There is no magazine published in this country which has brought me such delight as your POETRY. I loved it from the beginning of its existence, and I hope that it may live forever.

A Subscriber

POETRY for AUGUST, 1918

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The Carpenter
The Veteran
War Sketches
Return to the Front—On the Ambulance—In Moulins Wood
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Manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped and self-addressed envelope.
Inclusive yearly subscription rates: In the United States, Mexico, Cuba and American possessions, $2.00 net; in Canada, $2.15 net; in all other countries in the Postal Union, $2.25 net. Entered as second-class matter at Post-office, Chicago.

Published monthly at 543 Cass St., Chicago

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POETRY asks its friends to become Supporting Subscribers by paying ten dollars a year to its Fund. The magazine began under a five-year endowment which expired Sept. 30th, 1917; and although the endowment has been partly resubscribed for another period, this Fund is insufficient and expenses are constantly increasing. The art of poetry requires, if it is to advance, not only special sympathy from a discriminating public, but also endowment similar to that readily granted to the other arts. All who believe in the general purpose and policy of this magazine, and recognize the need and value of such an organ of the art, are invited to assist thus in maintaining it.
ARMENIAN MARCHING SONG

MAHOMED'S banners dark the sun.
Under the smile of the Christian Hun,
Islam hate hath its work begun.
March, march, Armenia, march!

Over your thresholds seeps a flood;
Bright are your lintels flecked with blood:
March, march, Armenia, march!

Out at the doors where your first-born males
Dripping sag from the piercing nails,
Sound your reveille with dying wails—
March, march, Armenia, march!
Lingering woe of the crucified,  
Hanging on high like Christ who died:  
Time not to weep by your crucified—  
March, march, Armenia, march!

You flaunt no helmets to the skies,  
Dulling the red rain from your eyes—  
March, march, Armenia, march!  
Blinded, grope to the desert wild,  
Trampling the head of the slaughtered child;  
Over the limbs of the maid defiled,  
March, march, Armenia, march!

Climbing Arahrat's sacred crest  
Where came the Ark of Life to rest,  
March, march, Armenia, march!  
Sounds the last charge: the trumpets blow;  
Waves of steel through your thin ranks flow;  
Four thousand feet to the crags below,  
March, march, Armenia, march!

Christ's arms outstretched no hate can hide—  
When Rome slew him, it nailed them wide!  
Into the heart of the Crucified,  
March, march, Armenia, march!

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SYRIAN MOTHER’S LULLABY

Low hangs the morning star,
_Arahan arahan!_
Dull, like a fading scar,
_Arahan,_
Lies the Dead Sea.
Sleep, sleep, my Christian babe!
  On these Syrian sands,
  Golden Syrian sands, Jesus walked;
  Holding children’s hands
  In his loving hands, Jesus walked:
Sleep, sleep, my Christian babe.
  In my bosom hide your eyes,
  For a red dawn paints the skies.
  Little darling, do not weep—
  Jesus’ heart its watch doth keep.
Sleep, sleep, my Christian babe.

Green flags blow down the sky,
_Arahan arahan!_
Turk horsemen thunder nigh,
_Arahan,_
By the Dead Sea,
Sleep, sleep, my Christian babe.
  On these Syrian sands,
  Golden Syrian sands, Jesus walked;
  Clasping baby hands
In his tender hands, Jesus walked:
Sleep, sleep, my Christian babe.
Swift the crimson Turkmen ride—
Near my heart your wee head hide.
Jesus' heart its watch doth keep;
You shall slumber safe and deep.
Sleep, sleep, my Christian babe.

Where died the morning star,
Arahan arahan,
Flames Islam's scimitar,
Arahan,
O'er the Dead Sea.
Sleep, sleep, my Christian babe.

From these golden sands,
Ancient homeland sands, Jesus walks;
Reaching living hands
For our dying hands, Jesus walks:
Sleep, sleep, my Christian babe.
While the cold dark waters rise
In my bosom hide your eyes.
Christ before us treads the deep,
Jesus' heart its watch doth keep;
You shall never wake to weep!
Sleep, sleep, my Christian babe.
Men there are who live among flowers
And the colors of the rose are known to them in the seed—
Even as the hands of a woman in the dark
Make of the shadows a garden,
Filling the night of her husband with fragrance.
Men there are who know the stars:
To them, the night sky is a velvet woof
Crossed with the tints of jewels and April waters.
It is a carpet infinitely patterned,
Whereon the Poet-God lies, half dreaming—
Amid the perfect and the boundless
Yearning for the wistfulness of things imperfect,
And so making the Song that is Humanity.

Even so am I to the roseate carpets of the Orient.

The Magic of Khorassan weavers is known to me:
The dyers of Khiva and Damascus,
And the Arabian dreamers in purple,
The resonant color-singers of old Turkestan,
Have come to me out of the dim shadows
Of the carpet-bales,
Under the flickering gas-jets,
In the back room of a little shop on upper Broadway.
For—how long ago!—in the time of peace
I was a rug vendor.
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

Nineteen Hundred and Sixteen, Anno Domini:
And Spring bursting with young green in the parks,
And bird-wings rhythmically weaving
Into the New Earth’s carpet
Little mottoes of freedom!
Gajor wept and said, “You will never return.”
And my friends in the Syrian café on Tenth Avenue
Laid their hands heavily upon me.
But I saw only the hands of the ancient color-singers beckoning;
Heavier were their ghostly fingers tapping at my soul.
Oh! never were the lips of her I love
More desirous and more dear
Than when she alone whispered:
“If thou diest, I die; yet go!”

Makhir Subatu!
Nineteen Hundred and Sixteen, the Year of Our Lord,
And Spring; and the Rose of Sharon blooming
By crimson-clotted brooks:
And gold-tongued lilies
That once, with my youth, answered the nightingale,
Now dumb beneath the moon,
Their white throats choked with blood!
Among the trampled green of olive-groves
Are strewn the stained girdles of young women,
Or wrapped about small—pitifully small—black mounds of death.

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Sky-blue, sea-blue, girdles of young women  
That once sacredly bound the Hope of a Race,  
Waiting the loosening hands of Love;  
And little tunics of slain children  
Woven through the woof, like the snow-flower pattern,  
Under triumphant spring-green banners  
Blowing from the four corners of the hills.  
And the fringes that hold the Sacred Carpet up to Heaven—  
The countless thick-packed white fringes—  
They are the bones of men who loved their Christ.  
For this is the great Prayer-rug of Islam.

I have seen the Turk weaving his Sacred Carpet,  
I have knelt on the Prayer-rug of Islam!  
I am apostate, dear Christ!  
Christian and poet no longer, lover no more,  
How shall I lay hands on my beloved's blue girdle?  
My heart is a place of swords!

Ajan Syrian
In garments dyed with blood, thorn-crowned, alone,
A wistful figure on the battlefield
Is by frore moonlight through the dusk revealed.
The mutterings of crass voices 'round him groan.
  "Hearing he has not heard;
A god, he has not stirred
To stay this shamefulness of war," men say.
Spear-pierced by scorn he passes on his way.

Dark is earth's skyline, scarlet-dark; and he
Is pale as wind-blown ashes. His scarred face
Droops to the slain boys in that slaughter-place;
His wounded hands touch all wounds tenderly.
  Yet when he lifts his eyes
The love-light in them dies;
For fury he has fury and for those
Who show no mercy he no mercy knows.

