Poetry
A Magazine of Verse
Edited by Harriet Monroe
February 1919

Poems from the Chinese
Translated by Florence Ayscough and Amy Lowell

The Farewell, by Charles Vildrac
Translated by Witter Bynner

D. H. Lawrence, Baker Brownell

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You would enjoy the pleasure that comes as Poetry passes from hand to hand up here in the lines. I share my joy! Even "rough-necks" take to it.

Captain C. J. Masseck, of the A. E. F. in France

Vol. XIII No. V

POETRY for FEBRUARY, 1919

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THE night is the color of spring mists.
The lamp-flower falls,
And the flame bursts out brightly.
In the midst of the disorder of the dressing-table
Lies a black eye-stone.
A golden hairpin has fallen to the ground.
She leans against a screen,
Arch, coquettish, welcoming his arrival.
Then suddenly striking the strings of her table-lute,
She sings—
And her face is like rain whitening the Gorge of Witches
And like the bright busy movement of the Western Sea.

Li Hai-ku—Nineteenth Century
THE EMPEROR'S RETURN FROM A JOURNEY TO THE SOUTH

Like a saint he comes,
The Most Noble.
In his lacquered state chariot
He awes the hundred living things.
He is clouded with the purple smoke of incense,
A round umbrella
Protects the Son of Heaven.
Exquisite is the beauty
Of the two-edged swords,
Of the chariots,
Of the star-embroidered shoes of the attendants.
The Sun and Moon fans are borne before him,
And he is preceded by sharp spears
And the blowing brightness of innumerable flags.
The spring wind proclaims the Emperor's return,
Binding the ten thousand districts together
In a chorded harmony of Peace and Satisfaction,
So that the white-haired old men and the multitudes rejoice,
And I also wish to add the tribute of my secret writings.

Wen Cheng-ming—Sixteenth Century

ON SEEING THE PORTRAIT OF A BEAUTIFUL CONCUBINE

Fine rain,
Spring mud
Slippery as bean curds.
In a rose-red flash, she approaches—
Red like wine;
Tottering as though overcome with wine.
Her little feet slip on the sliding path—
Who will support her?
Clearly it is her picture
We see here,
In a rose-red silken dress,
Her hair plaited like the folds
Of the hundred clouds.
It is Manshu.

*Ch'en Hung-Shou—Nineteenth Century*

CALLIGRAPHY

The writing of Li Po-hai
Is like the vermilion bird
And the blue-green dragon.
It drifts slowly as clouds drift;
It has the wide swiftness of wind.
Hidden within it lurk the dragon and the tiger.

The writing of Chia, the official,
Is like the high hat of ceremonial.
It flashes like flowers in the hair,
And its music is the faint, sweet tinkling
Of jade girdle-pendants.

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But I stand beside the Lang Temple,
Doing nothing
And speaking not at all.

Liang T'ung-shu—Eighteenth Century

THE PALACE BLOSSOMS

When the rain ceases,
The white water-flowers of Ch'ang Lo stroll together at sunset
In the City by the River.
The young girls are no longer confined
In the tower pavilions,
But may gaze at the green water
Whirling under the bridge of many turnings.

T'ai Ta-mien—Eighteenth Century

ONE GOES A JOURNEY

He is going to the T'ung T'ing lake,
My friend whom I have loved so many years.
The spring wind startles the willows
And they break into pale leaf.
I go with my friend
As far as the river-bank.
He is gone—
And my mind is filled and overflowing
With the things I did not say.
Again the white water-flower
Is ripe for plucking.
The green pointed swords of the iris
Splinter the brown earth.
To the south of the river
Are many cinnamon trees.
I gather branches of them to give to my friend
At his return.

Liu Shih-an—Eighteenth Century

FROM THE STRAW HUT AMONG THE SEVEN PEAKS

I

From the high pavilion of the great rock,
I look down at the green river.
There is the sail of a returning boat.
The birds are flying in pairs.
The faint snuff color of trees
Closes the horizon.
All about me
Sharp peaks jag upward,
But through my window,
And beyond,
Is the smooth, broad brightness
Of the setting sun.
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II

Clouds brush the rocky ledge.
In the dark green shadow left by the sunken sun
A jade fountain flies,
And a little stream,
Thin as the fine thread spun by sad women in prison chambers
Slides through the grasses
And whirls suddenly upon itself
Avoiding the sharp edges of the iris leaves.
Few people pass here.
Only the hermits of the hills come in companies
To gather the Imperial Fern.

Lu Kun—Nineteenth Century

On the Classic of the Hills and Sea

In what place does the cinnabar-red tree of the alchemists seed?
Upon the sun-slopes
Of Mount Mi
It pushes out its yellow flowers
And rounds its crimson fruit.
Eat it and you will live forever.

The frozen dew is like white jade.
It shimmers with the curious light of gems.

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Florence Ayscough and Amy Lowell

Does the Yellow Emperor regard these things
Because it is the fashion to do so
Among people of importance?

T'ao Ch'ien—Fourth Century

A RECLUSE

A cold rain blurs the edges of the river.
Night enters Wu.
In the level brightness of dawn
I saw my friend start alone for the Ch'ú mountain.
I gave him this message for my friends and relations:
My heart is a piece of ice in a jade cup.

Wang Chang-ling—Tenth Century

AFTER HOW MANY YEARS

Spring

The willows near the roadside rest-house are soft with new-
burst leaves.
I saunter along the river path,
Listening to the occasional beating of the ferry drum.
Clouds blow and separate,
And between them I see the watch towers
Of the distant city
They come in official coats
To examine my books.

[239]
Months go by;
Years slide backwards and disappear.
Musing,
I shut my eyes
And think of the road I have come,
And of the spring weeds
Choking the fields of my house.

Summer

The rain has stopped.
The clouds drive in a new direction.
The sand is so dry and hard that my wooden shoes ring upon it
As I walk.
The flowers in the wind are very beautiful.
A little stream quietly draws a line
Through the sand.
Every household is drunk with sacrificial wine,
And every field is tall with millet
And pale young wheat.
I have not much business.
It is a good day.
Ha! Ha!
I will write a poem
On all this sudden brightness.
Florence Ayscough and Amy Lowell

Autumn

Hoar frost is falling,
And the water of the river runs clear.
The moon has not yet risen,
But there are many stars.
On the opposite bank
Autumn lamps are burning in the windows.
I am sick,
Sick with all the illnesses there are.
I can bear this cold no longer,
And a great pity for my whole past life
Fills my mind.
The boat has started at last.
Oh, be careful not to run foul
Of the fishing-nets!

