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Poetry

A Magazine of Verse
Edited by Harriet Monroe
May 1920

Sunlight Persuasions
by Marsden Hartley

The Bean-stalk, by
Edna St. Vincent Millay

Helen Dudley, Eda Walton,
Carlyle F. McIntyre

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Your magazine is admirably American in spirit—modern cosmopolitan
America, not the insular America of bygone days.

Evelyn Scott

Vol. XVI

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SUNLIGHT PERSUASIONS

THE FESTIVAL OF THE CORN

(The dance is given on the fête-day of San Domingo. The saint's wooden image having been venerated in the church of the pueblo, the procession now emerges, carrying it into the plaza.)

DANCE, Domingo, dance!
Give him a leaf of corn in his hand;
Rub him with blue corn-juice—
His legs, his hands, his arms.

The black horse and the ochre horse
Were prancing on the front wall
Of the little mission.
The dark red boy sat upon the roof,
Waiting for the first gunshot
To strike the hammer on the bell.

[59]
With ribbons they brought together
The new brides and bridegrooms of the year.

Fantastically they rose from the kiva,
The koshare; with cornhusks on their heads,
Cornhusks of the year that is gone;
   Rabbit's fur for girdles;
Orange corn for necklaces.
Turtle-shells, sea-shells, and ox-toes
Made music like juvenile zylophones
   In the wind.
Their bodies were naked but for the breech-cloth.

   Dance, Domingo, dance!
   Give him a leaf of corn in his hand;
   Rub him with blue corn-juice—his legs,
   His hands, his arms.

They came with the shot of the gun
From the church, bearing Domingo
Under a blue calico canopy:
Priests in robes, acolytes in overalls,
Little red acolytes with bluebottle hair.

From the kiva-side the drums began to beat:
Men of the chorus were gathering.
They sang in unison, resembling old choir-boys
In the organ-loft of the mountain-tops.

One by one the youths of the Domingos
Came up out of the kiva’s mouth,
Beautiful as young girls at maypole time;
Their hair combed and oiled with bear’s oil
All the way to their waists.
   Jet, with the reflection
Of eagles’ eyes upon it;
   Jet, with morning blisses reflected;
Black rivers of young hair, striped with rows of blue corn.

A girl, a boy, a girl, a boy, a girl.
A man, a boy, a man, a boy, a man.
Long lines of wondrous dark flesh
Turning toward the ash-gold dancing-place.

    Pom, pom, pom, pom, pom, pom, pom:
The rawhide drum was muttering, as the macaw
Feathers of the ceremonial rod waved
   In the summer wind.
Crimson macaw-tails, and a coyote’s skin
Were trembling to the aria of the young corn.

They sat him down, the still Domingo
Of the wooden soul and the stove-pipe halo,
Gilded with store bronze.

    Give him a leaf of corn in his hand—
    Let him dance!
Dance, Domingo, dance!
Jesus won’t care,
For a little while.
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Up the long plaza step by step, with red-man syncopations
In their ears, their red feet trod the way, coercing

The adolescent corn.

They want the young corn-breasts to fill with young milk;
They want the ear to hang heavy with orange and blue milk.

It is you they are singing for, young corn! It is for you they are dancing, the red young bodies flushing with an old flame of the sunset. The red of the west is coming up out of their loins, up out of their boyish and girlish breast-flanks. Red sparks are falling from their carved lips.

Dance, Domingo, dance!
Rock the young Jesus to sleep.
Lay him down under a candle.
He'll drowse and fall to dreams with the thud-thud Of the beautiful red feet on an ash-gold earth.

Green corn-leaves, evergreen leaves, ox-toes, turtle-shells, sea-shells, and young bells ringing at their knees. There's the pagan hymn for the ragged Christ-child.

Mary is picking field-flowers on the edge of her blue robe, behind the adobe wall of the church. Domingo sits under his calico canopy waiting for oblations. You, lovely red boy, pick the paint from his cheeks, and let the old smile through to the sun. The sun will crush his lips. Domingo wants to dance, children of the flaming west.

Domingo opens his wooden eyes.

[62]
Beat of the tom-tom in my ears! Thud-thud of multitudinous red feet on my solar plexus! Red fire burning my very eyelids with young red heats! The last saps of the red-man are pouring down my thighs and arms. The young red blood is dripping from the flanks of laughing red bodies aching with the sensuousness of the passing pagan hour.

The blue milk is rising in the cornfields. Can't you hear it rising like new fountains from the old mother breast? Can't you see the little trees of blue milk spreading their branches on the sunlit air?

Sky-blue and corn-blue are mingling
Their kisses like the rainbow edges
Of a whirling spectroscope.
Blue prisms dangling from red bodies—
Blue corn-juice dripping, drop by drop,
Over the edge of luscious young red lips.

The mother is granting her favors. The father is blessing his corn-children with celestial fermentations. Blue milk is rising from the ground; pouring up through the corn-stalk fountains; dripping from young corn-leaves. Red lips are spreading trumpet-flowers—ready to catch the corn-juice as it falls.

Statures are increasing. The red-man boy is growing an inch taller before my eyes. Something is coming up out of his ruddy breast and thighs and arms.

[63]
Something is reaching out over him.
   It is the blue corn-juice
His mother is pouring over him.
   Soon—there will be ribbons of new
Marriages stretched in front of the altar rail.
   The old choristers are singing
In the organ-loft of the mountain-tops.
All the valleys are in unison with the thud-thud
Of multitudinous red feet.

The Jesus-child is smiling under the candle
At the feet of Domingo of the wooden cheeks.

I saw you dance, Domingo. I saw them rub blue corn-juice
   on your legs, and hands, and feet. I saw you step down
from out the candle branches. I saw your heavy feet grow
light when the red boy smiled you away from your calico
canopy.