He tramples out the wine-press of his wrath;
He puts the mighty down from their high seat;
Time-rotted tyrannies topple at his feet;
Gaunt discrowned spectres flit before his path.
  Their doom was in his word
When first Judea heard
Of brotherhood. Kings scuttle at his nod,
Blown down black battles by the breath of God.
The night brims up with hate and misery;
As from the ground, at each thin blart of fire,
Gleam dead phosphoric eyes in deathless ire.
The hosts snatch freedom from their butchery.
   Dead—no lords they fear.
   Dead—their blue lips jeer.
Their cross, and his, drives on the smash of things.
The Carpenter builds scaffolds for the Kings.

James Church Alvord

THE VETERAN

We came upon him sitting in the sun—
   Blinded by war, and left. And past the fence
Wandered young soldiers from the Hand & Flower,
   Asking advice of his experience.

And he said this and that, and told them tales;
   And all the nightmares of each empty head
Blew into air. Then, hearing us beside—
   “Poor kids, how do they know what it’s like?” he said.

And we stood there, and watched him as he sat
   Turning his sockets where they went away;
Until it came to one of us to ask
   “And you’re—how old?”

   “Nineteen the third of May.”

Margaret I. Postgate

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WAR SKETCHES

RETURN TO THE FRONT

Sleek cats in sunny doorways . . .

He held the picture in his weary brain
That he might ease his misery and pain,
Forget the swaying lorry and the rain.

The dark was kind at any rate, and yet
It pressed against his eyes. His feet were wet.
He wished that he could light a cigarette.

Sleek cats in sunny doorways . . .

He moved; the water ran along his skin;
He wiped the drops that gathered on his chin.
The road grew rougher and more rain leaked in.

ON THE AMBULANCE

". . . The upper stretcher on the left-hand side,
I mean. Something felt queer behind my back.
Here, take my pocket light."

"You needn’t stop.
I’ll look. . . . He’s dead."

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"I thought so. I shan't stop. 
Dawn must be nearly here—the star-shells bloom
More palely on the sky. He must have died
Just now. . . ."

"I never saw so many stars."

IN MOULINS WOOD

I walk alone through a desolation where the stripped and
beaten trees are mute, having forgot to pray.

Over the shell-holes, torn mouths of clay, hangs the smell
of gas, like that of rotting pears.

Silence everywhere—save above, where the shells pass whin­
ing on invisible grooves. Surely someone is drawing
heated irons across the sky.

A fearful place to walk with Solitude; my nerves ache. Are
all men dead but me, or is this Death by my side?

Robert Redfield, Jr.
A SONG FOR SOULS UNDER FIRE

To F. L. W.

Lo, that doves
Should soften
These surging streets!

I found him talking simply and gladly of God,
In the unmoved city of granite
And noise.

Thought kindled in his cheek,
And his white faith
Was the tree in spring
To look upon.

He whispered me he knew the God of Daniel
In the lions’ den;
The faith of Joan of Arc
On parapets.

He will walk, a spirit
Of unguessed power,
Into battle.

He will walk unreached
Into fire!
MY HEART, LIKE HYACINTH

Oh, Grief is not so near to tears
As I!

Hurting me more than chord-pain—
The thought of you,
Quiet, alone,
Lovely as a watered reed,
Resting in the straightness
Of your cool white bed.

For I, storm-shattered and sick,
Lie here flushed, hard-breathing.

Oh, Grief is not so near to tears
As I!

THE ADVENTURER

Gatherer of shells,
Flower-hunter,
Breather of slight winds—
There is much to surprise me.

I bring you songs for flutes,
And odd-shaped leaves
And pointed vagaries.

These trinkets you may toy,
And twine into your moods—
Carelessly.
But I cannot tell you of what they are made,  
Or where I found them.

**MELLOW**

These soft hours,  
The color of blurred pebbles  
And wan sand,  
Are an old worn fringe  
About the breasts  
Of the mellow afternoon.

The lilac lake  
Is a saucer—thin—  
Burdened with faint blue rings.

The brown velvet dog  
Is a curved attitude  
Upon the lawn.

Jagged in the black tree-lines  
The frayed sun languishes—  
A pale pink poppy  
Grown too large.

**WITHOUT CHAPERON**

Frail,  
The white moon leans  
To the green-edged hill.

To S. W.

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The aspen lifts
Its tracery
Into light.

The moon slips down
The edge of night.

It is odd
To stand here alone—
This quaking aspen
And I.

THE FOREST OF DEAD TREES

I climbed up the rough mountain-side
Through the forest of dead trees.

I touched their smooth, stark limbs,
And learned much of the white beauty of death.

Whose taut, slender thigh was this?
And this, whose gracious throat?

O life, you are not more beautiful
Than this silent, curving death is beautiful!

And Eternity—
I think I heard it cry:
"Centre within centre,
Death or Life,
One am I."

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BENEDICTION

Let no blasphemer till the sacred earth
Or scatter seed upon it,
Lest fruit should fail
And weed-scars sting its fineness.

Send him here who loves its beauty
And its brownness.

He will plow the earth
As a dancer dances—
Ecstatically.

Let no blasphemer till the sacred earth
Or scatter seed upon it.

Mark Turbyfill
SONG OF THE VINE, IN ENGLAND

Man:
O Vine along my garden wall,
Could I thine English slumber break,
And thee from wintry exile disenthral—
Where would thy spirit wake?

Vine:
I would wake at the hour of dawning in May in Italy,
When rose mists rise from the Magra’s valley plains,
In the fields of maize and olives around Pontrémoli,
When peaks grow golden and clear and the starlight wanes.
I would wake to the dance of the sacred mountains boundlessly
Kindling their marble snows in the rite of fire;
To them my new-born tendrils softly and soundlessly
Would uncurl and aspire.

I would hang no more on thy wall a rusted slumberer,
Listless and fruitless strewing the pathways cold.
I would seem no more in thine eyes an idle cumberer—
Profitless alien, bitter and sere and old.
In some warm terraced dell where the Roman rioted,
And still in tiers his stony theatre heaves,
Would I festoon with leaf-light his glory quieted,
And flake his thrones with leaves.

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Doves from the mountain belfries would seek and cling to me,  
    To drink from the altar, winnowing the fragrant airs.  
Women from olived hillsides by turns would sing to me,  
    Beating the olives or stooping afield in pairs.  
On gala evenings the gay little carts of laborers,  
    Swinging from axles their horns against evil eye,  
And crowded with children, revellers, pipers, and taborers  
    Chanting, would pass me by. . . .

There go the pale blue shadows so light and showery  
    Over sharp Apuan peaks—rathe mists unwreathe,  
Almond trees wake, and the paven yards grow flowery,  
    Crocuses cry from the earth at the joy to breathe.  
There through the deep-eaved gateways of haughty-turreted  
    Arno—house-laden bridges of strutted stalls—  
Mighty white oxen drag in the jars rich-spirited  
    Grazing the narrow walls!

Wine-jars I too have filled, and the heart was thrilled with  
    me.  
Brown-limbed on shady turf the families lay:  
Shouting they bowled the bowls; and old men, filled with  
    me,  
    Roused the September twilight with songs that day.  
Lanterns of sun and moon the young children flaunted me,  
    Plaiters of straw from doorway to window cried.  
Borne through the city gates the great oxen vaunted me,  
    Swaying from side to side.
Wine-jars out of my leafage that once so vitally
Throbbed into purple, of me thou canst never take:
Thy heart would remember the towns on the branch of Italy,
And teaching to throb I should teach it, perchance, to break.
It would beat for those little cities, rock-hewn and mellowing,
Festooned from summit to summit, where still sublime
Murmur her temples, lovelier in their yellowing
Than in the morn of time.

