, artificial wealth, artificial life. Steadily it is snapping the bonds that held it, steadily it is becoming articulate of the chaos in which it finds itself. And this growing articulateness is no artificial thing. Literature in America is now no longer the

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beautiful plaything of a few cultivated people. It is bursting out in the most unexpected places. It is growing vulgar, that it may speak to all hearts. It is becoming a common heritage of the people.

If there are any in England who care to understand what America may become in the future, or who wish to discover a new phase of literary growth, let them buy, for example, Amy Lowell's latest, *Men, Women and Ghosts*, and perpend thereon. They may be shocked, horrified, startled. They may wince in horror at certain lines of certain poems, so little will these square with their old traditions of good writing. But sooner or later they will face the dilemma. Either the old traditions are unalterable, in which case there is nothing new in the world to say, or else there is something new in the world to say which must create traditions of its own. Which is it to be?

Let the English reader, in this year, so pregnant with destiny, turn first to the Napoleonic pieces, which Miss Lowell has entitled appropriately *Bronze Tablets*. These pieces, I venture to say, will illuminate the present war to their minds as nothing else has done. There is only one thing that may be fitly compared to them, which is that great unread poem, Thomas Hardy's *Dynasts*. But the reader will see in a moment that there can be, in truth, no comparison between things so different in their method.

Hardy's is the old method of the epic poet. Despite the fact that he has cast his poem in the form of a drama (a quite unplayable drama), he is essentially epic in outlook. He nar-

rates vividly, imperturbably, the events of history. He is only, as it were, the optical lens through which certain events arrange themselves. He is as impersonal as dumb Nature which has shaped these events. Only, in order to correct the perspective, in order that we may see the relation and correspondence between the personages, and in order that nothing may make one person bulk larger than another, he constructs a complicated apparatus of immortals that comment upon and weigh each event. Thus everything becomes small, but clear. We see Napoleon living and breathing, but, as it were, through the wrong end of a telescope.

Miss Lowell's method is profoundly different. You may like or dislike it, but fortunately mere unreasoned likings or dislikings have nothing to do with sane and orderly criticism. And you must either grant the results in granting the method, or refuse both method and results altogether. The method is this: Miss Lowell sits in an armchair, turning over the facts of history in her mind; gradually she visualizes them, not as something which has been played out on the world's stage long ago, and which can be revived only in the mind, but as something which is being played out still—as it were, in another room, through the gap of a window or door—for the benefit of our ardent, striving, inchoate, absurd twentieth century; so she puts down what she sees, all the time being aware of the fact that when it is finished, she will resume the thread of her twentieth-century affairs. In this way we get a picture, a dramatic, living picture, not of the past alone, nor of the present, but of their contact. It is

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as if an audience at a play suddenly realized that the actors were themselves in an earlier phase. It is an art that uses the past as a searchlight to turn upon the present.

Take the poem called *The Hammers*, for instance. Was ever such a poem as this written before? Miss Lowell listens, gazes, nerves and brain on fire, at the window of the past. And what does she hear? Why, precisely the sound of hammers—hammers building a ship, hammers chipping off Napoleonic decorations and the names of battles from arches, hammers shoeing a horse, hammers making a coffin. The grotesque, inhuman, horrible refrain of iron hammers goes through a third of a century. And bit by bit, out of their infernal devil's-dance we get—what? Why, precisely, one of the great tragedies of history—Napoleon in despair throwing himself on England's mercy and being packed off to St. Helena to die.

Marble likeness of an Emperor,
Dead man who burst your heart against a world too narrow,
The hammers drum you to your last throne,
Which always you shall hold alone.
The glory of your past is faded at a sunset fire,
Your day lingers only like the tones of a wind-lyre
In a twilight room.

Strange commentary on human vanity from these crazy hammers! Strange commentary for us who live today! Even such a thing as a hammer plays its part in reminding, in chastening us, in making us feel the great sorrow and defeat of human effort. Would the poem be any more true, think you, if the hammers had not played their part in it, and sung their meaningless refrain from first line to last?

No: for the hammers are precisely the burden of the poem. What is it that these hammers do not do? They recreate history for us, and in recreating it, recreate our present day. Let the hammers ring! Soon for us they may be silent; but for those who have ears to hear, the burden of these hammers is the burden of the world—"the eternal world that ever groweth."