Dream, little Jesus-child! The sunlight from little candles
helps the pagan dream. The red boy laughs your grief
away—with his young luscious body. The fountain is
filled with the blue juice of the corn.

Domingo nods with heaviness again:
Straighten my stovepipe halo once more;
Take up the posts of my calico canopy;
Carry me to the altar again—
Back to the Nottingham-lace curtains,
And the blue robes of Mary.
The Jesus-child is waking.
    Stick the old pap in his mouth—
The pap with the milk that is grey.

ESPAÑOL

See him pass, Señoritas!
In his eyes are crisp shadows
Of doorways from the Alhambra—
Clipped with sunlight.

Habaneras come from Lillas Pastia's
Tavern, as he saunters by—
From Pastia's window in the moonlight.

I have seen the bull-ring in the pupils
Of his eyes:
Calm cool crowds—women arranging their mantillas,
Throwing kisses to their beloved matador,
Over the ring-side.

I have seen thunder-storms on the hills of Toledo—
Lightning striking the Escorial.
I have seen the fandango, when he smiled.

These are all for you—
    Señoritas!

[65]
GIRL WITH THE CAMELIA SMILE

Eyes—
   Little vanity mirrors
From Damascus.
Her hair—
   Is a packet of love-letters
Burned to a crisp—on the Sunday
Morning—of a sad young man.
Gowned one way—a maple leaf
Bitten with frost-lips—
Whisked from the last boughs
   Of October.
The last wild leaf fierce with autumnal ecstasies.

He was one wind who danced with her—
The sad young Sunday-morning man.
He had seen her—gathering—
   Shell-flowers
On a brown sea's edge—
Before the moon had withered.

THE TOPAZ OF THE SIXTIES

In the little tired spring,
Weary with the years of bubbling,
Deep down to where the gold sand comes to light
Again,
I see wreaths and wreaths of smiles.
"L'amour quand-mêmes!"—
The gold bird in the cage exclaims.
"L'amour quand-mêmes!"—reiterates the lark
To the dahlia and the petunia buds
In the garden.
"L'amour—quand-mêmes!"
Sings the nightingale in the plum-boughs,
Where the clematis shuts the window in
With fragrant fringe.

Once it was a precious stone—
Long, long, ago.

THE ASSES' OUT-HOUSE

Three flies lay sleeping
In a cobweb shroud,
Dreaming of molasses, of jam,
And of heaps of offal.

The fourth swung by his ear.

He was a withering fokker
On its last tail spin.

His body was bluebottle;
His wings were grey
As his cobweb shroud,
Stitched with prism hues.
He was dreaming of old bones
On which to rear his young.

TO C——

I
If a clear delight visits you
Of an uncertain afternoon,
When you thought the time
For new delights was over for that day,
Say to yourself, who rule many a lost
Moment in this shadowy domain,
Saving it from its dusty grey perdition,
Say to yourself that is a flash
Of lightning from a so affectionate west,
Where the clear sky, that you know, resides.
The rainbow has crossed the desert once again.
I took the blade of bliss and notched it
In a roseate place.
It shed a crimson stream——
That was our flush of joy.

II
They will come
In the way they always come,
Swinging gilded fancies round your head.
So it is with surfaces.

They will walk around you
Adoringly,
Strip branches of their blooms for you—
Young carpets for young ways.

With me it is different.

Stars, when they strike
Edge to edge,
Make fierce resplendent fire.
I have lived with bright stone,
Burned like carnelian in the sun,
Myself;
Myself seen branches wither.

Carbon is a diamond—
It cuts the very crystal from the globe.

You are so beautiful
To listen.

SATURDAY

You, yellow climber,
You, whom I have the honor to address
Amorously, at the high noon of my morning.

[69]
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

The Sunday of a new caress is over me.  
Just there, a little to the left of your cheek—  
Sitting upon the needlepoint  
Of an unfeathered plum-tree—  
So high it is where he sits  
The hills graze his eyelids and his mouth—  
A mockingbird, amorously inveigling.  
If you think he is mocking you, yellow one,  
Do not trouble.  
He is nevertheless  
Singing.

With fan-shaped petals of cerise  
The ground is covered this morning.  
The ladies must have dropped  
Their modesties here, last night—  
In passing.

It is of them too the mockingbird sings,  
Toward the morning.

Marsden Hartley
WOMAN-SONGS OF THE HERERO
A primitive people of Northwestern Africa

SONG OF MOCKING FOR AN OLD WOMAN

She is old,
Her breasts are withered,
Nobody will give cows for her.

When she goes to carry water
The shining black young men,
Big, laughing lazily,
They mock at her
Although she carries them water and food at noon.
"She is old," they say,
"Old and withered like the dead mangrove
That once had red blossoms."
They do not know
Red blossoms are in her heart still,
For her breasts are withered.

She is old:
None would give cows for her.

SONG FOR SHREDDING BARK

If you will shred the bark,
Little daughter,
You shall have a hundred cows,
You shall have a dozen lovers,

[71]
You shall have food all day long.
Your father will boast of you,
Little daughter,
Swifter to work than any of his wives.
If you will shred the bark,
Little daughter,
You shall be sold to a great chief
Head of twenty kraals—
If you will shred the bark,
Little daughter!

SONG OF A WOMAN WITH TWINS

Ou! Ou! Ou!
When I was young and little,
And thought only of the mealies and the sun
And the wet whispering river water,
How could I tell what would befall me—
How could I know what should come to me!

Why did the demons come?
Why did they make me bear
Two bodies at one birth?
Ah, they were not like demons—
They were like little helpless man-children,
Little and hungry, with curling hands and feet,
Like the son I hoped to bear!

All the night I screamed
And all the night I bore them—
Why did the witch-man’s drum, beating by my head,
Why did the witch-man’s charms, smelling strong with enchantment—
Why did they not keep the demons
From being born to me?
My father gave him cowries,
Cowries and a gun,
Taken from a white man
That he killed a year ago—
Slowly, slowly,
For good and lasting magic
That the gun should shoot straight.
None had such a gun!
And yet the demons came—
At my right breast a demon,
At my left breast a demon,
Sucking, sucking.