Winter

I was lonely in the cold valleys
Where I was stationed.
But I am still lonely,
And when no one is near
I sigh.
My gluttonous wife rails at me
To guard her bamboo shoots.
My son has neglected
The vegetables.
Oh yes,
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

Old red rice can satisfy hunger,
And poor people can buy muddy, unstrained wine
On credit.
But the pile of land-tax bills
Is growing;
I will go over and see my neighbor,
Leaning on my staff.

Li Hai-ku—Nineteenth Century

THE INN AT THE WESTERN LAKE

The inn leans against the mountain's root.
The smooth skin of the water shines,
And the clouds slip over the sky.
This is the twilight of dawn and dusk.
On the top of Hsi Lung
The hill priest sits in the evening
And meditates.
Two—
Two—
Those are the lights of fishing-boats
Arriving at the door.

Wang Ching-seng—Nineteenth Century

Translated by Florence Ayscough
English version by Amy Lowell

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THE FAREWELL

When in a plunge of water the great ship
Had sunk to the sea's depth,
Its blind body dragging after it
Halyards and dripping masts,

When toward the four quarters of the night
Its boats had all perished,
Each beyond sight of the others,
Each with a high wave
Covering its final cries,

When the furious water had wiped
From its surface all signs,
There was still in the sea
A man alive and swimming.

. . . . . . . .

He knew that the land was far off
And that before he could feel, with a cry of joy,
Becoming real to the reach of his feet
The shore of the tide of wreckage,

There would have to be day after day,
Turn after turn, exhaustion and sleeping and eating.

He acknowledged his appointed end,
But he thought himself strong and he wished
To use calmly the moments of this strength,
To use for slow and holy profit
The last warmth of his body,
The last illumination of his mind.

He let himself be borne by the fury of the water,
Which heaved him high on the edge of its surge,
Then plunged him dizzily
To the foot of its deep and moving walls.

Huge waves came,
Charging him like rams,
Tossing his body
On their lowered horns.

Dykes burst before him,
Mountains shattered over him,
Hail beat across him,
Tigers played with his head.
The water enwound him,
Trying to dissolve him,
And for an eternity
The vast liquid tumult
Was at his very core.

Then for an instant about him
Calm came,
And the sea took respite,
And there was the seething of broken foam,
And his senses found the air again like another world.

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So it went until dawn.
And to live longer he ceased swimming,
Rather with his limbs forcing
The water to uphold him.

So it was until dawn,
And then the cold sheathed him;
And only then fell
The blind hope from his body—
That proud thing which gives to men
The custom of their victories
And the subjection of the earth;
Only then closed in on him
The awful certainty.

There was at the heart of this man
A life unknown to himself,
A life simple and still full
Of child-like faith,
Which never would have believed
That for its most favored guest,
Its most loving son,
Nature can be at times
An iron stranger, deaf
And absolute and pitiless.

And suddenly into the heart of this man
Came the shock and the wound of exile.
The sea, its sound, its motion,
Its power, its volume,
Overwhelmed him with horror.

He hunted out of his head the noise of the water
And he closed his eyes to escape it far away. . . .

He saw a town
Touched softly by the sun.

Fine new shoes
Went brightly creaking
Over the clean pavements.

Along the row of shops,
Behind the shutters,
All the clocks
Could be heard
Striking noon.

And then by the glimmer of a night-lamp,
He saw a closed room
Where a family lay asleep.

He heard the sound of their breathing,
The crossing and confusing of rhythms.

He leaned over the beds,
Heavy and humid with sleep.
In one lay two children together;
Their bodies were uncovered,
And huddled in a hollow
Like kittens.

He saw again a young girl
Watering flowers in a garden.
One of her hands caught up her dress,
The other was balancing as far as she could reach
The heavy watering-can,
To distribute a curving shower
Without wetting the tips of her shoes held tight together.

The little clustering leaves
Whispered content;
And even their wet fragrance came to him,
And the very sound on the path
Of footsteps crunching the pebbles.

He saw also streets cluttered with chairs,
Where one sits to drink and to watch the crowd.
And he saw soldiers gambling and wrestling
In the barracks-yard at dusk.

He saw deep lanes, he saw wheat-fields,
He saw also the straight roads
Where you say good-day to the people you pass.

And last he saw again the great realm
Where thoughts touch and exchange,
Where all is intimately blent from all the earth.
He saw again the land of lands
Where all prolongs itself in one embrace.

It was then he wished to utter words,
To give thanks for his whole heritage.
And he wished to speak them aloud,
In order that he might hear with his ears
Once more the genius of words,
The sound of a voice.

And so he spoke as if he were praying—
He pronounced, in the middle of the sea,
The words that serve for love
And for praise.

He sought them all out and repeated them,
As one dying of thirst sucks at the juice of a fruit.

And when there were no more of them in his head
He must sing
To satiate his farewell,
Sing without words. . . .

He must sing:

It was the loveliest song—
Of the pang of love and sadness;
It was the most poignant song of man
That a man ever had sung.

And though it routed in his head
The tenacious voices of the sea,
Though it was more august in his head
Than great organs,
No one here heard it.

And no one here can be surprised
By suddenly recalling it,
By humming it to himself,
Believing it sprung from his memory;

It was dissolved in the wind
Like snow in a stream.

His teeth were chattering as he sang it
And water burned his eyes;
But it was not the water of the sea.

From the French of Charles Vildrac
Translated by Witter Bynner
Crayons of Dominica

Under the Saman

Under the circular shadow of the jetty's saman
Creamy high-humped cattle munch the sweet pods:
The zebus browse placidly against the blue and black
Of the sea and a distant promontory.
On this promontory de Bouillé defeated Stuart;
On this sea Rodney defeated de Grasse.

The Little Donkey

Gi! ti bourique à-moin!
And around the bend
Swing enormous panniers
Swaying to tiny mincing feet.

Are you weary, little friend,
Mouse to these huge mornes?
Or does the beauty of your burden
Make it light?—
Lilies and fresh white roses
For Notre-Dame de Lourdes!

First Growth

The natives call this shadowless silence the grands-bois
And tell you these matted buttressed masses are trees—
Fromagers, chataigners, bois blancs and gommiers—
That solid darkness above, nothing but leaves.
No! I am creeping between the legs of monsters,
Mammoths and mastodons tangled in merciless vines.
It is their bellies that block the scorching sunlight:
The drops that fall are their sweat as they strain to the clouds.

CARIBBEAN NIGHTS

There are too many stars:
They jostle;
They quarrel with the moon
Till she grows sullen.

The fireflies are more quiet,
More generous;
Their little lamps reveal flowers
And love-looks and smiles.

Richard Butler Glaenzer
ORPHEUS IN THE STREET

I passed a hurdy-gurdy playing in the street
A haunting ancient tune to tempt the feet;
But nobody paused to listen,
Nobody paused to look,
Although the ragged tune entranced me in the street.