Each of these "small portions of the eternal world" starts forth from the dark frame of the past, moves vibrantly about us until the poem is finished, and then vanishes again. And while the drama is being played out we have the poet beside us, not inhumanly aloof, not pouring vials of wrathful morality on our heads, but as a human being as much interested in the spectacle as we, savoring to the full its grotesqueness, its humor, its irony, its pathos, its beauty. Miss Lowell's poetry may disregard all the old English literary traditions; granted. But there is one tradition which it accepts which is more than all of these, and that is the great human tradition. To me the author of these poems is the most interesting poet-personality in America today. Her work cannot be judged as a fixed and finished product, but as an ever-growing approach to a new and more intensely vital life-perspective. It reconstructs humanity for us in a new way; it is radically different from all that preceded it, and therefore cannot be judged by past standards; for its importance the future alone will be answerable. And whatever the future's judgment may be, there can be no doubt that the poet who created it is among the few that are great of soul. *J. G. Fletcher*

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FIRE OF YOUTH

Some years ago—twelve or thirteen—a weird witch-light descended out of the air upon me in the person of Miss Mary MacLane. Anything more quaint and subversive—wise in deep ways, absurd in odd vanities, both quiet and volcanic, with a mind that undermined into dark corners and shook its little torch at the sun itself—I never expect to see in human flesh than this young and pretty girl from Butte, Montana.

She had written a book of wild youthful revolt, a book which made a noise even though it had a streak of genius in it. The noise subsided, and the maker of it has not again interrupted the silence until now. The new book, *I, Mary MacLane*, is once more introspective, but more mature (though still absurdly young in spots) and less rebellious. It is not poetry, but one may step out of POETRY'S province to say a word for its prose, which rises at times to heights of pure beauty and bright imaginative intensity. Of an odd and whimsical, or even tragical, humor of laughter in such chapters as the one on Lot's wife or the Finn woman, it becomes in others—those on Keats, or her dream child, or the voices of children—poignantly wistful, sorrowful with the sorrows of the world.

There are absurdities, no doubt—moments of world-obliterating egotism which fail to convince. But on the whole one gets an impression of piercing sincerity and strange beauty, at times of poetic and luminous vision. H. M.

REVIEWS

MR. FULLER'S NEW PHASE

Lines Long and Short, by Henry B. Fuller. Houghton Mifflin Co.

From *The Chevalier of Pensieri-Vani*, back in the 'nineties, to *Lines Long and Short*, in this year of grace 1917, one may follow a sensitive romanticist who picks his way delicately among the thorns and brambles at the edge of the highway, smiling at the pricks and scars which enforce upon him a bitter wisdom. Always a consummate artist, Mr. Fuller delights in watching the strange human procession, so full of reckless impulses and ardors, which passes by along the road. If he cannot fling himself into it, no one knows better than he that this limitation is the reason why his art remains observant and a bit aloof in a passionate warring world.

I call Mr. Fuller a romanticist because he does not love things as they are, because his instinct is to seek beauty in the past, the far-away—in his dreams. Thus he gave the passion of his youth to Italy, like many another nineteenth century American; and produced a masterpiece of delicate beauty and humorous, insinuating charm—the ultimate word of that new-world mood which delights in the hoary and storied old-world, in its ancient splendors over-grown and half decayed. But he was not satisfied—he could not go on in that mood even though he indulged it again, with deep delight, in the mystically pale efflorescence of *The Last*

Refuge. He could not escape the appeal of the raw, the modern, even of his own native city of Chicago. He felt it, but it grated on the finest fibres of his soul; he could not reconcile it with his softly woven vision of discreetly remote beauty; and so the novels in which he essayed modern realism—*The Cliff-dwellers* and *With the Procession*—are experiments rather than whole-hearted, convinced interpretations of life.

So he took refuge in satire. In *Under the Sky-lights* and *The Puppet Booth* he indulged contrasting satirical moods, playing in one with certain slants of human character, in the other of contemporary literary art; and in both smiling always, first and last, at himself. And now, after a long interval, we have this book in both satirical moods, if they are not too grave this time to be called satirical—this book which plays with both human character and contemporary literary art, and as before plays most intimately, perhaps, most ruthlessly, with himself.