I from the scorn of frost and the wind’s iniquity
Barren, aloft in that golden air would thrive:
My passionate rootlets draw from that hearth’s antiquity
Whirls of profounder fire in us to survive.
The serried realms of our fathers would swell and foam with us—
Juice of the Latin sunrise; your own sea-flung
Rude and far-wandered race might again find home with us
Leaguing with old Rome, young.
TO A GREY DRESS

There's a flutter of grey through the trees:
Ah, the exquisite curves of her dress as she passes
Fleet with her feet on the path where the grass is!

I see not her face, I but see
The swift re-appearance, the flitting persistence—
There!—of that flutter of grey in the distance.

It has flickered and fluttered away:
What a teasing regret she has left in my day-dream,
And what dreams of delight are the dreams that one may dream!

It was only a flutter of grey;
But the vaguest of raiment's impossible chances
Has set my heart beating the way of old dances.

DREAMS

To dream of love, and, waking, to remember you:
As though, being dead, one dreamed of heaven, and woke in hell.
At night my lovely dreams forget the old farewell:
Ah! wake not by his side, lest you remember too!
I set all Rome between us; with what joy I set
The wonder of the world against my world's delight!
Rome, that hast conquered worlds, with intellectual might
Capture my heart, and teach my memory to forget!

Arthur Symons

THE WINDOWS

The windows of the little house look down the crooked lane,
Windows that are watching like a child's wide eyes;
Hopeful in the sunshine and wistful in the rain
And anxious in the winter when the blown snow flies.

Morning after morning I walk the fields a mile,
I go to town and back again, I swing the little gate;
But though I lift my face to them the windows never smile,
They only look above my head, and, looking, watch and wait.

Long since my watching ended—the heart-thrust and the care.
It's only for the little house I keep its windows bright;
And sometimes on a May-day put a crimson flower there,
Or a lamp that burns unshaded on a wild Fall night.

Theodosia Garrison

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GARDENS THERE WERE

Gardens there were, and faces clear as agate,
And words I have forgotten how to speak.
A thousand people pass . . . I have forgotten
The things I might have said, the things I seek.

Roses there were—a very sea of roses;
Zithers, the sudden drawing of a breath,
And something passionate throbbing in the moonlight—
Can we remember passion after death?

Gardens there were, and something that was hidden
Deeper than water coursing in the earth . . .
Beauty had filled my open hands with silver . . .
There is a death made manifest in birth!

Roses there were . . . In many a clear dusk sweetened
With frost, or washed with some quick gust of rain,
I have smelled roses, and the old, old longing
For those lost faces comes to me again.

Zithers and roses, and the words forgotten;
Faces that were as delicate as stone
Hewn from the hills of Greece . . . A thousand people
Pass me, and yet I know I am alone.
GOD'S HOUSE

When people go to summon God
Unto his earthly throne,
The roof whereunder God may house
Must be a cry in stone.

For God, he will not hear a prayer
That lies against the ground—
How shall the worm lift up to God
So suppliant a sound?

How shall the birds who build so small
Be heard beneath the sky?—
Or those who have no mason's hand
Be shriven with a cry?

Ten million spires of prayer there be
In Christendom today—
There is no God in Lisser Wood,
Or on the queen's highway.

And I who cannot square a stone,
Or lodge beneath a roof,
Have heard strange horns on sundown hills
And seen the devil's hoof!

Leslie Nelson Jennings
HAY

A farmer, singing, passed my home today
On top a wagon heaped with fragrant hay.

Big-footed horses drew the sun-sweet load
In slow contentment down the shadowed road.

A vagrant wind snatched little whiffs of scent
And brought them to me as the wagon went:

Fine largess of the fields—the rustling grass,
The crumpled, odorous clover! Jolting past

It brought the beauty of the country-side—
Long lanes, and thickets cool, and meadows wide;

Brought back all sweetness that in summer lies—
Fragrance of flowers, warmth of brooding skies,

Scent of the soil and perfumes of the dew,
Dank odor of the rain that filters through,

Radiance of daybreak, tenderness of dusk,
Mist of the moonlight when pervasive musk

Of moonflower and of jasmine by the door
Enchant the silence. These and greatly more

Came to me as the farmer went his way
A-top his wagon heaped with sun-sweet hay.

Beatrice Stevens
A GIRL DANCING ON THE SHORE

Dance on, dance swift to your flute's song,
    Girl of the setting sun!
The waves are wild to do you wrong
    Before the dance is done;
But your white fleeting feet
Have caught the sway and beat
    Of the ocean's eager cry.
The wave-men vainly strain
To drown your slow refrain
    And the flute's mellow sigh.

Dance on, dance swift, light on the breeze—
    You, the pale sea's fair daughter!
The sun has set beyond the seas
    In lakes of gilded water.
So play like tossing spray
As mistily fades the day,
    And smoke-blue shadows creep.
Now tread one rhythm more,
Then rest upon the shore
    And pipe the waves to sleep.

Henry C. Thomas
WITH THE WIND

My soul is borne out on the wind.
Through the opaqueness of her earthly case she glitters like a sword.
She is free; she rides her body as the whirlwind the storm.
She is free from the death of the flesh.

Her passage is brief as the lightning,
As the flash of the outgoing sea-gull,
Or the slipping frigate!
She is the juggler who raises the dead,
With whom the spirits speak.

The soul is beautiful! Proud in her beauty she laughs at life
And drinks deep of the day.
And she casts herself on the wing of the wind,
Breasting the uppermost height.

ON THE HEIGHTS

It is exquisite, arrived at the outermost limit,
No longer to thirst for anything.
How poignantly you yielded yourself and became intoxicated
With the fierce wine of my presence!
Sensitively the last veil
Completely melted between us.

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Oh, how beautiful, in the temple of the woods,
That irretrievable hour!

From the Russian of Konstantin Balmont
Translated by Edith Chapman Tracy

EASY PARTING

You are relieved and grateful
That she has made it easy for you;
And so you show respect
To the gallant courage,
Playing up in this defeated moment.

You can not see
That this is only the shell of her,
Who, in the long lonely nights,
While beside her you slept unmindful,
Knew that sometime her heart would fail,
And killed herself
By tiny fragments
Years ago.

Mildred Cummer Wood
I am a woman, sick for passion,
Sitting under the golden beech trees.
I am a woman, sick for passion,
Crumbling the beech-leaves to powder in my fingers.
The servants say: “Yes, my Lady,” and “No, my Lady.”
And all day long my husband calls me
From his invalid chair:
“Mary,” Mary, where are you, Mary? I want you.”
Why does he want me?
When I come he only pats my hand
And asks me to settle his cushions.
Poor little beech-leaves,
Slowly falling,
Crumbling,
In the great park.
But there are many golden beech-leaves
And I am alone.

I am a woman, sick for passion,
Walking between rows of painted tulips.
Parrot flowers, toucan-feathered flowers,
How bright you are!
You hurt me with your colors,
Your reds and yellows lance at me like flames.
Oh, I am sick—sick—
And your darting loveliness hurts my heart.