I thought my heart would break as I stood listening there
To ragged Orpheus grinding out his air;
For nobody paused to listen,
Nobody paused to look,
Although the ancient gods of Greece flocked round us there.

IN WINTER

I am content to wait for spring,
To cherish winter days;
I am grown fearful of the thing
That hurts in hidden ways.

I almost fear for March to pass
Because of spring’s swift feet;
The hushed green coming of the grass
Will make the earth too sweet.

B. K. van Slyke
THE ALIEN

Mississippi, you mothered me when the child in me was young;
You taught me the song of the soothing waves, the current's cooing tongue;
You laughed with me when my heart leaped high, you told how a grief is borne:
The world away from your shining smile is a strange world, half forlorn,
And the old child in me yearns for you—the strength of your steady flow—
With a longing only the river-born, your wandering children, know.

C. Cunningham

MOUNTAIN TOPS

Oh, splendid are the mountain tops
That thrust aside the sky;
No dweller in the valley land
Has thrilled in them as I!

But lonely are the mountain tops
To him who walks apart—
No peasant in the valley land
Bears half so hurt a heart!

John Bakeless
IN THE NIGHT

But you have been dead so long—
You have been dead a year,
You have been dead so many months, so many weeks,
And many, many days!
You have sunk deep into death,
You are resting in every limb.
You have turned away your face from me to sleep—
You are so quiet
You have forgotten me.

Sometimes I am afraid that you are alive—
I wake in my bed, I moan,
I turn restlessly from side to side.
O my beloved, I will forget you—
You shall not be waked by my moaning,
You shall not hear my cries;
I will be quiet,
You shall sink deep into death.

I will forget you.
I will remember you only with the taking in of my breath,
I will remember you only with the beating of my heart.
I will forget you.

Margaret Judson
EN MASSE

You too, America, have seen the hugeness of days
Break with unguessed being out of the sullen past;
To you the massive hour has called,
Halting you amid random progress,
Giving revelation, blasting, huge, of its being.

Ungainly grandeur rises from your soil,
Doom light stands above man's dank shadow.
Above wrangle, above hypocrisy,
Light lifts its being, America,
Hugely above you.

. . . . . . . . . .

Terrible fluidities lurch through you, America.
Blind, slathering, fluent, the liquid of passion
Lifts you upon dark urgencies of being.

Tides move with terrible, unknowing will;
Grim tides come from the sea
Lifting all upon the breast of being, holding all
In the cruelty of oneness. The flood,
The flood of being, the surge
Of mobbed thought! The ebb, America,
The ebb again!

. . . . . . . . . .

The skin of time bursts with thick noises,
Formless, spilling in huge, helpless flux.

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Gorged moments open with sodden split;
The clog and glut build shapeless things.

Time lolls in unexpected disgorgement—
Release, heavy war, loosed inhibitions; the sullen flux
Begins. All is overwhelming, limp, massive.

Where are the smooth Latin hours,
Neat with emptiness, indifferent optimism?
How has time debouched on unready men
These guttural, dizzy mists,
This massive slime of being?

Fulness lies across these lives
In savage, self-created burden. Terrors
Raise themselves hugely from the soul
Like the massive water of breakers.
The inhuman, passionate quest rolls
Monstrously across placid lives, building
Immensity in staggered, foaming heaps.

Whence the blind utterness of these aggregations,
America? Who validates this load—
Congested, heaving experience, discreet things, poured
In immense preoccupation into the soul?
Whence the massive utterness of circumstance?
After Word

Where spaceless night rests upon the water
Can you find being:
There a star wounds the liquid darkness
With still, white stab;
A ripple lifts its soft load of light,
And returns to the fluid soul
Of the night water;
Light sinks pervasively into the textures of darkness,
Deep into the dusk of water;
The being of light sifts into all its spaces;
Light, ineffably its meaning
Fumes in fragrant faintness
Amid drenching visions.

Baker Brownell
POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

POEMS

TOMMIES IN THE TRAIN

The sun shines.
The coltsfoot flowers along the railway banks
Shine flat like coin which Zeus in thanks
Showers on our lines.

A steeple
In purplish elms; daffodils
Sparkle beneath; luminous hills
Beyond—but no people.

England—O Danaë
To this spring of cosmic gold
Which falls on your lap of mould!
What then are we?

What are we—
Clay-colored, who roll in fatigue
As the train runs league after league
From our destiny?

Some hand is over my face,
Some dark hand. Peeping through the fingers,
I see a world that lingers
Behind, yet keeps pace.

[258]
Always, as I peep
Through the fingers that cover my face,
Something seems falling from place,
Seems to roll down the steep.

Is it the train,
That falls like a meteorite
Backward in space, to alight
Never again?

Or is it the illusory world,
That falls from reality
As we look? Or are we
Like a thunderbolt hurled?

One or another
We are lost, since we fall apart
Forever, forever depart
From each other.

WAR BABY

The child, like a mustard seed,
Rolls out of the husk of death
Into the woman's fertile, fathomless lap

Look—it has taken root!
See how it flourisheth!
See how it rises with magical, rosy sap!
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As for our faith, it was there
When we did not know, did not care;
It fell from our husk like a little hasty seed.

Sing—it is all we need,
Sing, for the little weed
Will flourish its branches in heaven when we slumber beneath.

**OBSEQUIAL CHANT**

Surely you've trodden straight
To the very door!
Surely you took your fate
Faultlessly. Now 'tis too late
To say more.

It is evident you were right—
That man has a course to go,
A voyage to sail beyond the charted seas.
So you have passed from sight,
And our sighings blow
Back from that straight horizon which ends all one sees.

Now, like a vessel in port,
You unlade your riches into death,
And glad are the watchful dead to receive you there.
Let the dead sort
Your cargo; breath from breath
Let them disencumber your bounty, let them all share.

I imagine dead hands are brighter,
Their fingers in sunset shine
With jewels of passion once broken through you as a prism.
Dead breasts are whiter
For your wrath; and yes, I opine
They anoint their brows with your blood, as a perfect chrism.

It is evident you were right—
There are bounds to break,
Sumptuous passage from sight,
For you, and sighs down the white
Path of your wake.

Now to the dead you’ve given
Your last allegiance.
But woe unto us who are driven
After you, hostile to heaven
And its hateful legions.

BREAD UPON THE WATERS

So, you are lost to me.

Ah you, you ear of corn straight lying,
What food is here for the darkly flying
Fowls of the Afterwards?
White bread afloat on the waters,
Cast out by the hand that scatters
Food untowards,

Will you come back when the tide turns?
After many days? My heart burns
To know.