Oh, the little hungry mouths,
Oh, the little curling hands,
That they will drown tonight!

Ou! Ou! Ou!

When I was little and young,
Tumbling laughing in the sunshine,
How should I know what would come to me?
How should I know what would befall me?
Ou! Ou! Ou!

Myrtle Eberstein
THE BEAN-STALK

Ho, Giant! This is I!
I have built me a bean-stalk into your sky!
La—but it's lovely, up so high!

This is how I came—I put
There my knee, here my foot,
Up and up, from shoot to shoot;
And the blessed bean-stalk thinning
Like the mischief all the time,
Till it took me rocking, spinning,
In a dizzy, sunny circle,
Making angles with the root,
Far and out above the cackle
Of the city I was born in;
Till the little dirty city,
In the light so sheer and sunny,
Shone as dazzling bright and pretty
As the money that you find
In a dream of finding money—
What a wind! what a morning!—
Till the tiny, shiny city,
When I shot a glance below
Shaken with a giddy laughter
Sick and blissfully afraid,
Was a dew-drop on a blade,
And a pair of moments after

[74]
Was the whirling guess I made;
And the wind was like a whip
Cracking past my icy ears,
And my hair stood out behind,
And my eyes were full of tears,
Wide-open and cold,
More tears than they could hold;
The wind was blowing so,
And my teeth were in a row,
Dry and grinning,
And I felt my foot slip,
And I scratched the wind and whined,
And I clutched the stalk and jabbered
With my eyes shut blind—
What a wind: what a wind!

Your broad sky, Giant,
Is the shelf of a cupboard.
I make bean-stalks—I'm
A builder like yourself;
But bean-stalks is my trade—
I couldn't make a shelf,
Don't know how they're made.
Now, a bean-stalk is more pliant—
La, what a climb!

Edna St. Vincent Millay
RODOMONTADES

THE BRIMMING CUP

I do not drink in sorrow, but in the purest joy.
Man in holy melancholy sits alone with grief.
Only in glorious madness am I the drunken boy,
Pouring green flasks of liquid sun, and dancing like a leaf.

I leap in zenith revelry, I spit upon my past.
My thundering heels strike ringing sparks from cobblestones,
Like little stars to nick off the minutes flying fast.
Ah, I am only drunken when joy laughs in my bones!

COMPENSATIONS

You came with Judith’s flashing eye
And artlessness grown art.
Oh, most notorious perfidy!—
You took both head and heart.

Yet Time bore compensations sweet:
My age upon your youth
Is warm as Father Boaz’ feet
Upon the breasts of Ruth.

[76]
THE UNTAMED

Out of my dream I wrought you; and your mouth
   Was scarlet, the young body straight and fine,
Your soft eyes like full midnight of the south,
   And every curve and flexure wholly mine.

But at my kiss you stirred; the deeps awoke
   And pushed me strongly backward. Oh, the new,
The virginal, untamed one, whom no yoke
   Could bind, nor make you to yourself untrue!

THE GREEN DOOR

Here in the May we danced on violets
   And blew off golden bubbles. Ah, my love,
How shall I name the sorrows and regrets
   I pluck, and the black drink I press thereof?

Now you dream deeply, wise in death's great lore;
   I lean above you where the crickets sing,
And fumble the dumb latch of the green door—
   You of the Maytime, lovely, wantoning.

THE MOURNERS

Thus I first saw her: brooding secretly,
   Framed like a maid within a trysting gate
Of shadows; like a hidden memory
Which knows its power to hurt, and thus can wait.
A golden melancholy brushed her face,
As she tore petals from an old regret
Of some long-withered blossom. Oh, the chase
Of time had left her somehow in his debt.
Like a tired traveller, I stopped to ask
Her charity; but slowly leaf by leaf
She stripped her flower. Hers was the woman's task
To sit in mourning, mine to fly from grief.

LADY OF AUTUMN

Lady of Autumn, in your cold repose
Dreaming among the brown-leaved empty vines
With sable robe drawn close, the night wind blows,
And Winter with his icy hand pres fines
Your lease on this bright garden of wild youth.
Soon you will nod by the dry sticks of age.
Lady of Autumn, do I speak the truth?—
Put on red shoes, make Love a pilgrimage!

THE HOUSE OF LAURELS

Gray in eternal twilight are its hills,
The country where my house is hidden away;
And melancholy with blind whippoorwills
That cannot fly to hunt their vanished day.
Low sombre woods of crimson mulberries
    Beckon the desperate traveller to drain
A skin of their rich juice. Oh, here is peace
    For restlessness, for sorrow, and for pain.

The houses are of solid marble-stone
    And only large enough for one to sleep.
Hence, fathers from their children live alone;
    Lovers are parted as by hatred deep.

I pass the quiet porches of my friends;
    The eyeless walls give me no greeting sign.
One more turn to the left, and the road ends. . . .
    The house with laurels at the door is mine.

Carlyle F. McIntyre
TWO POEMS

AGAINST THE SUN

Darkness utter and absolute of the night
Hides from me the face and eyes
Of one who loved me in the light,
Obscures the violent leap of mind to mind
Into a stranger world—
Passion that seemed to bind,
Hides from me utterly what I have known,
The unquiet soul of one
Who captured joy with inward moan.

A ghost against the sun,
A shiver in the grass,
Dead memories that drift,
And pass, and pass.

COOTHAM LANE

Twilight has encircled
The flowers in the garden,
And the sky is dim and faint.
The flowers are as cold as alabaster,
And luminous like paint
Of an old Venetian master.
In the church across the fields
They are asking pardon.