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You burn me with your parrot-tongues.
Flame!
Flame!
My husband taps on the window with his stick:
"Mary, come in. I want you. You will take cold."

I am a woman, sick for passion,
Gazing at a white moon hanging over tall lilies.
The lilies sway and darken,
And a wind ruffles my hair.
There is a scrape of gravel behind me,
A red coat crashes scarlet against the lilies.
"Cousin-Captain!
I thought you were playing piquet with Sir Kenelm."
"Piquet, Dear Heart! And such a moon!"
Your red coat chokes me, Cousin-Captain.
Blood-color, your coat:
I am sick—sick—for your heart.
Keep away from me, Cousin-Captain.
Your scarlet coat dazzles and confuses me.
O heart of red blood, what shall I do!
Even the lilies blow for the bee.
Does your heart beat so loud, Beloved?
No, it is the tower-clock chiming eleven.
I must go in and give my husband his posset.
I hear him calling:
"Mary, where are you? I want you."
I am a woman, sick for passion,  
Waiting in the long, black room for the funeral procession to pass.  
I sent a messenger to town last night.  
When will you come?  
Under my black dress a rose is blooming.  
A rose?—a heart?—it rustles for you with open petals.  
Come quickly, Dear,  
For the corridors are full of noises.  
In this fading light I hear whispers,  
And the steady, stealthy purr of the wind.  
What keeps you, Cousin-Captain? . . .  
What was that?  
“Mary, I want you.”  
Nonsense, he is dead,  
Buried by now.  
Oh, I am sick of these long, cold corridors!  
Sick—for what?  
Why do you not come?  

I am a woman, sick—sick—  
Sick of the touch of cold paper,  
Poisoned with the bitterness of ink.  
Snowflakes hiss, and scratch the windows.  
“Mary, where are you?”  
That voice is like water in my ears;  
I cannot empty them.  
He wanted me, my husband,
But these stone parlors do not want me.
You do not want me either, Cousin-Captain.
Your coat lied,
Only your white sword spoke the truth.
"Mary! Mary!"
Will nothing stop the white snow
Sifting,
Sifting?
Will nothing stop that voice,
Drifting through the wide, dark halls?
The tower-clock strikes eleven dully, stifled with snow.
Softly over the still snow,
Softly over the lonely park,
Softly . . .
Yes, I have only my slippers, but I shall not take cold.
A little dish of posset.
Do the dead eat?
I have done it so long,
So strangely long.
SARA TEASDALE'S PRIZE

LOVE SONGS, by Sara Teasdale, published last year by the Macmillan Company, has been starred by a five-hundred dollar prize, bestowed officially, from an anonymous donor, by Columbia University, at the same time that this institution awarded the Pulitzer prizes of a thousand dollars each for the best play, the best novel, the best editorial, and the best book of science, of the year 1917. Miss Teasdale's—or rather Mrs. Filsinger's—prize is for the best book of poetry published last year in this country by a citizen of the United States.

But this prize is not to be credited primarily either to Columbia University or its School of Journalism. Officers of the Poetry Society of America, we are informed, solicited the money, and appointed the committee of award, which consisted of William Marion Reedy, Bliss Perry and Jessie B. Rittenhouse.

Without disparaging the award, we must say a word about this committee, for questions of principle are involved. For thirty years, more or less, American painters, sculptors and architects have been fighting for the principle of professional juries in all competitions. A society which pretends to stand for the great art of poetry in this country should inflexibly adopt this rule; its prizes should represent the finished judgment of the most distinguished poets in its membership list. The cachet of a society with so large a title...
should mean something. That cachet has hitherto meant nothing, because of the society's singularly provincial and haphazard way of awarding the only prizes it has given until this year—the two annuals of an hundred and twenty-five dollars each.

No one could question Mr. Reedy's competence as a judge of modern poetry, but the sad fact has to be admitted that he has never confessed himself a poet. Mr. Perry also, so far as we are aware, is innocent of the art, and moreover his authority as a critic and man of letters is seriously to be questioned. Miss Rittenhouse has been secretary of the society from its foundation, but her recent small volume of verse could hardly be accepted as evidence that she is one of the more distinguished poets on its rolls, or therefore a fit member of this committee.

As for the award itself, the only way of forming an opinion is to examine the publishers' lists for 1917. These disclose the following as the more important books of verse (listed according to date of publication)—the possible competitors of Miss Teasdale's *Love Songs*:

*Sea Garden*, by H. D. Houghton-Mifflin Co.


*These Times*, by Louis Untermeyer. Henry Holt & Co.

*Lustra*, by Ezra Pound. Alfred A. Knopf.
Let us examine this list. Possibly H. D.'s little volume of beautiful imagist poems can not be considered, because legally, being the wife of an Englishman, she is not a citizen of the United States. Aesthetically she, like Ezra Pound, is intensely American in every fibre of her temperament, just as Whistler was profoundly our fellow-citizen in spite of his long residence abroad. And aesthetic citizenship should be the criterion in such a competition as this.

Mr. Robinson's *Merlin* should certainly not win him a prize, however distinguished his earlier work has been. Nor is Mr. Ficke's *April Elegy* up to his best level or to the best on this list. If I were on the committee I would fight, bleed and die rather than give a prize to Mr. Woodberry. Mr. Untermeyer is not in the running; nor is Mr. Bynner's *Grenstone Poems*, though some of the *Celia* lyrics might make it an "almost." Of the vers-librists, surely not Mr. Oppenheim; and the books by Mr. Underwood and Mrs. Tietjens might be challenged as poetic prose rather than free
verse; at any rate, they can hardly compete with H. D. or Ezra Pound among the radicals.

We are thus left with these two radicals—Mr. Pound and H. D.—and with Mr. Lindsay and Mr. Johns among the rhymesters, as Sara Teasdale’s only serious competitors during the year 1917. It may be objected that Mr. Pound’s Lustra was first published in London in 1916; possibly that would bar it out, though I can not see why the Knopf volume does not bring it within the rules. There are in Lustra certain poems—Dance Figure, Fish and the Shadow, Ortus, The Garden—which have superlative magic, and Mr. Pound has been, moreover, immeasurably stimulating in modern poetic art. It would be very difficult for me to vote against this book if it comes within the rules. I should have to give it the preference over H. D.’s little volume, exquisite as that is in its hard, clear, gem-like artistic purity.

Among the rhymesters, both Mr. Lindsay’s book and Mr. Johns’ would be serious competitors of Love Songs. Mr. Lindsay’s is a bigger thing; and the instrument he plays, if not finer, has more richness and volume. As for Mr. Johns, while I don’t like the dialect part of his book, certain other lyrics in it have for me a poetic magic of more intense and original quality than Miss Teasdale’s.

However, Miss Teasdale’s volume contains a few poems which may be ranked among the finest woman’s love-songs in the language, and the whole book reveals with singular clarity and precision a beautiful bright spirit of rare vividness and charm. Her art is of an absolute and most refresh-
ing simplicity; and sincerity also, except when the emotion is frayed by a tempting facility. Though of an old fashion, it is a fashion that endures—her best lyrics certainly "put it over." The committee, weary of discussions as to what is or isn't poetry, may well have taken refuge in the certainty that good love-songs have been poetry since long before Sappho chanted hers in Lesbos. Whether the book should top the 1917 list or not, it is certainly worthy of a prize, and we offer our hearty congratulations to the poet.