Will you come back after many days
To say your say as a traveller says
More marvel than woe?

Drift then, for the soundless birds,
As fish, in their shadow-waved herds,
To approach you.

Drift then, bread cast out;
Drift, lest I fall in doubt
And reproach you.

For you are lost to me!

PENTECOSTAL

Shall I tell you, then, how it is?

There came a cloven gleam,
Like a tongue of darkened flame,
To burn in me.
And so I seem
To have you still the same
In one world with me.

In the flicker of a flower,
In a worm that is blind, yet strives,
In the mouse that pauses to listen,

Glimmers our
Shadow as well, and deprives
Them none of their glisten.

In each shaken morsel
Our shadow trembles
As if it rippled from out of us hand in hand.

We are part and parcel
In shadow, nothing dissembles
Our darkened universe. You understand?

For I have told you plainly how it is.

NOSTALGIA

The waning moon looks upward, this grey night
Sheers round the heavens in one smooth curve
Of easy sailing. Odd red wicks serve
To show where the ships at sea move out of sight.
This place is palpable me, for here I was born
Of this self-same darkness. Yet the shadowy house below
Is out of bounds, and only the old ghosts know
I have come—they whimper about me, welcome and mourn.

My father suddenly died in the harvesting corn,
And the place is no longer ours. Watching, I hear
No sound from the strangers; the place is dark, and fear
Opens my eyes till the roots of my vision seem torn.

Can I go nearer, never towards the door?
The ghosts and I, we mourn together, and shrink
In the shadow of the cart-shed—hovering on the brink
For ever, to enter the homestead no more.

Is it irrevocable? Can I really not go
Through the open yard-way? Can I not pass the sheds
And through to the mowie? Only the dead in their beds
Can know the fearful anguish that this is so.

I kiss the stones. I kiss the moss on the wall,
And wish I could pass impregnate into the place.
I wish I could take it all in a last embrace.
I wish with my breast I could crush it, perish it all.

D. H. Lawrence
COMMENT

THE VIERECK INCIDENT

NOW that the Great War is over, a number of smaller wars remain to be fought, wars which have been held in abeyance while the nation was training every nerve and muscle for the enormous task. Probably the most important of these smaller wars is one which will never be over, a war which requires eternal vigilance and a sword ever unsheathed if the world is to be made, and kept, safe for democracy—the spiritual war for freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of the press.

These are fundamental human rights, elements of that liberty for which, together with life and the pursuit of happiness, our forefathers fought the Revolutionary War, unfurled the Stars and Stripes, and wrote the Constitution of the United States. In the Constitution they inserted a clause protecting these rights. But a constitution, however well written, does not fulfill itself; sooner or later it will become a scrap of paper unless it is fulfilled by the spiritual fervor of those who swear allegiance to it from generation to generation.

The immediate text of these remarks is the recent expulsion of George Sylvester Viereck from the Poetry Society of America; though, heaven knows, since poetry is a free expression of the spirit of man, a magazine devoted to the art might find a text in certain provisions of the conscription and espionage acts which may hold conscientious objectors
and other peace-propagandists (among them a number of poets) in prison for a decade or two after the war they opposed is over. Suppressive texts are only too numerous these days, and if we choose the case of Mr. Viereck for special emphasis it is because it is almost a *reductio ad absurdam* of the whole tendency, involving a rich irony which invites the gods to laugh. When a society of poets—poets being nothing if not arch-individualists, jealous guardians of spiritual freedom—when such a society becomes more suppressive of one of its members than the United States government has been during a year and a half of war, then it is time to inquire where we are going and when we may hope to return to ancestral first principles.

We pass over the legal aspects of the question, which Shaemus O’Sheel, Mr. Viereck’s champion in the P. S. A., presents in his circular letter to members. Whether the executive committee had power or not, under the P. S. A. constitution to expel a member, it would seem that the whole society might have been permitted to vote on the question.

But whatever may be the strict letter of the law, the artistic and spiritual implications of the incident are more important. A society of poets should be the freest body in the world, the most tolerant of individual idiosyncrasy of thought and word. If a member’s opinions are too idiosyncratic, that should be the very place for him to find it out, through, not suppression but expression, through give-and-take with other minds. The punishment of extremists, if
war or other violence makes it expedient, may safely be left to the authorized agencies of law and order. If poets must revise their opinions before getting together, must think by rule and speak by the card, then their association becomes about as stimulating as a padded quilt.

The whole tragi-comic incident is but a detail of a menacing public mood. The mood is equally menacing whether it comes from one extreme or the other—from autocracy, military or industrial on the one hand, or mob tyranny on the other. In either case it is destructive of liberty and provocative of violence.

I remember my youthful horror over the imprisonment of John Bunyan, William Penn, and other famous worthies, for their advocacy of certain doctrines, among them an objection to war. I remember my self-righteous satisfaction that such outrages upon human liberty were impossible in our enlightened era and nation. Yet today men and women—some of them mere boys and girls—are in prison at Fort Leavenworth for ten, twelve, fifteen years for exactly the same reason, and I doubt if the jailors are so merciful as Bunyan's, who allowed his prisoner ink, paper and time to write a masterpiece. No doubt our modern prisoners, of a great republic now happily at peace, wish that they were in old Russia, with some tzar's birthday coming along to give them hope of amnesty!

More tolerance—this should be the demand of all who think and feel, especially of all poets—more tolerance for conscientious objectors and other recalcitrant opinionaters. 

H. M.
Of late years, considerable attention has been attracted to Chinese poetry and to Chinese painting; but as yet the art peculiar to the Far East, the art considered by the Chinese as the most perfect medium by which "man can express himself, can record the reactions of his personality to the world he lives in" has entirely escaped notice. I refer to the Tzū Hua—"written pictures" or "hanging-on-the-wall poems."

It is of course quite natural that this should be the case; general knowledge of the Far East, of its customs, its art, its theory of life, its reactions to its environment, has been, is, and must be for some time to come, superficial. While a knowledge of its language, without which real comprehension is impossible, has been attained by comparatively few Occidentals. It seems likely, therefore, that the Tzū Hua will remain unnoticed and unappreciated until a much closer understanding is established with the Far East.

Yet what art could be more subtle, more refined, more truly aesthetic! A beautiful thought perpetuated in beautiful hand-writing and hung upon the wall to suggest a mental picture—does not the possession of such a medium rouse the envy of Occidental imagists, who are indeed the spiritual descendants of the East?