He has a very good time with his free verse—this master of prose, stripping it more bare of ornament than any imagist, stamping it out with a kind of anvil cadence, making it an effective instrument for his bitter music of soulless lives. Materialism and sordid compromise, so prevalent always and everywhere, and especially, to his mind, here and now, have got on Mr. Fuller's nerves, and this book, with its iron humor and its keen and scalpel-like sympathy, is the record of his protest. If it is a dark record it is not

a dull one; if it moves among shadows, it carries a brilliant flash-light of wit and wisdom, and even uncovers now and then piteous little warm corners of humane gentleness and sweetness.

It is not Chicago complete, not her whole self out in the warm and searching and benevolent sunlight—this book which Mr. Masters has called the best book of Chicago that has come out of Chicago. But if not quite the whole story, it is an unsparing revelation of aridities in American life—the good old Anglo-Saxon stock narrowing down and drying up until there is nothing left of it but a wisp of spiritless existence. In *Tobias Holt*, *Bachelor*, in *Polly Greene*, in *Alonzo Grout*, in *Aridity*, he shows how Puritanism has petered out in these days of far horizons, becoming a hard conventionality, a dry respectability, a firm plodding in a narrow groove, which are more destructive to the race than Belgian deportations or Balkan wars. No word of praise would be too strong for the unerring precision of Mr. Fuller's art in these sharp drawings done in a few bold lines. Again, in *The Statue* and *The Day of Danger* he shows how futile is revolt to this type of mind, and in *Toward Childhood* he shows how ashen is its triumph.

It is a big, thought-provoking, soul-stirring book.

But is it poetry? I hear someone ask.

Well, I find a stark, bold, grotesque poetry in both its spirit and form. Not that it matters what one calls it!

H. M.

POETRY OF THE AMERICAN NEGRO

Songs of the Soil, by Fenton Johnson. Published by the author at 35 West 131st Street, New York.

Although indirectly, the negro has contributed not a little to certain developments of American art, particularly in music, musical shows and folk-stories. But he has himself benefited very little, or been very little concerned individually with the achievements that bear the imprint of his race. The reason is not far to seek. As soon as the negro is educated he begins to think the white man's thoughts, or to try to think them; it is impossible for him to do otherwise. But his emotional reactions, his religious feeling and his imagination are racially different from those of the white man, and if his art is to amount to anything he will have to seek to give expression to what is essentially his. But the negro poet has almost invariably echoed the white man's thought, the white man's vision of the negro. He has projected no new vision of himself. Paul Lawrence Dunbar followed in the foot-steps of Thomas Nelson Page and Joel Chandler Harris, and other white men who used the negro dialect and portrayed the negro character; and succeeding negro poets have followed Dunbar. Usually, when the negro poet discards dialect for plain English, his language is pale and academic, and his thought, again, is not his own but a weak dilution of some already diluted European model. Although this book language is pale and anæmic beside the rich and colored oral expression of the negro race, I do not mean to say that the negro poet should write exclusively in dialect.

What I mean to say is that he should discard this prop and invent a new and individual idiom based upon the characteristic speech of his people. And I would also recommend that all negro poets make a study of their folk-songs, collecting all they can, for it is through such songs that they will learn to know their own race.

This little book by Fenton Johnson furnishes substance and text for the foregoing remarks. The poems in dialect are mostly commonplace, but the *Negro Spirituals*, written in the spirit of the genuine negro hymns and plantation folk-songs (not in dialect), have in them the germ of future development. Here is one of them called *The Lonely Mother*:

Oh, my mother's moaning by the river,
My poor mother's moaning by the river,
For her son who walks the earth in sorrow.
Long my mother's moaned beside the river,
And her tears have filled an angel's pitcher.
"Lord of Heaven, bring to me my honey,
Bring to me the darling of my bosom,
For a lonely mother by the river."

Cease, O mother, moaning by the river,
Cease, good mother, moaning by the river;
I have seen the star of Michael shining,
Michael shining at the Gates of Morning;
Row, O mighty Angel, down the twilight,
Row until I find a lonely woman,
Swaying long beneath a tree of cypress,
Swaying for her son who walks in sorrow.