Mr. Reedy, who no doubt voted for it, says of Love Songs in his Mirror: "It is a collection of as nearly flawless lyrics as ever were penned—sheer song with the artlessness that is almost impeccable artistry." Padraic Colum speaks in The New Republic for their simplicity and genuineness, and their "subtly intellectual" quality as well, and sums up his review thus:

Love Songs is one of the books of verse we accept without any discussion. The sincerity of the poems, their clearness, and their intellectual level, are related to a fine courage that is always present.

And Vachel Lindsay, in a recent letter, remarks, "The book deserves to be spot-lighted;" and insists that he led the way for the committee by dedicating The Chinese Nightingale "to Sara Teasdale, Poet."

Our thanks to the anonymous donor for the hint he has given to the late Joseph Pulitzer, and the general public as well. Mr. Pulitzer's will, creating a school of journalism at Columbia University, with annual thousand-dollar prizes for a novel, an editorial, a book of science, etc., omitted
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poetry. Probably he never thought of it—nobody was thinking of poetry during the period when his will was drawn. Of course the omission of poetry from any prize-list which included at least two literary products, the novel and the play, was preposterous; and we may hope that the present donor, or other donors, may permanently atone for the slight with an annual prize as large as the other prizes.

The poem of each year—or book of poems—must be, we submit, at least as prize-worthy as the editorial of the year. It may be, of course, of a value immeasurably greater, for, by the favor of the gods, it may be a masterpiece, an enduring work of genius—a distinction which could scarcely be claimed for any editorial.

H. M.

REVIEWS

A MODERN EVANGELIST

Look! We Have Come Through! by D. H. Lawrence.

D. H. Lawrence has recently published a third volume of poetry to stand beside his Love Poems and Amores. This event has, so far as I am aware, passed almost without notice in the English press. The reviewers of the English press know perfectly well that Mr. Lawrence is supposed to be a dangerous man, writing too frankly on certain subjects which are politely considered taboo in good society, and therefore they do their best to prevent Mr. Lawrence from writing at all, by tacitly ignoring him. If they are driven to the admission, these selfsame reviewers are obliged grudg-

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ingly to acknowledge that Mr. Lawrence is one of the most interesting of modern writers. Such are the conditions which a modern writer with something new to say is obliged to accept in England to-day. The press can make a great to-do about the innocuous, blameless and essentially minor poetry of Edward Thomas (to take but one example); they politely refuse to discuss the questionable, but essentially major effort of a D. H. Lawrence. Is it any wonder that such an attitude drives a man to sheer fanaticism?

For a fine, intolerant fanatic D. H. Lawrence undoubtedly is. That is his value for our present day, so rich in half-measures and compromises. Lawrence does not compromise. In this last collection of poetry he gives us works which are not good poetry, which are scarcely readable prose. He includes them because they are necessary to the complete understanding of his thought and gospel. We, if we are wise, will read them for the same reason. For Lawrence is an original thinker, and his message to our present day is a valuable message.

Briefly, the message is this: that everything which we call spiritual is born and comes to flower out of certain physical needs and reactions, of which the most patent is the reaction of sex, through which life is maintained on this planet. Lawrence therefore stands in sharp contrast to the Christian dogma of the middle ages, and to those writers of the present day who still maintain an attitude of respect to the Christian view, which is that we are each endowed with an immortal soul, at strife with our physical needs,
which can only be purged by death. Lawrence, like a recent French writer, "does not desire to spit out the forbidden fruit, and recreate the Eden of the refusal of life." He is frankly pagan. To him, the flesh is the soil in which the spirit blossoms, and the only immortality possible is the setting free of the blossoming spirit from the satiated flesh. When this is accomplished, then the spirit becomes free, perfect, unique, a habitant of paradise on earth. This is the doctrine of which he is the zealot, the intolerant apostle.

The specific value of this idea need not concern us very greatly. The question is, rather, of its poetical value; and there is no doubt that it is a system of philosophy which is essentially poetical. Poetry is at once highly objective and highly subjective. It is objective in so far as it deals with words, which are in a strong sense objects, and with the external world in its objective aspects. It is subjective, because it also states the poet's subjective reactions to words and to all external phenomena. Lawrence is one of the few poets in England to-day who keeps this dual rôle of poetry well in mind; and that is why his poetry, though it may often be badly written, is never without energy and a sense of power.

The reason for his failings as a poet must be sought elsewhere than in his attitude to life. We can only understand why he fails if we understand the conditions under which he is forced to write. With a reasonable degree of independence, a public neither openly hostile nor totally indifferent, an intellectual milieu capable of finer life and better understand-
ing, Lawrence would become nothing but an artist. He has none of these things; and so he is forced, by destiny itself, to become the thing he probably began by loathing, a propagandist, a preacher, an evangelist.

This brings him into close connection with Walt Whitman, who similarly spent his life in preaching with puritanical fervor a most unpuritan gospel. Indeed, if one examines closely Lawrence’s latest technique as shown here in such poems as Manifesto and New Heaven and Earth, one is surprised to see how close this comes in many respects to that of the earlier Whitman, the Whitman of The Song of Myself. For example, note the selfsame use of long, rolling, orchestral rhythm in the two following passages:

When I gathered flowers, I knew it was myself plucking my own flowering,
When I went in a train, I knew it was myself travelling by my own invention,
When I heard the cannon of the war, I listened with my own ears to my own destruction,
When I saw the torn dead, I knew it was my own torn dead body. It was all me, I had done it all in my own flesh.

Every kind for itself and its own, for me, mine, male and female,
For me those that have been boys and that love women,
For me the man that is proud and feels how it stings to be slighted,
For me the sweet-heart and the old maid, for me mothers and the mothers of mothers,
For me lips that have smiled, eyes that have shed tears,
For me children and the begetters of children.

The difference is (and this too is curiously brought out in the technique) that Lawrence is more delicate, more sensitive, more personal. He deliberately narrows his range, to
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embrace only life and his own life in particular. Unlike Whitman, he has a horror of the infinite, and I am sure that he could never bring himself to “utter the word Democracy, the word en-masse.” He is an aristocrat, an individualist, and indeed, he has only a horror of the collective mass of mankind, which he sees (and in this case, he sees more clearly than Whitman) to have been always conservative, conventional, timid, and persecutors of genius. In fact, the only similarity is, that both he and Whitman are preachers of new gospels, and therefore are obliged to adopt a similar tone of oratory in their work.

For this reason, Lawrence in his best poetry is unquotable, as is the case with all poets who depend rather on the extension of emotion, than on its minute concentration. But now and again he produces something that seems to transform all the poetry now written in English into mere prettiness and feebleness, so strong is the power with which his imagination pierces its subject. Such a poem, for example, is the one called The Sea. I have space for only its last magnificent stanza:

You who take the moon as in a sieve, and sift
Her flake by flake and spread her meaning out;
You who roll the stars like jewels in your palm,
So that they seem to utter themselves aloud;
You who steep from out the days their color,
Reveal the universal tint that dyes
Their web; who shadow the sun’s great gestures and expressions
So that he seems a stranger in his passing;
Who voice the dumb night fittingly;
Sea, you shadow of all things, now mock us to death with your shadowing.

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The man who wrote this, and many other passages in this volume, has at last arrived at his maturity—the maturity of the creative artist who is able to grasp a subject through its external aspect and internal meaning simultaneously, and to express both aspects in conjunction, before the subject is laid aside.