In China, the arts of poetry and calligraphy have their common root in the ideographs which form the written language; these wonderful ideographs and the art of calligraphy are vividly described by Lafcadio Hearn in his Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan.
No rigid convention fetters the fancy of the calligraphist; each strives to make his character more beautiful than any others, and generation upon generation of artists have been toiling from time immemorial with the like emulation so that through centuries of tireless effort and study the primitive ideograph has been evolved into a thing of beauty indescribable. It consists only of a certain number of brush strokes, but in each stroke there is an indescribable secret art of grace, proportion, imperceptible curve, which makes it seem alive, and bears witness that even in the lightning moment of its creation the artist felt for its ideal shape equally along its entire length.

In writing thus, however, Hearn refers only to form, he does not mention what constitutes the soul of the character, which is its composition. These marvelous collections of brush strokes which we call Chinese characters are really separate pictographic representations of complete thoughts. Complex characters are composed not of strokes, but of more simple characters, each having its own peculiar meaning and usage; thus, when used in combination, each plays its part in modifying either the sense or the sound of the complex; it is therefore impossible to seize a poet's complete meaning unless each character is analyzed and broken up into its component parts; this can only be done by a careful study of the ideograph in its original form. Many have been so altered during the centuries which have passed since they were first traced, as to be almost unrecognizable.

About 200 A.D., realizing that this alteration was taking place, a scholar named Hsu Shih wrote the dictionary known as the *Shuo Wên Chieh Tzŭ* or the *Speech and Writing—Characters Untied*, containing about ten thousand characters in their primitive and final forms. This work is on the desk of every scholar in the Far East and is studied with the
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greatest reverence. Many editions have appeared since it was written, and by its aid one can trace the genealogy of characters in the most complete manner. While translators are apt to ignore this important matter of "genealogy," if one may so call it, of the characters, it is ever present in the mind of the Chinese poet or scholar who is familiar with the original form, indeed he may be said to find his overtones in the actual composition of the character he is using.

In a recent review of a volume of Chinese poetry, a critic in the London *Times* writes:

The difference seems to be that the Chinese poet hardly knows he is one. The great poets of Europe, in their themes and their language, insist that they are poets—what they do is accompanied with a magnificent gesture; but the Chinese poet starts talking in the most ordinary language and voice of the most ordinary things, and his poetry seems to happen suddenly out of the commonplace as if it were some beautiful action happening in the routine of actual life.

This critic can have no knowledge of the Chinese language, as nothing can be further from the truth than his remark. It is true that the Oriental poet finds his themes in the most ordinary affairs of every-day life, but he describes them in a very special, carefully chosen medium. The simplest child's primer is written in a language never used in speaking, while the most highly educated scholar would never dream of using the same phrases in conversation which he would use were he writing an essay, a poem, or a state document; nor would he use the same written style for these three productions. For instance, in speaking of "sunset" one would probably say, in Chinese, quite simply "sun
down”; in writing a poet would, however, employ a character which means “the sun disappearing in the grass at the horizon”; a character which in its primitive form was an actual picture of the sun vanishing in long grass. Each language—the spoken, the poetic, the literary, the documentary—has its own construction, its own class of characters, and its own symbolism. A translator must therefore make a special study of whichever he wishes to render.

Although several great sinologues have written on the subject of Chinese poetry, none, so far as I am aware, has devoted his exclusive attention to the poetic style, nor has any translator availed himself of the assistance, so essential to success, of a poet, that is, one trained in the art of seizing the poetic value in shades of meaning; while, on the other hand, such poets as have been moved to make beautiful renditions of Chinese originals, have been hampered by inadequate translations. In a word, English translations of Chinese poetry, have not, as yet, been the result of collaboration between a sinologue and a poet. We have therefore but a faint conception of its possibilities.

It is time that a knowledge of Chinese art should come from a direct study of native sources. Although we are deeply indebted to the Japanese for all that they have done to make the whole subject comprehensible, we must never forget that in accepting their opinions and their renditions we are accepting those of a people alien to the Chinese, a people who differ widely in their philosophy, their temperament, and their ideals; a people who, although they have
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borrowed the ideographs of the Chinese have, in many cases, modified and altered the original meanings. For this reason, Chinese poems translated from Japanese transcriptions cannot fail to lose some of their native flavor and allusion, indeed it is not possible that they come very near the originals.

It is impossible to do more than hint at a few of the points which further study of Chinese poetry will bring out clearly; we have, for instance, not mentioned the characteristic method of reading poems in a modulated chant, which is well described by Mrs. Tietjens in POETRY for October, 1916. She confines her remarks to the Classics; they apply, however, to a much wider field.

The poems which appear in the current issue are taken from a collection of Tzü Hua once in the possession of a Chinese gentleman of keenly aesthetic taste, and are excellent examples of an art universally popular in China.

It is a thousand pities that the readers of POETRY cannot realize how extremely literal Miss Lowell's arrangements are. Her remarkable gift, first shown in Six French Poets, for seizing the essence of the allusion which a poet wishes to convey, has enabled her to render in a phrase the different parts of a complicated character in using which the poet expresses a complete thought.

It is only by digging until the very roots of the character are laid bare that Chinese poetry can be really understood.

Florence Ayscough

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REVIEWS

PERFUME OF CATHAY


Reading this book, I have been saying to myself over and over again, "This is poetry"—an experience which has not often come to me. The authors who appear in these pages lived in a country I have never seen, wore strange garments, and wrote in a tongue I do not understand. But thanks to the devoted labor and the scholarly skill of their translator—a skill that is above suspicion—I have been enabled to come in touch with these men, many of whom are anonymous, and some of whom lived in such ancient times that they are mere shadows more remote than Homer. And yet all these men are now, because they were poets, my personal friends. They have often spoken to my heart and my heart has listened. They have given me songs for which I am eternally grateful. And though none of my gratitude may reach their ears in the kingdom beyond the grave, yet I know I must express it now, that others may come and read their songs in turn, and feel the same as I.

These Chinese poets fulfilled exactly Matthew Arnold's famous phrase "to see life steadily and to see it whole." And I am quite certain that they were the only poets who ever did so. Mr. Waley says cautiously in his *Introduction*, "To most Europeans the momentary flash of Athenian questioning will seem worth more than all the centuries of
Chinese assent.” But is this true? Is it true that the world-war of today—another momentary flash of questioning—is worth more, say, than Mr. Waley’s volume? On the one side, thousands of men killed, thousands more maimed, whole countries laid waste, hunger, disease, desolation, in order to put a stop to the ambitions of one man who has presumed to question the right of others to live on as they were accustomed. On the other hand a handful of songs—mere words about life, death, sorrow, disappointment, vanity. Mere words against armies! Mere words against time!