And in twilight
Comes the echo
Of an ancient door that closes,
And the echo of their voices.
For now they go, the villagers—
Along the road they go again,
Under the unrepentant stars,
Across the fields and through the lane.

THE ROOF-GARDEN

Since I lost my ancient wealth
These are they that have nourished my life
In this grotesque, grey desert of the town:
The leaping up of flame;
The widening of the sky at the corner of the street;
The soft renewals of steam at the funnel's lip,
Rising, coiling, dissolving;
White flowers of the roofs
That in unfolding vanish.
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THE BULL

Now day, like a great white Bull,
Shambles among the dewy corn,
Massive-limbed, and broad, and full,
Two curves of the sun for horn;
Winged Bull Assyrian,
Twain blue wings that heaven span.

Woody plains and rivers slow,
That with reeded whisper go
Down the nave of green willow,
Through the poplar’s portico—
There the Bull of Day shall pass,
Parting osiers, rustling grass.

Sherard Vines

MOONDOWN

Moonlight and foam of the sea—
When I shall tire of singing
Your solemn witchery,
And Beauty shall fail in bringing
Its poignancy,
Dead may I be!

Paul Tanaquil

[82]
PEACE

GRASSES AND SAND

I saw blown grasses and white sand today!
On either hand blown grasses, rain-freshen'd,
And underneath, the samite peace of sand.

God seemed no further than my hand might reach;
And I, who long had trod my city ways,
Came face to face with the passion of grass and sand:

The passion of all of the laboring years at last,
The stable earth with its miracled leaf and bloom,
And its syllabled speech to me, "Hold fast! hope hard!"

THE ADVENTURER

Let us know he hath gone adventuring,
And the farthest reach of the day explored.
Let the heart bowed down find peace in this:
The imperial night and her stars bring word
He hath seen and heard.

Alfred Battle Bealle
YOU AND I

A Wife speaks:
We were wild birds soaring
   To reach the sky!
The gray wind lifted you like a feather—
   I ceased to fly.

We were fast streams flowing
   To find the sea!
The brown earth carved for you a channel,
   But none for me.

We were young plants growing
   To brave the cold!
The gold sun kissed you all the winter—
   I am old.

QUERY

A Musician speaks:
How can one sky hold night and day,
   Sun and snow?
How can one heart hold love and passion,
   Friend and foe?
How can one rose hold flower and thorn,
   Bloom and death?
Edna Wahlert McCourt

How can music hold these and more?—
Is it God's breath?

STRANGERS

A Father speaks:
You are a bough and I am the tree:
Why are you reaching over the wall?
What do you see?

You are a fawn and I the deer:
Why do you bound to that farthest hill?
What do you hear?

You are a glacier and I am the snow:
Why do you move across the broad land?
Where do you go?

Edna Wahlert McCourt

WHAT GRIEF?

How can so much joy find rest
In a tiny feathered breast?
Or what grief can a bird heart know
That it speaks to my sorrow so?

Mabel Cornelia Matson

[85]
I MET THREE LOVERS

I met three lovers
In a crowd:
One was free,
And one was bowed,
And the third one spoke
Too loud.

To each of them
I spoke just this:
"Walk to the hill-tops
If you would kiss;
For to me it has always
Seemed amiss
To lend my lips
In a valley."

Up my first lover
Went with me—
My stalwart lover
Who was free.
He saw the sadness
In my eyes,
And left me
Laughingly.

For lover two
The way was long,
But as we went
His step grew strong.
He saw the laughter
On my lips,
And only kissed
My finger-tips.

Then he who was last
Went up with me.
His voice grew soft
In humility;
So on the hills
I gave my kiss,
And spent my life
In the valley.

ONE SPRING

One spring I lost completely,
Giving it to you.
Only myself,
Who died,
Knew.

One spring I lost completely.
Now each spring is two—
The wild sweet spring
I lost,
And the new.
FROM A PROMONTORY

Out on the far-most ledge of rock
I stand, and I am almost free.
Breathe on me, wind, that I may be
Blown like a brown bird out to sea!

INDIAN PRAYER

One sunset hour
Wrapped in sacrificia fire,
Then I shall enter Thee,
Spirit of all sands;
And Thy night
Will cool my small desire
To be among my kinsmen.

STRENGTH

God says to the sea
Again and again,
"Come back to the shore;"
And again and again to the moon,
"Once more
Slip over the dune;"
And with each night done,
"Rise again,"
To the sun.
He makes every daisy
Separately.
For each bird’s song more
Claps an encore
From his balcony floor.
Can it be
God alone has strength to exult
In monotony?

MORNING AND NIGHT

When through the curtain’s flutter the sun slips in,
Streaks yellow on the floor and flecks the face of you,
I awake to think of dusting off the red-plush chairs
And of drying steaming dishes a long white hour through.

I shall sweep light leaves from the wide, strong-pillared porch;
Brush out the feathered dirt with my stiff new broom.
I shall press vine-tendril patterns from wet linen, I shall ruffle
The fresh, starched hangings for the sunny sitting-room.

All these rushing hurried moments of the morning through
I do not love you, there is too much to do!

But when the poplar’s shadow by the lake grows tall,
And the fire gleams gold on the tea-cup by your plate,
Then the whole room listens with the wonder of it all,
With a still impatience for your whistle at the gate.

Eda Lou Walton
TOURING America is very easy now-a-days. All you have to do is to hitch Pegasus to the locomotive. Poetry will carry you and yours anywhere you care to go. Being a man of means would inevitably defeat such a desire. Such a man cannot leave his means for more than a weekend. We met one at the recent POETRY dinner to William Butler Yeats. He announced with a doleful accent that he has been trying to take a week off for a year past. He asked Mrs. Kreymborg, “How do you do it?” She answered, “I married a poet.” She might have added: “You're entirely too rich, sir; you have too many belongings to look after, and to look after you. We have only each other and Pegasus.”