*John Gould Fletcher*

**AN ENGLISH SOLDIER POET**

*Ardors and Endurances*, by Robert Nichols. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

The contents of this volume are divided into three Books, the first presenting war poems. The design on the outer cover is appropriate to the hour—the frenzied face of war, a reproduction from the drawing of a Fury by Michelangelo. The heroic title may come from the lines—

My heart demands in grief
Ardor, endurance and relief:

or the lines may be the offspring of the title.

It is always with a tender awe that I touch a book by a soldier. And this young soldier is so winningly frank and boyish—he takes us so into his confidence! He tells us what he has read—in some passages that he has quenched his thirst from the goblet of Keats, in others that Milton has led him by the hand; and this influence of the past does not necessarily injure the poems it stamps. However, Mr. Nichols forms a veritable "case" for the modern surgeon of poetry, for we find him using throughout his work such expressions as "in sooth," "I wis," "Hist—draws he

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nigher?,” “lush meadows,” “sentinel palm,” etc. It is rather late in the day for a young poet to begin thus, even though many now sophisticated moderns wrote in much the same way when they were young. With Mr. Nichols the substance often prevails over the manner, though the noble dreams and clear aspirations which fill this book and give us memorable lines are set to a pattern of thought frequently as conventional as its patterns of style.

This is not to say that each of the poems is in the old manner of thinking and writing. There is a stirring freshness often, words are used originally, and we discover vital words new to poetry. It has been said that modern methods make egoists of the mediocre. If so Robert Nichols would not suffer from adopting them. The man who wrote these lines is a man to be reckoned with:

Hunger is in my heart . . .
I stretch my arms out and I kiss
The whole world's dark and simple face.

Much has been said about the writing of poetry dealing with the war; a virtue has even been made of the power of some poets to draw away from the subject entirely. Now, when the foundations of the world are rocking with war, when we cannot help absorbing war every blood-stained minute, that poetical thought should be able to detach itself completely from war would seem to be something of a miracle. Nichols' lines ring with the intensity and fire of the thick of the fight. *The Day's March* is a notable example; so is *Noon*. *The Assault* is a striking account of an infantry advance amid a hurricane of shell:
Fragments fly,
Rifles and bits of men whirled at the sky.

Book II contains *A Faun's Holiday*, a long poem in the classical manner which has a certain youthful power and charm. Book III, *Poems and Phantasies*, shows like power and a keen sense of the beautiful. *The Hill* gives the feeling of the Virgin Mother as she enfolds the Christchild with her love and forecasts his iron hour. Perhaps the best piece of descriptive writing in this collection is *The Tree*, showing the crooked, creaking tree as its loaded bough dips and the body of Judas falls and lies on the grass facing the sky, the flies dizzily swinging "over its winkless eyes." Goya himself has painted no stronger picture. There are good songs and crude songs. In *Change* we have the emotion of a man as his spirit projects itself with the outflowing tide. Here the metre is perhaps more varied than in many of the other poems. The reader will delight in a quaint Pierrot poem which leaves its "moonshine, moonshine in the head." There is beauty in *Book III* as in *Book II*, but it is *Book I* that most of us will remember longest.

*Agnes Lee Freer*

**A PRAIRIE POET**


One who takes up *Barbed Wire* from a book-counter expecting a collection of war poems will find nothing of the sort. These are simply poems of the prairies.
It has been said that *The Well Digger* is equal to anything Frost has done, and I remember wincing when I heard the book as a whole pronounced better than *Spoon River*—to my thinking all approach to *Spoon River* being barred. As to the latter comparison, I find no trace of Masters in Mr. Piper's work, except perhaps in the last part of *The Boy on the Prairie* and in his introduction of many names. The resemblance, at the author's best, is to Frost, with Frost's fine charm left out. Yet the resemblance may be chance, and if subtle charm be lacking we have force to take its place. The work has an elemental sweep that spurs the reader to turn page after page. Tired of bewildering controversies, of the eternal question, "Is this poetry?"—I can only say that while to me many of the lines and stanzas are but powerful statements of fact, Mr. Piper is a poet. One is carried far and irresistibly by his masterful insight into western life. He has a good supply of fresh, strong words with which to paint in graphic pictures his sketches and stories of the starkness, monotony and beauty of prairies. His descriptions are not those of a mere looker-on; one feels that he has been the farmer tearing the corn from heavy husks, that the groaning axle has told him things, that he has been a part of the struggle of man, and that he has sounded the dependence of man upon beast. There are beautiful descriptions of night on the prairie, of cooling dews, of delicious fragrance.

Almost all of the poems are written in blank verse, with a very few lyrics, in shorter metre and rhymed, bringing a
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welcome variety of form. It seems strange that one otherwise emancipated should use the inversion, and such expressions as "glimpsed," "did she clearly sense?", "'tis," "spite of grasses wild," "ere," "did roar," etc. Whether or not these still have their place in certain lyrical work, in Mr. Piper's broad, untethered style they jab the sight as uncomfortably as isinglass flashed before it in the sun.

At the Post Office, The Well, The Claim-Jumper and The Ridge Farm are notable. But I think the best poem in the book, and one to be read more than once, is In The Canyon, the chronicle of a woman who literally died of loneliness, as strong an expression as I have ever read of the need of the human heart for companionship. I call it poetry from beginning to end.

Martha, a childless widow, whom some freak of destiny has sent to the canyon, faces the months in a spot where a dugout could be cheaply made, far from any buildings. She longs to see people. The only break in her monotony is a monthly trip to town, or the perusing of patent cure-all advertisements which she brings home to read, or the borrowing of the county paper. "If I could see your house, and watch mine!" she said once to a distant neighbor whom kindliness had brought to her door. The canyon seems a trap closing her in. She keeps a diary. "Better to write than mutter to myself!" is one of the jottings. This diary keeps pace with the narrative, and through it we apprehend the full horror of her need:

The little lamp cast all the shadows up  .  .  .

A road
Bears witness men have passed, makes promises
That men will come. If I lived by a road— . . .

Out here the stars are always near at hand.
The air is stirless, fearing the least noise.
I wonder that my heart can beat so loud;
I long to free my senses with a shriek.

And this description of the deserted soddy is the poet's final word:

Down the steep slope,
With the brown bunchgrass swishing round your knees.
The rusty stovepipe rises through a beard
Of starveling herbage. A mat of tumble-weeds
In the doorway is o'erhung with bluestem blades;
They blot the path to the well. The garden place
Bristles with ragweed; at one corner spire
Red and white hollyhocks, and the dying souls
Of damask roses drench the sultry noon.

Agnes Lee Freer

ART VERSUS FORMULAE

Poems of Charles Warren Stoddard, collected by Ina Coolbrith. John Lane Co.
Gardens Overseas and Other Poems, by Thomas Walsh. John Lane Co.
Beggar and King, by Richard Butler Glaenzer. Yale Univ. Press.

Mr. Stoddard's verse probably gave pleasure to him and to his many friends during his lifetime. It is now a record

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of the man for them, and as such is treasured. Mr. Stoddard himself, it is said, did not overestimate its value. It belongs to the period of the eighteen-seventies and eighties—a period which seems now to have been singularly complacent and colorless so far as poetry is concerned. (Of course one excepts Whitman, who was then living, but whose work had long passed the stage of gestation.) The most spontaneous thing in the book is the little poem called *Wind and Wave*:

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Oh, when I hear at sea
The water on our lee,
I fancy that I hear the wind
That combs my hemlock tree:
But when beneath that tree
I listen eagerly,
I seem to hear the rushing wave
I heard far out at sea.
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And I can not forbear quoting from the preface this memorial poem by Joaquin Miller, for the charm of its fresh nonchalant directness:

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Say, Charlie, our Charlie, say,
What of the night? A-lo-ha! Hail!
What noonful sea? What restful sail?
Where tent you, Bedouin, today?
O generous green leaves of our tree,
What fruitful first young buoyant year!
But bleak winds blow; the leaves are sere,
And listless rustle two or three.