Other interesting poems are *John crossed the Island on his Knees*; *God Be With You*; *Shout, my Brother, Shout*; and *Lif' Up de Spade*. This last poem would be improved if it

were not written in dialect, but in English like the *Spirituals*. This is true also of some of the other poems in the book which seem to have a good deal of the folk feeling, but disguised rather than helped by the dialect which has come to be commonplace and banal.

A. C. H.

WAX TABLETS

Tablettes de Cire, par A. de Brimont. Calmann-Levy, Paris.

Frail things are proverbially long lived: "The bust outlasts the throne." Time and again we are assured that Greek mythology is played out. Neither the crowns of the French Academy nor the classical titles of the poems could attract one to the book before me.

For five hundred years a part of the population of Europe has been engaged in retelling these tales. They are shown time after time in what have been called, I think with short-sightedness, the "waxen" idylls of Amaltheus. It is rare that in the retelling one comes upon fresh imagination, as in John Baptist Pigna's *Nymphae* in their flight from the satyrs:

Osculaque arboribus lachrymis madefacta tenellis
Figere: sed Nymphas cum iam sat saepe vocassent.

People given up wholly to rhetoric will wonder how a book with no unusual phrase, no original thought, no violence of expression, can yet manage to hold one's interest, and to establish the personality of its author. The poems in *Tablettes de Cire* are worthy of their title.

Échos, légers échos, en passant par mes lèvres
Soyez frères de l'ombre et des reflets sur l'eau,
Les reflets d'un reflet—les échos d'un écho!

Carvings in ivory so white that at first glance one fears perhaps it is celluloid. Many things contrary to my own particular canons of art. Rhymed couplets, which are not contrary to my canons, but everywhere a purity of tone, sustained, permeating every expression. Nowhere does the reach exceed the grasp. That is perhaps the secret, the sign in this case of the curious sincerity of an artist who will pretend to no emotion beyond what she has felt, and who has the wisdom to know that emotion as felt has been enough for the poem. It is a book that could have come only from France; that could have been written, or published, only where an author was conscious of a finally civilized audience, an audience capable of receiving such poems.

In *La Pêche Merveilleuse* I think the old legend is refilled with magic, as also in *Syrinx* with touches of whimsicality:

Il trouble les flots purs pour voiler son image!
Être un dieu lourd et laid quand tous les dieux sont beaux.

There is a felicitous rendering from the Arabic beginning:

Ta robe avait glissé dans la rivière verte,
Et toi, les bras tendus, le visage pâli,
Les sourcils remontés et la bouche entr'ouverte,
Tu la regardais fuir, fille de Bākili.
Je suivais des sentiers déjà suivis la veille,
Car je crains les détours du sentier différent:
"Salut" dis-je, "salut! Ta jeunesse est pareille
A la robe de lin qu'entraîne le courant;
Pareille, elle s'enfuit au fil du temps qui presse."

E. P.

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A SYMPHONIC SUITE

The Jig of Forslin, by Conrad Aiken. Four Seas Co.

We have had other symphonies in verse, but none of them, for the present reviewer, gives the effect of music, evokes so nearly the same kind of emotion music evokes, as this book does. The term symphony not only suits it, but there is no other one word suits it so well. The publishers call this a "novel in verse"—a story of adventure in a man's mental hinterland; but while it is true that the poem is more than a collection of episodes, the parts are bound together not as the parts of a story, but as the movements of a symphony, with repetition of phrase and theme, moods and motives, which appear and reappear, are joined and again dispersed, in no logical pattern, but fluctuating and flowing:

Music heard in a dream; or hid in a wall;
Like a slow music, moving under a sea.

In it you may know what it is you are thinking when you are not thinking, see the procession of dream and memory and desire as it goes sliding by in the mind, when the mind is numbed or drifts, resting from its obvious, actual life, and experience merges with the experience outside.

It might be pointed out that in this book, as in others by Conrad Aiken, there is a disproportionate abundance of harlotry; but perhaps that is what one must expect looking at Forslin, or at any not too aged man, through glasses Freudian. Real and unreal are blended, the submerged rises into sight, the thwarted reaches out into satisfaction, and life

is lived beyond the limits imposed by inhibition and necessity,
time, space.