The one quality that is common to all these Chinese singers is their absolute sincerity, their refusal to accept any make-believes about life. To them men are neither heroes nor villains; they are simply products of nature, very much on a level with trees and animals in Nature’s eyes, fated to the same sorrow, pain and oblivion. A great modesty before Nature is the Chinese poet’s chief characteristic. Instead of informing us confidently with Whitman,

> Cycles ferried my cradle, rowing and rowing like cheerful boatmen,

he usually exclaims despondently,

> Often I fear that these untalented limbs
   Will be laid at last in an unnamed grave!

This refusal to see anything especially fine or important or heroic about man and his destiny, is the elementary principle of the Chinese character. From this it comes about that the Chinese poet has no use for the figures of speech, huddled adjectives, verbal climaxes, tortured metaphors, and so forth, which his occidental rival uses so constantly. Mr. Waley [274]
Perfume of Cathay

speaks of "the habitual clichés of Chinese poetry." The phrase is perfectly just. Chinese poetry is a set of stock phrases, of mere clichés. There is a strong analogy here to Chinese painting. In Chinese painting, the forms are little more than a series of old conventions. The color is nothing more than black and white. Yet in the spacing of these forms, and in the variation of these tones, an art has been evolved that surpasses western art as far in its power of suggesting the infinite moods of Nature, as western art surpasses it in sheer brilliant craftsmanship. And these poets, working with characters that, because of their limited ideographic significance, and later calligraphic development, might almost be called conventional paintings in miniature, evolved poems like the following, where every word is sheer commonplace, but where the total effect is simply overwhelming:

When I was young, I was out of tune with the herd;
My only love was for the hills and mountains.
Unwittingly I fell into the web of the World’s dust
And was not free until my thirtieth year.
The migrant bird longs for its old wood,
The fish in the tank thinks of its native pool.
I had rescued from wildness a patch of the southern moor;
And, still rustic, I returned to field and garden.
My ground covers no more than ten acres:
My thatched cottage has eight or nine rooms.
Elms and willows cluster by the eaves:
Peach trees and plum trees grow before the hall.
Hazy, hazy the distant hamlets of men;
Steady the smoke of the half-deserted village;
A dog barks somewhere in the deep lanes,
A cock crows at the top of the mulberry trees.
At gate and court yard—no murmur of the world’s dust:
In the empty rooms—leisure and deep stillness.

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Long I lived checked by the bars of a cage:
Now I have turned again to nature and freedom.

Mr. Waley may assure us as often as he likes that a poem like this was the product of a race of “torpid mainlanders” whose “thoughts set out on no strange quests and adventures.” I simply refuse to believe it. No one can write a poem like that if his mind and imagination are torpid. No; it is only after passing through innumerable quests and adventures, after exhausting every other possible experience, that one can have this experience and express it in this way. Either Mr. Waley has failed to understand the depths of the oriental temperament, like many another western observer, or his introduction is nothing but an elaborate piece of camouflage designed to conceal his true views.

But to return to the question, whether the momentary flash of Athenian questioning is worth more than all the centuries of Chinese assent? It is quite true that to a cultivated Chinaman the Greek attitude of mind would have seemed ignoble, savage; let us out with the word—Hunnish. Achilles sulking in his tent and letting the Greek army go to ruin without lifting a hand to save it; Medea slaughtering her children to get even with Jason; Ajax infuriated to madness because he was not awarded Achilles’ armour; Danaë set adrift on the ocean with her infant a helpless prey of wind and wave, simply because she had followed the dictates of Nature—themes such as these would have seemed horrible to the Chinese poet, and to treat such themes as fine heroic episodes would have seemed even worse. To regard Clytemnestra as a fine creation of the imagination would
have seemed to him as horrible and unnatural as to regard poison-gas, gangrene, and trench-fever as fine things. There may have been Clytemnestras even in China—I do not know. But the nearest we get to them in poetry is something like the following:

Entering the hall, she meets the new wife;
Leaving the gate, she runs into her former husband.
Words stick—she does not manage to say anything.
She presses her hands together and hesitates;
Agitates moon-like fan, sheds pearl-like tears,
Realises she loves him just as much as ever,
That her present pain will never come to an end.

The fact that this poem was written by a blood-stained murderous tyrant, a veritable Chinese Nero, ought to start an interesting discussion amongst our Freudians. Now that the Freudian theory of art is fashionable, and many hold that poetry is only the expression of some suppressed impulse, transmuted to the imaginative plane, what are we to make of such a poem as this? Does it represent an impulse towards pity and humanity, in the character of a singularly depraved and vicious man? And if so—if the vicious man expresses his good impulse, and a good man expresses his underlying baseness, in the form of imaginative experience, what then becomes of ethical progress, and of the preponderance of good over evil, that we are so often assured is the supreme characteristic of great art? Perhaps the Chinese, with their refusal to affirm the value of life, either good or evil, are right after all:

Prosperity and decay each have their season.
Success is bitter when it is slow in coming.
Man's life is not metal or stone,
He cannot far prolong the days of his fate.
Suddenly he follows in the way of things that change.
Fame is the only treasure that endures.

The vanity of existence—this thought, so repellant to our occidental minds that we have tacked an optimistic conclusion in *Ecclesiastes*, made of *Job* a tragedy—instead of what it is, a quite common experience—and declared that Shakespeare's mind was jangled and out of tune with itself when he wrote *Measure for Measure*, *Timon of Athens*, and *Troilus and Cressida*—the vanity and the nothingness of existence, this is the one fundamental idea that all these Chinese poets accept quite comfortably and complacently. And just because they do accept it, they make most of our western poetry seem like silly mouthing and wasted sound and fury. They do not pretend to unravel the dark scheme of things: to discover any external meaning in the mysteries of life, birth, death, hunger, sorrow, lust, and sleep. But just because they accept without questioning, their eyes are opened, and they see clearly:

Cliffs that rise a thousand feet
Without a break,
Lake that stretches a hundred miles
Without a wave,
Sands that are white through all the year,
Without a stain,
Pine-tree woods, winter and summer
Ever green,
Streams that for ever flow and flow
Without a pause,
Trees that for twenty thousand years
Your vows have kept—
You have suddenly healed the pain of a traveller's heart,
And moved his brush to write a new song.
They are human, these Chinese poets: and it is just because they set no store upon anything but nature and humanity, that they regard an humble cottage, a cup of wine, a friend, and a good talk as the summum bonum of existence. It is when they have to part with one of these things, that they lacerate our hearts:

Sad, sad—lean with long illness;
Monotonous, monotonous—days and nights pass.
The summer trees have clad themselves in shade;
The autumn "lan" already houses the dew.
The eggs that lay in the nest when I took to my bed
Have changed into little birds and flown away.
The worm that then lay hidden in its hole
Has hatched into a cricket sitting on the tree.
The four Seasons go on for ever and ever:
In all nature nothing stops to rest
Even for a moment. Only the sick man's heart
Deep down still aches as of old!