Our belongings are easily inventoried. Those we couldn't take along when we left New York for Chicago we left behind or gave away. The rest we packed into a trunk, a suitcase and a hand-bag inside of two hours. Even two hours are over-long to devote to belongings. Indians, gypsies and the other nomadic peoples require less than an hour. Birds ask less than a minute. Folk who live a circus life need a week or two. Millionaires lead such a life, minus the joys of owning a menagerie. When my partner and I left Chicago we dropped some more belongings. One should be able to leave any place on earth at a moment’s notice. We come into and go out of life in a wink—it's like opening and
shutting a door. Isn't Nature worth imitating? There is no more pathetic sight than watching people tied to belongings. They should be as easy to remove as our hats or shoes. Belongings are a temporary protection; most of us make them permanent, and our dependence a form of slavery.

The railroad fare? That's easy. Put everything you have which distinguishes you from the rest of mankind, be it ever so little, into some poems, and you'll sell enough of them to pull a straight face at the ticket-agent. By way of varying the method of hoodwinkery, lest your audience grow accustomed to your perpetrations, add some music on an instrument you can carry in a small case with a handle; and some plays you can perform with puppets, likewise to be carried in a small case with a handle; and Pegasus and his trappings are complete. In our own cases, all we had to do was to open the mail the morning before our departure and find checks covering requests to perform one of our so-called "poem-mimes" plays in Connecticut, Minnesota and Texas—the play yclept Lima Beans—and we had the fare to Chicago. That tiny tragedy has tided over many a cloudy period.

In this connection, it must be noted that America is a huge country with a huge audience. But you've got to go out and find it. You can't expect anything so immense to come to you—not yet. Large bodies move slowly. In other words, we must shed the notion of the average New Yorker or Chicagoan that America is bounded by the Hudson River or Lake Michigan; or that the hospitality of America is

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bounded by anything whatsoever. There is no richer hospitality than the invitation of California, although you have to cross the Rockies to reach it. And you don’t have to come from England for your American audience—the door is open to the native as well. It is still a little slower in opening to the native; in some instances, an imported butler asks you for your credentials. But there are many houses now where an artist, born in America, may knock, and the door will open instantaneously. There are many such houses in Chicago. New York is a laggard, but that is doubtless because I was born there.

There are always people to listen to you, and to pay a little at the gate. These things don’t happen at once. They aren’t related to miracles. But if you believe in yourself somehow—if you have it in you to believe in yourself, through a long, tireless period, firmly, tenaciously, silently, without protest or controversy, and if you are anxious as well as willing to move along without belongings, the audience, represented by the food, clothing, lodging and railroad fare, will come to you as naturally as breathing. If you keep on giving, you’re on your way to getting—“you have to breathe out to breathe in.” Personally, I’ve gone without luxury ever since I was born. So has the Missus. People are kind enough to say or hint that they envy us our funds—if they knew what they were envying, most of them would hesitate! They belong to belongings. Most folk don’t crave even a scraping acquaintance with freedom. You have to give away everything to be free. Yes, you have
to eat and keep warm to be free; but, as I say, there are plenty of people who need poets as well as grocers and plumbers and undertakers. Providing you bring them something, or they imagine you do; or, like a Barker or advertising solicitor, you can inveigle them into the belief, they'll reimburse you under the good, old-fashioned social machine of give-and-take.

What you bring your audience need not affect the price of wheat or oats. It doesn't bring breakfast or dinner to the table, or buy a new frock for Genevieve, or a sweater for Jonathan. What you bring is merely a matter of ephemeral sounds, or of movement, or of pigments or clay—things to lead the mind astray from belongings and materialism. They represent the necessity of forgetting belongings. Even John D. finds this necessity urgent. He takes it out in hitting a golf ball. And he pays for that nirvana.

The apprenticeship to Pegasus is severe, to be sure. At one time, I spent ten substantial years in a New York garret rented at six dollars a month, and sat down to most of my meals in an Eighth Avenue bakery; but I'll never regret that garret and bakery. They did more for me than a university course—they trained me in the curriculum of freedom. I had a table, a cot, a chair, and a few small accessories. They were sufficient. I have had more since, but I have never needed more. From my single window, I could view the whole of lower New York. The sun was my most constant visitor. Before I entered that apprenticeship, I was the gloomy Gus of the town. The only smiles
or grins I knew were those I beheld. Before that ten-year term closed, I was one of the chipmunks of the town. I've degenerated still further since. Not long ago, Miss Lowell dubbed me the buffoon of poetry. I'm happy she didn't dub me the king. Kingship was destined for William; and the job of supervising the material universe for Woodrow. Consider how glum those gentlemen are.

We are saving money by going west. Rubbers, umbrellas, overcoats, sweaters and the like are not needed in California. The money we save will pay part of the fare; the balance we eke out of making sounds. We'll send you a thought from the Pacific. The water's fine from April on; and it doesn't come from the sky. With the Sierra snows, a last reminder of winter and winter thinking, we'll be down among the oranges. And we send you a sunny invitation to drop your belongings and join us.

*Alfred Kreymborg*

**ENGLISH AND AMERICAN**

Some discussion has occurred recently in London on the subject of "pure English." The occasion was the publication of a book on *English Homophones* by the poet laureate, and of a book on *Spoken and Written English* by Doctor Bradley. Only an expert philologist is competent to criticize these two books minutely, but words are to a poet what colors and sounds are to a painter and musician; his language can scarcely be a matter of indifference, even to the successful professional poet.
What is pure English? And, supposing this were discovered, would the American writer of today desire to use it? We in England do not find it easy to say exactly what constitutes pure English, since different pronunciations and usages exist in the various sections of our people as well as dialects in remote country places in Wales, Ireland and Scotland. Even if these differences are ignored we have only a sort of "class prejudice" to determine what constitutes pure English. The pure English of the "bourgeoisie" may, for all I know, be rank Cockney to the ear of sensitive Americans; yet, if English people of that sort ever think about their language at all, it is certain that the majority are convinced that theirs is the right and only pure usage. Literary men are not much better; they have only their instinct as a criterion and that is fallible.