Ever I turn and turn, with my turning shadow,
Ever like smoke I am blown and spread and die.

H. H.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

THE HAWK'S WELL

I was passing a store window when I noticed an attractive cover on a magazine. Closer inspection revealed the fact that it was a reproduction of a painting by Edmund Dulac, fine enough to make one care to preserve it. So I gave the clerk a quarter for the March number of *Harper's Bazar* and began turning the pages to see if there were more illustrations by Dulac. As it happened, there was nothing with any direct reference to the Chinese lady on the cover, but there was an article on *The Hawk's Well*, the Noh play written by William Butler Yeats, with Dulac's designs for the costumes and for the masks worn by the two principal characters. This was interesting, and I congratulated myself on having bought the magazine, usually associated in one's mind with fashions, for which, being on the edge of the desert, I had no present use. The article and illustrations covered two full pages in the body of the magazine, and I fancied that that was all there was to it. Not until I reached home did I notice at the bottom of the second page of the article (which proved to be a preface by Mr. Yeats) a note in small type: *Continued on page 132*; and there, sure

enough, between advertisements of Hair Restorers, Patent Leather Boots, Mrs. Vernon Castle, and Back-lace Corsets, I found the text of *The Hawk's Well*. Perhaps there was something symbolic about it. Many may wait and fall asleep and know only by the wet stones that they have missed the perfect moment. I at least had luck—I found the play. But think of a Noh drama, born of the most ascetic theatre and convention, produced among such distractions! Is it not a reversal of all precedent?

Mr. Yeats' brief play is based upon the structure of the Japanese Noh as revealed to him in the Pound-Fenollosa translations, familiar to the readers of POETRY. He has chosen an incident from the heroic age of Ireland, and Cuhullain is one of the principal characters. There are but six: three dancers, the Guardian of the Well, an old man, and a young man who is Cuhullain. Dancing and music of course complete the action. The verse is extremely simple:

He has made a little heap of leaves,
He lays the dry sticks on the leaves,
And shivering with cold he has taken up
The fire-stick and socket from its hole.
He whirls it round to get a flame,
And now the dry sticks take the fire,
And now the fire leaps up and shines
Upon the hazels and the empty wells.

The form of the Noh is peculiarly adapted to our Little Theatres, and it will be surprising if more poets do not experiment with it. Mr. Wallace Stevens' play, *Three Travellers Watch a Sunrise*, although it did not follow strictly the Noh conventions, and although it called for one

very realistic feature which might be hard to manage artistically, had a great deal of the Noh spirit, and it is in this sense that I have always thought of it. *A. C. H.*

WANTED: A SONG FOR AMERICA

In its issue of May tenth, *Life* offers a prize of five hundred dollars for a song for America in the present crisis. "No poem or song shall be longer than twenty-four lines. It should be a song of modern Democracy, typifying the spirit of Liberty, Fraternity, Equality and the Allies." (Isn't that enough to frighten the Muse?) Also, "Its adaptability to be set to music will be a factor." By "best" is meant its "close conformity to the description just given united with correct metrical rendering." The poems are to be in by noon June 18th, and more than one poem may be submitted by one contestant. A postscript is to the effect that in the event of a tie the prize will be duplicated. This is as it should be. A split prize is worse than a split infinitive. Any poet who can tackle modern Democracy, the spirit of Liberty, Fraternity, Equality, and the Allies, and get away with it in twenty-four lines, is entitled to all that is coming to him. Nevertheless, we hope for the miracle.

A. C. H.

POETRY, which has been rebuked for presenting no poetry of militant patriotism at the very moment when the war-drums sounded, is as eager as *Life* to prove the miracle; and it hereby asserts its desire to print with the utmost

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promptitude any "song for America" sent to its office which may seem worth printing—be it a song of war, or an ode of "modern democracy," or any poem, lyric or dramatic, on some motive suggested by the present crisis. Our only regret is that no one has given us a five-hundred-dollar prize to be offered as a stimulus and a reward. H. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

TO MISS MONROE IN THE CAROLINAS

You have been ill! Alas, I had not heard.
It is impossible to be famed enough
To penetrate the nut-shell, hickory-rough,
Where live I, self-interned and self-interred.
Thank God, you're well again. No better word
Warms the May here, where April winds still sough.
Meanwhile the German folks have called our bluff,
Russia's revolved, and strange things have occurred.
Of course the tissue of a warless state
Was stranger still, but that they would not see.
Not to see strangeness brings a stranger fate.
And now before God's eyes, it seems to me,
Pulses an ocean of dream disconsolate,
Inchoate save with salt, bitter exceedingly.