Of Mr. Waley's qualifications as a translator I say nothing. Let these extracts speak for themselves. As regards his selection, there are some objections to be made. It is a pity that someone as well equipped as he is, does not give us a more complete and exhaustive selection from say half-a-dozen poets, rather than a miscellaneous collection ranging over centuries. It is true that Mr. Waley has tried to do this, notably in the case of Po-Chü-I. But he has made a serious mistake by giving us a superabundance of this author's satires, which I find dull, and crammed with obscure historical allusions; and of his reflective pieces, which represent him as only an affectionate garrulous old man; but omitting all mention of the Everlasting Wrong and the Lute Girl, except to say that their author set little store by either. It
may be true that in his old age Po-Chü-I thought so; but the fact remains that both were written by him, and that the former especially is one of the finest poems ever written in Chinese or any other language.

Mr. Waley makes amends for this slip, by giving us twelve poems by Tao-Chien, which convince us that this great recluse, who despised the court, "could not crook the hinges of his back for a peck of rice a day," and preferred to grow chrysanthemums in obscurity rather than be a minister of state, was one of the supreme poets of China, every word of whose work should be studied again and again.

So we quit this volume with the conviction that the Chinese poets, working on themes that were purely commonplace, and saying commonplace things about them, nevertheless said all that poetry will ever be capable of saying. For twelve or thirteen centuries at least, their art remained at its height—surely a time long enough in the history of any nation. Then it declined, became merely a complicated literary exercise, a fascinating but empty game of allusions, an artificial fabrication, instead of a living expression of human emotion. It is quite true that the Chinese have produced neither a Homer, nor an Aeschylus, nor a Shakespeare, nor a Tolstoy. But we who have all these great men need only soberly consider the state of the world today, to wonder whether, after all, we are any better off for possessing them. And the Chinese at least have poetry—endless fields of it, hundreds of lives that have perfectly expressed themselves in song. It is enough for them, and perhaps some day
it will be enough for us also. \textit{Ex oriente lux}—some day we may be able to say:

Business men boast of their skill and cunning,
But in philosophy they are like little children.
Bragging to each other of successful depredations,
They neglect to consider the ultimate fate of the body.
What should they know of the master of Dark Truth
Who saw the wide world in a jade cup,
By illumined conception got clear of Heaven and Earth,
On the chariot of Mutation entered the Gate of Immortality?

\textit{\textbf{John Gould Fletcher}}

\textbf{NARCISSUS AT WAR}


Over here we don’t know what this English poet looks like, but somehow his book suggests a young Narcissus in the trenches. It is shot full of beauty and sorrow, the beauty of a Greek clarity and the sorrow of an austere shapeliness. The book should be read backward, for the earlier poems are printed at the end, among them the lovely \textit{Simaetha}, finely curved as a vase, which \textit{POETRY} printed in ancient days before the war. Even through these runs an undercurrent of sorrow, as if the beauty of life were too keen for joy.

But Narcissus is not blasted in the trenches; no shell destroys him—thank heaven!—and even his ecstasy in beauty survives, suffering a sea-change under the alchemy of war.

\textit{But the mean things of the earth hast thou chosen,}
\textit{Decked them with suffering,}
\textit{Made them beautiful with the passion for rightness,}
\textit{Strong with the pride of love.}
Exalted by the "passion of rightness" and the "pride of love," he finds beauty even here—the horror has no power over him. The Sign is an expression of spiritual triumph:

We are here in a wood of little beeches:
And the leaves are like black lace
Against a sky of nacre.

One bough of clear promise
Across the moon.

It is in this wise that God speaketh unto me.
He layeth hands of healing upon my flesh,
Stilling it in an eternal peace.
Until my soul reaches out myriad and infinite hands
Toward him;
And is eased of its hunger.

And I know that this passes:
This implacable fury and torment of men,
As a thing insensate and vain:
And the stillness hath said unto me,
Over the tumult of sounds and shaken flame,
Out of the terrible beauty of wrath,
I alone am eternal.

Yet there are vividly realistic pictures of a soldier's life—in Grotesque, Leaves, The Trenches, A Shell, The Transport full of the splendor of two stallions, and that bitterly tragic detail of death, The Face.

It would be unfair to quote only from the war poems if some of the best of the earlier ones were not familiar to our readers. Ganhardine is a lovely song in rhyme, and To Sāi gives us the very soul of a little child. H.M.

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Another Soldier-poet

ANOTHER SOLDIER-POET

The Old Huntsman, by Siegfried Sassoon. E. P. Dutton & Co.

After the wartime fervor has died away, how much will be left of the war-poets? It is by no means an easy task for the critic to say, since he too is under the emotional spell, and, if he were not, one would suspect him of being lacking in human sympathy and so lacking in what is most essential in criticism. It is much better therefore to err on the side of being over-generous than it is to be niggardly in one's appreciation of those poets who have not only written of the war but lived it. What is good will outlast the war and what is bad will die with it.

Mr. Siegfried Sassoon, if one may judge by the opening poem, presumably an early one, had not really qualified as a poet until he experienced war. The Old Huntsman is in the manner of Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, and has the same monologuish monotony, the same sort of aloof, "class" patronizing that one finds in many of Mr. Gibson's pieces. Not that Mr. Gibson is a snob or has this class feeling, quite the reverse; it is rather the conscious effort to overcome it, as it were, that characterizes his work, as it does that of Mr. Galsworthy also. But it is not at all in this spirit that Mr. Sassoon writes of his comrades-at-arms, by which it may be perceived that he has made progress towards democracy and poetry at one bound! In A Subaltern; Stand-to; Good Friday Morning; Conscripts; or Died of Wounds; one gets vivid, sharp, realistic trench or hospital scenes and charac-
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ters; and one feels no gulf between the poet and the character or scene. Both are involved, and the result is conviction without theatricality. Yet, after all, it is hard to tell how many of these will outlast our fresh memory of the war: they have somewhat the quality of the press-dispatch or the war-photograph; they will always be interesting, but it is poems like Absolution, A Mystic as Soldier; and Secret Music that really prove Mr. Sassoon a poet of more intrinsic worth, and one from whom we may hope much after the war. Here is A Mystic as Soldier:

I lived my days apart,
Dreaming fair songs for God;
By the glory in my heart
Covered and crowned and shod.

Now God is in the strife
And I must seek him there,
Where death outnumbers life
And fury smites the air.

I walk the secret way
With anger in my brain.
O music through my clay,
When will you sound again?

Another hopeful sign in Mr. Sassoon's work is his healthy reaction to the sentimental values of war, mostly insisted upon by those not in the trenches; as in They or Stand-to. Perhaps this, applied to his own work, may counteract certain "Georgian" influences in it which do not seem all for the best.