And "American English?" There are few American books, especially those written by American professors of English, which do not immediately announce the country of their origin by their use of our common tongue. The problem is briefly this: Are Americans to write the language they speak, which is slowly but inevitably separating itself from the language of England, or are they to write a devitalized idiom learned painfully from books or from a discreet frequentation of London literary cliques? The answer may seem obvious, but the difficulty is complicated by a fact which I can make most plain from a personal experience. The only young man I know who satisfies me that he speaks and writes pure English—the ideal pure English of England
—is an American. There is no indication in his speech or his writings that he has lived most of his life in the United States; nor has he a trace of the Cockney or of that unspeakably offensive "Oxford manner" which mar the speech of most Englishmen. Unless I assume that this man is an unique exception, which seems absurd, I can only conclude that the purest English is that of a rather rare type of cultivated American.

Language is made by the people; it is only fixed by writers and orators. When language, especially that of poetry, is too far removed from that of the people, it becomes conventional and hieratic, like church Latin; or languid and degenerate, like modern official French poetry. When language is conventionally used by writers it becomes burdened with clichés and dead phrases. If American soldiers, newspapers and popular novels are evidence, it is clear that the American people is evolving a new language, full of vigorous and racy expressions. In spite of the phenomenon of the "pure-English" American, mentioned above, I am compelled to believe that the majority of his countrymen use an idiom which differs considerably from that which he employs and from that to which I am accustomed. Whitman wrote a language which is intelligible to all Englishmen (far more so than that of James); but it seems to us inaccurate, harsh and crude, for all its vigor and occasional rare beauty. The language of the American people—judging from a comparison between newspapers of the Civil War and of today—has altered considerably in fifty years,
English and American

so that a modern Whitman would write a language almost needing a glossary for Englishmen. Contemporary American poets use this popular language merely for comic effect or for purposes of sentimentality; most of them, since they are cultivated and rather literary, are careful to use a speech which is as well understood here as in America. Yet even in their writings there is a conception of the language which differs from ours. Almost all the American poets in The New Poetry anthology seem to have a feeling for words which differs from that of the English. In the works of Miss Lowell, for example, there are few usages which an Englishman would not be prepared to defend; yet there is an Americanism in her language, indefinable but unmistakable. Miss Lowell will, I think, recognize this as one of the excellencies of her work; she is, however, too well versed in classic English literature to have any but a faint trace of the quality I am trying to describe. It is more marked in Mr. Carl Sandburg, and still more marked in American prose; for even American literary criticism is a little difficult to understand, and new novels are bewildering with vigorous but incomprehensible expressions.

Englishmen of letters and literary journalists may publish their exhortations and practice their refinements; in vain—a vast and increasingly articulate part of the English-speaking and English-writing world will ignore them. Another century may see English broken into a number of dialects or even different languages, spoken in Canada,
Australia, South Africa, the United States and England. The result may eventually be similar to the break-up of Latin. The triumph of any one of these languages will be partly a matter of commercial and military supremacy, and partly a matter of literary supremacy. Even when that literary supremacy is unreservedly conceded to Sidney, Ottawa or Chicago, a knowledge of the idioms of Shakespeare and Henry James will, I like to feel, still be considered necessary for all good writers.

Richard Aldington

Postcript. The last number of Les Marges, a French literary fortnightly edited by M. Eugène Montfort, which reached me a few days after this note was written, contains an interesting article by M. Jean Catel, La Poésie américaine d’aujourd’hui. He mentions the excellent work which has been done by POETRY and comments on the writings of Whitman, Miss Lowell, Mr. Sandburg, Mr. Lindsay, Mr. Frost, Mr. Masters and H. D., whom he calls “la plus parfaite artiste de tous.” His article contains a long discussion of the very subject which I have touched on here, and I find that several of his conclusions are identical with mine. He is convinced that within a reasonable time a new, vigorous language will be developed in America as the medium of expression for its literature.

R. A.

ART AND EIFFEL TOWERS

The refined American tourist, and even the ordinary one, in Paris, believes it distinguished to confound the Eiffel
Tower by a sarcastic appreciation; when, leaving the Louvre galleries through the Tuileries, he discovers at a distance, piercing the twilight clouds, that thousand-foot-high monument of French engineering. In this way he agrees with the traditional European intellectual, whose admiration dies away as soon as any structure does not look to him like a church or a royal palace, does not suggest something like gothic or renascence.

Yet whatever is produced in a country by its natives, cannot, considered from a purely artistic standpoint, be in discord with the local atmosphere and in this way spoil the landscape, the skyline or the surroundings. That is the reason why, for instance, a city like Chicago on the border of its immense lake, with its edifices twenty stories high, its wide and endless avenues, its numberless factories and warehouses, shall one day appear as a thing of beauty to everybody. A healthy thinker can therefore say, from today on, that Chicago is beautiful because it exists, and can easily prevision a Chicago style. Beauty is not a conception (a priori), but a result.

What we call a style is only an ensemble of material and sentimental details, brought together by temporary circumstances on one spot of the globe. Chinese pottery, Japanese lacquer-work, the shape of oceanic shells, Greek mythology and the rose-color preferred by a Dubarry—here are some elements of what we call rococo. Who can make me believe that at some future day New York manner or Wilsonian style will not, just as officially and as seriously, mean
past fashions of vases, hats, mansions or pianos, just as do the names of Queen Anne or Louis XIII? A cathedral, while in construction, represented a long and expensive attempt of geometers, melters, masons, carpenters, wood- and stone-carvers, blacksmiths, glassmakers and so on, to terminate a work worthy of its purpose, the adoration of a Supreme Being. It happened not until long afterward that such a Christian temple became a worldly example of architectural perfection.