Say, Charlie, where is Bret, and Twain?
Shy Prentice, and the former few?
You spoke, and spoke as one who knew—
Now, Charlie, speak us once again!
The night-wolf prowls—we guess, we grope,
But day is night and night despair;
And doubt seems some unuttered prayer,
And hope seems hoping against hope.
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But, Charlie, you had faith, and you,
Gentlest of all God’s gentlemen,
You said you knew and surely knew—
Now speak, and speak as spoke you then.

The author of First Offerings, Mr. Samuel Roth, is still very young, to judge from the title and internal evidence. He is at present locked in an academic chrysalis—using words and phrases of stock poetic parlance that are, so far as poetry is concerned, quite meaningless. He is using false counters; cloaking his feeling with abstractions, words like valor, despair, eternity, immortality, and corresponding phrases that sound so well to youth and convey so little. Of course the poet may wake up; one never can tell. It is quite impossible to predict what his future development may be at this stage. He comes nearest to personal expression in A Song of Earth, which is unfortunately marred by the line, “Earth than which there is no purer joy!”

Both Mr. Walsh and Mr. Glaenzer write as if they belonged to the same poetic stock and generation as Mr. Stoddard. Their verse does not seem to touch reality at any point. It is impersonal verse; one can read it through without knowing any more of the author than when one began. “In art,” Tagore says, “man reveals himself and not his objects. His objects have their place in books of information and science, where he has completely to conceal himself.” Much poetry is like a sort of pseudo-science in this respect. It is as unreal as if the poet had used chemical symbols for emotional reactions; as personally inexpressive as a geography which describes boundaries and countries but gives nothing of the soul of landscape. We know that both Mr. Walsh [281]
and Mr. Glaenzer have enjoyed their landscapes, but they have not transmuted this enjoyment in such a way as to make us feel it. Mr. Roth says "H 2 O" when he means "water!"

Mr. Smith's verse is even farther removed from reality than that of the preceding authors. It is conventional magazine verse, fluent, rhythmical, facile. The magazine poet has his reward on earth; he does not have to wait for it in heaven, so he can probably afford to ignore adverse criticism. Mr. Smith is at his best in poems approaching the ballad form, as in Aglavaine, published in POETRY.

A. C. H.

VERSES—BOND AND FREE


Writing an elegy may be a pious task, and it is in that spirit that Mr. Scollard has paid due tribute to his friend and fellow-poet Frank Dempster Sherman, of happy memory.

Youth has its visions and its fervors; yours
Were lovingly enlinked with Poesy;
You dreamed the dream that many an one allures.
The vernal dream where life is harmony.

And so on—the proper poetic things are said in the proper poetic way through two dozen stanzas, until we come in the last one to the amaranth and the asphodel and know that he task is done.

But what has this to do with poetry?  H. M.

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Common Men and Women, by Harold W. Gammans. Four Seas Co.

Certain books of alleged free verse floor me, I confess. I wish I could penetrate the rhythmic secret which enables the poet to cut his meditations into lines, or the imaginative secret which enables him to call the result a poem. Here, for example, is Saving a Nickel, which begins:

A walk of a mile or two
Would save five cents—

And ends, after an encounter with a tramp:

I gave him a quarter
Though I was walking to save five cents.

Perhaps Lady Ocean represents a closer encounter with the muse. It ends with this pleasing image:

I'd say you were asleep
But your white toes
Keep gripping at the sand.

"Fail? Work. Fail!" says the poet, only he puts it in three lines. Well, failure may be heroic!

In the Red Years, by Gervé Baronti. Four Seas Co.

Not being able to see a gleam in this book, beyond the clever frontispiece drawing, I passed it on to another, with this result:

The author expresses feelings which he thinks he ought to feel—never genuine. The "radical" verses at the start are nothing but rhetoric, How I Love, etc., nothing but journalistic description. Morning Song is perhaps the best, but poor enough.

Evidently Mr. Baronti is not appreciated in this office.  

H. M.

Poems of the Great War, selected by J. W. Cunliffe. For the Benefit of the Belgian Relief Scholarship Committee. Macmillan Co.

The war itself is not responsible for the many bad poems of which it is the occasion, even as love is not to blame for the many indiscretions in verse committed in its name. The fine poem about war, as about love, is the exceptional one, and only a small number of all the poems now being written about the war, and only a very small number of those included in these two anthologies, will, we may venture to believe, be included in the anthologies of fifty or a hundred years hence. But the sifting will necessarily be gradual, and the editors of these two volumes have done us a good service in beginning it. The two books supplement each other, for the selections differ except for those more notable poems on the war which everyone knows: Rupert Brooke's sonnets, Alan Seeger's I Have a Rendezvous with Death; the early war poems of Kipling and Hardy, Chesterton's The Wife of Flanders, Vachel Lindsay's Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight, and other poems with which the public is now generally familiar. Of course the first thing one does on reviewing an anthology is to look for the omissions. Ford Madox Hueffer's Antwerp must be included in any final anthology of war poems, and so must some of John Curtis Underwood's War-Flames, published later than Mr. Cunliffe's
selection. One notes also the absence of John Masefield's *August 1914*, an omission for which the editors presumably may not be responsible, since authors and publishers also have something to say about what shall, or shall not, go into an anthology.

*A. C. H.*


*Fifes and Drums*—Poems of America at War. Geo. H. Doran Co.

Mr. Wheeler's principle of selection is not unlike Mr. Clarke's and Mr. Cunliffe's—an effort to bring together the best war poetry as yet written. It omits some of the general favorites above mentioned, and includes a few translations from Emile Cammaerts and Edmond Rostand, and poems by Sarojini Naidu, Henry Newbolt, and others who are not often quoted. Among these is W. N. Ewer, whose *Five Souls* is one of the most moving poems of the present war. It begins with this stanza from the First Soul, a Russian, and continues with stanzas from an Austrian, a Frenchman, a German, and a Scotchman, all ending with the same refrain:

I was a peasant of the Polish plain.
I left my plow—because the message ran,
Russia, in danger, needed every man
To save her from the Teuton—and was slain.
*I gave my life for freedom—this I know;*  
*For those who bade me fight had told me so.*
As Mr. Lewis informs us in his platitudinous preface, Mr. Wheeler "has considerately admitted to his collection a few specimens of what is strangely called the new poetry." For example, Miss Lowell's Bombardment.

The Muse in Arms is, as its title implies, poems "written chiefly in the field of action"—a more complete collection than the Soldier Poems reviewed last year in POETRY. It contains a good deal of mere journalism, but also more entries of really poetic quality, by men known and unknown, than one would expect to find coming straight from the front.

Fifes and Drums represents last year's first American reaction to the call to arms. The poems were "written under the immediate stress of great events by those who have banded themselves together under the name of The Vigilantes." The book is interesting as impassioned rhymed eloquence, but none of the poems rises to lyric beauty.