E. H. L.

May 4, 1917.

NOTES

We present in this number the first of Mr. Pound's *Three Cantos*; the second and third will follow in the July and August numbers. The author writes:

"As POETRY circulates among people definitely interested in the art, I do not feel apologetic about presenting the opening cantos of an exceeding long poem. Most of the long poems that one can read were written before printing was invented, and circulated in fragments. More recent precedent may be found in the publication of separate cantos of *Don Juan*.

"It has been one of POETRY's chief services to make possible the current publication of work that otherwise would have been available only upon the issue of a complete volume of an individual's work. The harm which other magazines have done to poetry is largely in that they have fostered a habit among poets of setting forth only so much of their work as may be intelligible and acceptable in bits, only a page or so at a time."

Mr. D. H. Lawrence, the well-known English poet and novelist, has been printed often in POETRY. He is represented in the *Some Imagist* annuals, and his book of verse, *Amores*, is published in this country by B. W. Huebsch.

Mr. John Rodker is a young English poet familiar to our readers. Mr. Richard Butler Gleanzer, of St. George's, Bermuda, we have also published.

Sara Teasdale (Mrs. Ernst Filsinger), who recently removed from St. Louis to New York, is the well-known author of several books of verse, the latest being *Rivers to the Sea* (Macmillan Co.).

Mr. John Hall Wheelock, of New York, has published, through Sherman French & Co., three books of verse, of which *Love and Liberation* is the latest.

Mr. Glenn Ward Dresbach, of Tyrone, N. M., who has appeared before in POETRY, is the author of *The Road to Everywhere* (Gorham Press).

Three poets new to our readers are: Miss Ella Young, of Dublin, Ireland, author of *Celtic Wonder-tales* and of poems printed in British magazines; Miss Jane Heap, of Chicago; and Mr. Joseph Waller, of Grinnell, Iowa.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:

- A Lonely Flute*, by Odell Shepard. Houghton Mifflin Co.
The Yosemite and Other Verse, by Caroline Hazard. Houghton Mifflin Co.
Divinations and Creations, by Horace Holley. Mitchell Kennerly.
Lustra, by Ezra Pound. Elkin Mathews, London.
The Drums and Other Poems, by Walter Romeyn Benjamin. Robert J. Shores, New York.
Lollingdon Downs and Other Poems, by John Masefield. Macmillan Co.
War Flames, by John Curtis Underwood, Macmillan Co.
The Last of the Illini, or The Legend of Starved Rock, by W. N. Roundy. Privately printed, Chicago.
The Poems of B. I. Durward: Centenary Edition, 1917. Pilgrim Pub. Co., Baraboo, Wis.
Si Briggs Talks, by Madeline Yale Wynne. Houghton Mifflin Co.
The Laugh of Christ and Other Original Linnets, by St. Clair Jones. Studio Press, Indianapolis.
Profiles from China, by Eunice Tietjens. Ralph Fletcher Seymour, Chicago.

ANTHOLOGIES AND TRANSLATIONS:

- An Annual of New Poetry, 1917*. Constable and Co., London.
Some Imagist Poets, 1917: An Annual Anthology. Houghton Mifflin Co.
To Mother, An Anthology of Mother Verse, with introduction by Kate Douglas Wiggin. Houghton Mifflin Co.
The Love Poems of Emile Verhaeren, translated by F. S. Flint. Houghton Mifflin Co.

PROSE:

- George Edward Woodberry, A Study of his Poetry*, by Louis V. Ledoux. The Poetry Review.
An Evening in My Library Among the English Poets, by the Hon. Stephen Coleridge. John Lane, The Bodley Head, London.
Creative Criticism, by J. E. Spingarn. Henry Holt & Co.
The Young Idea: An Anthology of Opinion concerning the Spirit and Aims of Contemporary American Literature, by Lloyd R. Morris. Duffield & Co.