A. C. H.
Dear Editor: I resent any attacks made in England on your exquisite and ably edited magazine—POETRY of Chicago. It is full of daring and lovely experiment and achievement.

For example, I find the work of H. D. and Max Michel­son very beautiful, and sincerely think that numbers of American artists are ahead—in the mass—of ours.

There are, as you are of course aware, a number of similar experiments in metre and feeling, going on in Italy and France among the younger men. I could give you many names—interesting as those of R. Aldington, Ezra Pound or R. Frost. And as an old contributor to the Saturday Review perhaps I may say that poetical criticism in England just now, from a number of social causes, is at a very low level. It has never, as compared with France, been generally high in England.

The English, after fifty or sixty years, have, for instance, still not the faintest idea of how great a poet they pos­sessed—how Greek an artist—in Matthew Arnold. He is still thought to be far inferior to Tennyson; whereas Tennyson, compared to Arnold, was a talented child, who grew up into a venal muddler of the Millais standard. He was a considerable man; as an artist he had no trace of greatness about him. So bad is English natural taste, so confused, that it took nearly three hundred years or so—till about
1771, the date of the publication of Mackenzie’s *Man of Feeling* (and of course Mackenzie was a Scotchman)—before English published criticism noticed that there was anything in the least remarkable or subtle about Shakespeare’s handling of the character of Hamlet. This was unobserved by the best English critics—Dryden, Pope, Addison and Johnson.

We are in the art of literature a people vital, but coarse, stupid, and exceedingly confused. We live in a draughty channel between the continental and the insular. Our mind is always in what is called a “tide-up”; rough waters like those at the meeting of the streams of the North Sea and the Atlantic off Dover.

Off Dover, you must know, there is never the normal eight minutes of “slack water” at the turning of flow into ebb. There is always a mad churning between two seas. And England is always in a witch’s reel between Hebraism and Hellenism; materialism (commercial cynicism) against social reform; political wealth against popular poverty. At present England is exhausted by her massive political effort to transform herself into a self-directed and perfectly free nation. She is extremely noble, a great nation; but she has at present apparently no intelligence or fine leisure of feeling left over, after the shock of parties and of armies, in which to practice or adequately to criticise, the finest of the fine arts. She has, for example (and this we owe to an admixture of savage inertia into Philistine Puritanism), no National Theatre. And her living poets must endow her
An English Poet on “Poetry”

with beauty in her own despite. They should expect no reward, for they will certainly receive none—why should they fare better than Shakespeare, Arnold, Shelley or Blake? And perhaps that is best. One may remember Athenian treatment of Socrates and Pheidias, and be patient with our people. They do not know that “the beautiful is hard.”

Herbert Trench

Settignano, Italy, Dec. 2nd, 1918

A CORRECTION

Alice Corbin regrets that the final version of her poem, *Song of Sunlight*, arrived from Santa Fe too late for revision of the text last month. We record it here, in order that subscribers may enter the change in their copies. The final stanza should read:

Sunlight, I am mad with your light.
Rocks, earth,
I have never known you before.
Suns, you are powdered like rocks
In my body.
Earth, your red canyons
Are sluiced through me,
The crests of your hills
Break over me—
I ride upward to meet them.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

A NEW PRIZE

Mr. S. King Russell, of New York, a student of literature and music, offers a prize of one hundred dollars for good work by a young poet. The prize will be awarded next November at the same time as the two prizes already announced.

The understanding is that Mr. Russell’s prize is to be awarded by the editorial staff of POETRY to any young poet whose work the magazine has printed, whether it has appeared during the current year or earlier. The prize is to represent, in the same manner that a scholarship would if we were fortunate enough to have the bestowal of one, a mark of distinction and encouragement, and it is to be given to the young poet, comparatively unknown as yet, who, in the opinion of the jury, most deserves and needs the stimulus of such an award.

A CHANGE IN THE STAFF

Miss Helen Hoyt, who has recently returned to Chicago from Appleton, Wisconsin, is now an associate editor of POETRY. Our readers will remember Miss Hoyt as a contributor of verse to most of the special magazines, as well as a few of more general circulation.
NOTES

Of the two collaborators in the opening number of this issue, Miss Lowell needs no introduction. Mrs. Florence Ayscough, long resident in China and an ardent student of the language and arts of the country, has been for some years librarian of the Royal Asiatic Society in Shanghai, and has contributed six articles to the recently published Encyclopaedia Sinica. The second of the present group of poems was quoted, by our permission, in an article contributed by Mrs. Ayscough to The Mentor last December.

Mr. Charles Vildrac is one of the really important French poets of our time, and a volume of Mr. Bynner's translations of his selected poems will be published in April by the Yale University Press. His Gloire first appeared in POETRY for August, 1913. He is the author of a number of books of verse and prose, including the admirable Notes sur la Technique Poétique, written in collaboration with Georges Duhamel.

Mr. D. H. Lawrence, the distinguished English poet, was another early contributor to POETRY, and he is included in the three imagist anthologies published a year apart by the Houghton Mifflin Co. Amores was published by B. W. Huebsch in 1916. A later book, New Poems, has been recently issued in England by Martin Secker, and the poems here presented will be included in a de luxe edition to be offered soon by C. W. Beaumont.

Mr. Richard Butler Glaenzer, of Bermuda and New York, also an early contributor, is the author of Beggar and King (Yale Univ. Press).

Mr. Baker Brownell, who is still in the U. S. Service in Florida, was introduced by POETRY with a group of soldier poems, In Barracks, nearly a year ago.

The other poets are new to our readers. Miss Margaret Judson is an associate professor of English at Vassar College. Miss B. K. van Slyke has been a teacher and social worker in various places, but is now a breeder of dogs at Narberth, Pa. Mr. John Bakeless was at last accounts a student at Williams College. “C. Cunningham” is the pen-name of a poet in Keithsburg, Ill. None of these has published a volume or appeared much elsewhere.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGIANL VERSE:
A Family Album and Other Poems, by Alter Brody. B. W. Huebsch.
Colors of Life, by Max Eastman. Alfred A. Knopf.
The Other Side, by Gilbert Frankau. Alfred A. Knopf.
Growing Pains, by Jean Starr Untermyer. B. W. Huebsch.
Poems of New England and Old Spain, by Frederick E. Pierce. Four Seas Co.
Idylls of the Skillet Fork, by Payson S. Wild. Ralph Fletcher Seymour.
Octavia and New Poems, by Charles V. H. Roberts. The Torch Press, N. Y. C.

PLAYS:
Purple Youth, A Play in One Act, by Robert DeCamp Leland. Four Seas Co.

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