H. S. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

A SPECTRAL GHOST

Editors of POETRY: In your June issue A. C. H. contends that "Spectra, then, proves nothing against the method of free verse as such, though it may hit off very cleverly some of the practitioners thereof." May I call the attention of A. C. H. to the fact that all but one or two of Emanuel Morgan's contributions to Spectra are what might be called

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“rhymed jingles,” and to this paragraph from the book’s preface:

Emanuel Morgan . . . has found the best expression of his genius in regular metrical forms and rhyme. Anne Knish, on the other hand, has used only free verse. We wish to make it clear that the spectric manner does not necessitate the employment of either of these metrical systems to the exclusion of the other.

Our intent in publishing the book was not to question the use of free verse and not to “bait the public,” but to satirize fussy pretence; and if we have in any degree focussed laughter on pomp and circumstance among poets we shall have had enough satisfaction in our fun. I frankly admit that my approach to the game may have been with an excess of impatience, but I ask you if it is not true that I who came to scoff remained to play. Having given vent to Witter Bynner’s irritation at smug and pedantic pretences, Emanuel Morgan soon found himself a liberated identity glad to be agog with a sort of laughing or crying abandon, of which, in other poets, the New England soul of Witter Bynner had been too conscientiously suspicious. And so I am eager for a chance in the pages of POETRY to make amends for whatever may have been unworthy in Witter Bynner’s intention and manners, and to thank the editors of POETRY, Others, The Little Review and Reedy’s Mirror for their encouragement.

After various inaccurate and unjust statements in the press, let me say here accurately and justly that I think now of my later work even better than you do, that I count on having the readers of POETRY place my hand in your...
when they read the group of my verses you have accepted, and then place your hand in mine when they read, if they will, my new volume, *Songs of the Beloved Stranger*, which I am going to publish not pretentiously but seriously, and well aware of the likelihood that some of the critics may mock it according to their cue.

Yours more than ever,

Emanuel Morgan

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*Note by the Editor:* Thanks for your thanks, Emanuel! But has *POETRY* ever printed you? or so much as mentioned *Spectra*? It was a pleasure to “accept” the poems of so clever a joker, but why all this hand-clasping?

But don't be proud—don't quite obliterate Mr. Bynner! Have you read Mr. Arthur J. Eddy's tribute to you and Miss Knish in *Reedy's Mirror*? “Believe me,” he says, “they are not half bad! . . .” No one can read them without being instantly impressed with the importance of the so-called burlesques as revelations of the *real* Bynner and the *real* Ficke—and if all the 'poems' are as good as the few printed in the *Times*, delightful revelations they are of two personalities who are betrayed to be more human, more natural, more hail-fellow-well-met than their serious verse indicates them to be. And by conventional standards their serious verse is good—good but conscious, while their burlesques are the gleeful outpourings of their unrestrained—say boyish—selves. Their burlesques are their own while their serious verse is largely literature—traditional. How true this is of Ficke's sonnets—many of them fine—atttempts to cast the thoughts and feelings of an Iowa lawyer (a good one) in Roman mold! Admirable, as attempts, but why try to fit the youth, the surge, the radicalism of America into the most rigid of antique armors?

“I should say both Bynner and Ficke simply ‘broke loose in their burlesques and, for the first time in their lives, abandoned their literary pose under the cover of pseudonyms, just as many another man has been able best to express himself anonymously.”
NOTES

Only four of the poets of this number have appeared before in *Poetry*. Miss Amy Lowell needs no introduction; her latest book of verse is *Men, Women and Ghosts* (1916), and of prose *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry* (1917), both published by the Macmillan Co.

Mr. Ajan Syrian, who is a rug-dealer in New York, made his first appearance as a poet in *Poetry* for June, 1915. Born in 1887 on the Syrian desert, he came early to this country, was adopted by Mr. Gajor M. Berugjian of Brooklyn, and studied at Columbia University. His history, and the quality of his English work, suggest what artistic enrichment we may expect in the future from our immigrants of widely different races.

Mr. James Church Alvord, of South Attleboro, Mass., also appears for the second time. Ditto Mr. Mark Turbyfill, a young Chicagoan now in the service. Ditto Mr. Arthur Symons, the distinguished English poet, who after a long silence seems to have renewed his youth during the last two or three years.

Another distinguished English poet, Mr. Herbert Trench, appears for the first time in *Poetry*. His first book of verse, *Dierdre Wedded*, was published in London in 1901, followed in 1907 by *New Poems, Apollo and the Seaman*, etc. *Poems with Fables in Prose*, whose most important poem is *The Battle of the Marne*, has just appeared. In 1910 Mr. Trench was director of one of the London art-theatre companies, which gave a beautiful production of *The Bluebird*, by Maeterlinck; but he is now living in Settignano, near Florence. His poems, so far as I know, have not been published in America, though one of the finest of them is a tribute to Poe, contributed to a London weekly at the time of the Poe centenary.

Miss Theodosia Garrison, of Elizabeth, N. J., is the author of three or four books of verse, of which the latest, *The Dreamers and Other Poems*, published last year by Geo. H. Doran & Co., was recently reviewed in *Poetry*.

The other poets of this month have not yet published volumes, or appeared much in magazines. Mr. Leslie Jennings, of Rutherford, Napa Co., Cal., will soon issue his first book, however. Mr. Henry C. Thomas is another young Californian, living in Berkeley. Miss Beatrice Stevens hails from Dyersburg, Tenn. Miss Margaret I. Postgate lives in London, and Mildred Cummer Wood (Mrs. Clement Wood) in New York. Mr. Robert Redfield, Jr., of Chicago, was for a year or more an ambulance driver in France.
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

Miss Edith Chapman Tracy, of Milwaukee, the translator of the Balmont poems, sends the following note about their author from Chapter VI of Russia and the Russians, by H. W. Williams:

"The modernist movement expressed itself most distinctly as a poetical revival, and the leaders in this revival were Balmont and Briusov, the former half-consciously, the latter of deliberate purpose. Konstantin Balmont is a poet for the sheer love of the music of poetry. During the revolutionary period Balmont wrote political verse. He has consequently been compelled since 1906 to live abroad, chiefly in Paris, and exile has had a paralyzing effect upon a talent of rare spontaneity. Balmont has translated into Russian the works of many foreign poets, including Calderon, Shelley, Ibsen and Poe. He knows foreign languages well, but is too subjective to be a good translator, and his version of the English poet is much more suggestive of Balmont than Shelley. The English poet whom Balmont most resembles in quality, though not in range of talent, is Swinburne."

Balmont is the author of Free Russia, the new national hymn of the Russian republic.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:
Rain in May and Other Verses, by Forntassin Gift. Four Seas Co.
Motley and Other Poems, by Walter de la Mare. Henry Holt & Co.
Poems of West and East, by V. Sackville-West (Mrs. Harold Nicolson). John Lane Co.
The Angel in the Sun, by Edith Daley. Pacific Short Story Club, San Jose, Cal.
Dust from the Southern Cross, by Walt Mason, Jr. Privately printed, Cristobal, Canal Zone.
Inspirations of a Bachelor—Idyls and Ideals, by Arthur Miller Easter. Privately printed, Baltimore.
As Thou Wilt and Other Poems, by Ethelwyn Dithridge. Stratford Co.
Song-Flame, by Amy Sherman Bridgman. Stratford Co.
The Gardener and Other Poems, by Luther A. Lawhon. Privately printed, San Antonio, Tex.

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