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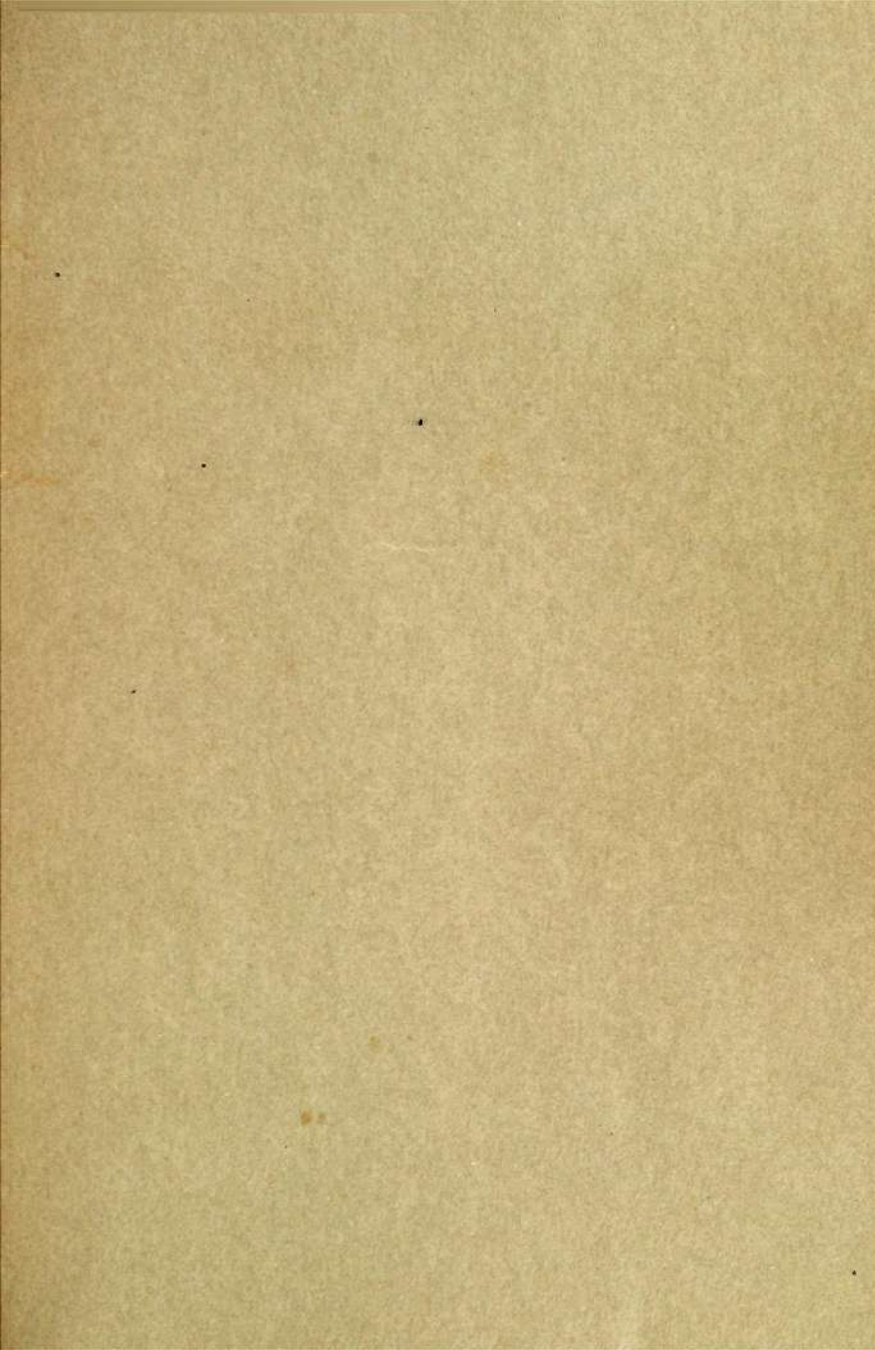
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