In our days people seem to believe that its execution is due to a convention between a tyrant of good taste and his obedient subjects; and also that God-houses like those of Chartres, London, Reims, Canterbury or Nürnberg were always old.

The truth is that an original popular monument of any period of human history, whatever can have been the reasons for its conception, changes, as necessarily as insensibly, into an accomplished type of a catalogued mode of aesthetic. Think of the Pyramids with their funereal purpose, or of the Roman Coliseum with its sport-object—a circus.

A modern structure like the Eiffel Tower belongs as naturally to its growing metropolis as a tree to a forest. Having been finished in a rather limited amount of time, which seems in favor of the harmonious unity of the whole, it is in its right and permanent place, and will every future day be more so, inasmuch as its direct neighborhood has the benefit of its graceful, solid, predominating lines and mass. At the end of the Middle Ages Notre Dame, an achievement
Art and Eiffel Towers

which took not less than seventy years, acted not differently on the crowd and on its habits of building.

"Let us hurry," wrote the most striking of all contemporary French poets, Guillaume Apollinaire, who died during the war, "Let us hurry to love the little train, with its blinking engine, running through the valley. If tomorrow it shall be ancient, everybody will be able to admire it." What strange power prohibits us from discovering an incontrovertible right to beauty among the creations of our time? Do we imagine this century to be as mediocre as often we are ourselves? Fritz R. Vanderpyl

REVIEWS

CELESTIAL JAZZ

The Golden Whales of California and Other Rhymes in the American Language, by Vachel Lindsay. Macmillan Co.

The carpers mutter in their throats that Lindsay is finished, and then he answers with a book like this! A book dripping with dew and honey, and musical with bells—honey of Sangamon, of California, of Hymettus if you will; silver bells, golden bells, jazz bells, cow bells, church bells, all the bells that jingle and jangle and chime across our plains and lakes and mountains from Plymouth to San Diego!

The book speaks with more authority than most of us are aware, for it lifts history from fact to fiction, gives it a glamour. And from the days of Homer—nay, long before—until now, history has followed the glamour and poets have
registered in men's hearts a truth deeper than events and
statistics. It may well be that in such poems as The Golden
Whales and Bryan! Bryan! Lindsay is even today writing
the epic of our multicolored, swiftly marching race. The
campaign of '96 is like to go down to posterity as he pic­
tures it, in spite of all future efforts of level prosers to weigh
and balance and set things straight. It is doubtful if "lean
rat Platt," and "bull-dog Hanna," and

Mark Hanna's McKinley,
His slave, his echo, his suit of clothes,
will ever recover from the blow dealt them in this wildly
marching, banner-waving poem of a sixteen-year-old youth
grown up to virile strength and purpose. And in spite of
thin-spread Chautauquas, and grape-juice dilutions, and any
future meddling with his destiny, "Boy Bryan" may find
his immortality as it is here decreed—thus and not otherwise.

Underneath the fervor and humor and jazzy music of this
book is a thinking mind and a poet's vision. I would not
say that any single poem in it is finer than The Congo or
The Chinese Nightingale or Booth; yet the book as a whole
gives an impression of growth and a suggestion of future
height and depth and amplitude. It has an effect of cover­
ing the continent, and of lifting our national ragtime from
the stamp of feet to the beat of wings. Its nonsense has
a jewel of truth at the heart of it, and its deafening blare
carries daringly a folk-tune motive. Again and again Lind­
say takes up a vague intuition in the heart of the American
people, and makes it articulate in a rollicking tune.
Take, for example, his short poem on that darling old absurdity, *The Statue of Old Andrew Jackson*—the equestrian miracle balancing on its horse’s hind legs in front of the White House. Does not this poem put the essential stamp of love and pride and loyal laughter on that early provincial America of the 1840’s, and on that slam-bang democratic general who “sat straight up” and “held his course”?

He licked the British at Noo Orleans,
Beat them out of their elegant jeans.
He piled the cotton-bales twenty feet high,
And he snorted freedom; and it flashed from his eye.

And now old Andrew Jackson fights
To set the sad big world to rights.
His hobby-horse will gallop on
Till all the infernal Huns are gone.

Even so is the boastful flamboyance of *The Golden Whales* typical of California; and even so its fun is of the good old American kind—rough, but good-natured, even loving.

One might pause to remark on this poet’s happy phrasing—a concise and trenchant vividness which seems to slip from his tongue before he is aware. There is no appeal from it: Bryan is a “deacon-desperado” for good and all; and forever “Daniel’s tender sweetheart” is

Gliding and lovely as a ship on the sea.

We believe him and go along with him, whether he is laughing as in *The Blacksmith’s Serenade*, or dreaming as in *The Lame Boy and the Fairy*, or suppressing tears as in *A Kind of Scorn*, a poem of proud renunciation and immeasurable sadness:
You do not know my pride
Or the storm of scorn I ride.

I am too proud to kiss and leave you
Without wonders
Spreading round you like flame.
I am too proud to leave you
Without love
Haunting your very name:
Until you bear the Grail
Above your head in splendor,
O child, dear and pale.

The Last Song of Lucifer is a more metaphysical expression of divine despair—the despair of the poet who would know and capture the whole, who would make himself God; and who wins angels and demons to his quest, singing “the song of the Sons of the Morning” in hell;

Till it leaped as a flame to the forests on high,
And the tears of the demons were fire in the sky.

And just for a breath he conquered and reigned,
For one quick pulse of time he stood,
By flame was crowned where God had stood
Himself the Word sublime.

Until he encounters The Punishment:

Beneath where the Gulfs of Silence end
Where never sighs nor songs descend;
Never a hell-flare in his eyes,
Alone, alone, afar he lies. . . .
And his memories of music
Are rare as desert rain.

There is sweetness and light in this book, and there is also suffering. Mr. Lindsay’s songs are no longer songs of youth, but we need not fear that he will have no more to sing.

H. M.
These poems have the austerity of sculpture—they are severely cut in marble. In them the zeal and beauty of an impassioned life is composed and patterned and held in level planes, even as in a firm and tautly designed bas-relief. There is no facility, no light playing with the emotion; it must be strong and deep enough to endure thought, and to command hard, reluctant materials.

Thus the poems are tense and sure. Making no display of rapture, they are yet sensitive to every wind of joy that blows through the walled garden of a sheltered life; without parade of suffering, they yet express that tragedy of inadequacy which haunted this woman's mind and caused her too early death. We have in these expressive poems the confession of inexpressiveness. Here is avowal—a fine generous gift of the spirit—from one who, in the common barter of human intercourse, could not give herself away. She says:

A bond
Of thought subdues me: rather am I fond
Of quietness, of safeties which enthrall;
Of self-enshrining loneliness. I fail
To make the gesture Life awaits.

It is a commoner tragedy, and a sadder one, than the world, preoccupied with louder cries, more dramatic confessions, can stop to realize. This "failure to make the gesture" is the special danger of sensitive and protected souls, to whom leisure brings not fulfilment but a baffling incompleteness, not companionship but solitude:
Unto what mould
Of wonted pain must you comply?
Oh, tell me, are you bound as I
With links of your own failure?

Again:
I lose the whole in shreds;
The sombre days unroll
And I must spend my dole
Of time untwisting ravelled threads.

Or this, from *The Quest*:
So you think I've been filled, to be sure?
And you've never guessed how poor
My leisured safety is!
How I slake my thirst with song
To urge and lure me along;
How I look for your melodies!

Piteously heroic was the effort of these twin sisters to escape from their walled garden and minister to a world at war. They did it, but the contrast was too cataclysmic, and their ministration too feeble against the immense catastrophe. In that bloody chaos when everybody failed, their own sense of failure became a personal reproach, deepening into an abysmal despair, which crushed them like rose-petals under the weight of the world's agony. If their health had not wavered, the experience might have enriched and illumined their hitherto cloistered lives. But they worked too hard and too long; the strain was too severe.

Miss Cromwell's later poems show such an advance over her youthful book, *The Gates of Utterance*, that one must grieve the more over her untimely death. She had from the first an artist's feeling for form, but as her life matured
her touch gained in precision and her art in shapeliness. The title of one of her finest poems, *Folded Power*, is descriptive of her art, and her mind as well: one feels concentrated power in her, power not wild but controlled, not fitful but firm, not chaotic but “folded” into formal beauty. The sonnet *Experience* presents a kind of spiritual exaltation hitherto associated with masculine rather than feminine sages:

There is no need for you to cheer or nerve
My spirit forward; for the days advise,
The years have counselled me. I recognize
No change from joy to sadness. I observe
No variation. Like the simple curve
Earth follows, meeting spring and winter skies,
My life is one experience, implies
Continuous truth. When it appears to swerve,
To mount from sadness into joy, or sink
To sadness with a wayward cruelty,
'Tis only so to you who watch. You think
That I must feel contrasting moods. You name
Them joy and pain. You have not skill to see
That where I stand all beauty is the same.

Perhaps one may fitly end with this lofty poem, even though others in the book may have a more immediate appeal. Mr. Colum’s brief introduction, and Miss Dunn’s biographical note, should both be commended for the unerring taste which guides their keen appreciation; and the former’s choice of the more beautiful poems, most of which our readers will remember, is hardly to be questioned. He says:

There is exquisite achievement in *The Mould, Folded Power, Autumn Communion, Star Song, Definition, Dominion, The Crowning Gift*. These are fine lyrics indeed—indubitably among the best that have been written in our day.

And unquestionably they will be remembered.  

*H. M.*
Reading these three anthologies, one is reminded of the difference between the whole tone and temper of present-day English poetry and our own. The Irish poets are more akin to us, but they are not represented here; and collections which omit Hueffer, Aldington, Flint and even Masefield, and include only one poem by D. H. Lawrence, can hardly be regarded as presenting the English case quite adequately. But, taking them as they are, as a manifestation of certain phases, at least, of English taste, we have to admit that in poetry as in painting and sculpture, the erstwhile British colonies are drifting away from the mother country, its practices and ideals. We feel cribbed, cabined and confined in these volumes; only now and then are we reminded of ties of blood, and oftenest in the most radical of the three, the one which represents the youngest group.

The “Georgians” live in the twentieth century, no doubt, but their subjects, ideals and methods follow the old standards of English song. Except for a few war poems by Siegfried Sassoon, and D. H. Lawrence's quite as unbear-
able poem of love, and Harold Monro's praise of the law of
Gravity, almost nothing in the book reminds us of the age we
live in; there is little which might not have been written
during some other period than ours; sometimes with an au-
thentic beauty which might have commanded a hearing
among the earlier singers, but more often with a muffled
and distant delicacy, as of an echo repeating from far away.
Indeed, certain of Tennyson's lyrics sound more modern
than most of these, and among them Shelley would sing like
an anarchist.

England, with its prim and patterned landscapes, its
daisies and daffodils, its nightingales and thrushes—these
poets praise her even as Chaucer and Wordsworth did,
though not quite so freshly as the one or so keenly as the
other: until one longs for a wild wind from the Rocky
Mountains to blow barbarous music through this close
lush atmosphere, these soft and over-studied harmonies.
Even when J. C. Squire calls up the Volga and the Amazon
among his Rivers, he is merely dreaming on the banks of the
Thames and fitting those mighty names into his quiet revery.

'And when love is the subject, as it so frequently is, the
women whom these poets celebrate are neither stenographers
nor suffragettes nor débutantes nor cocottes, nor any other
feminine individuals to be met in common streets or rooms.
They are either the dainty empty ladies of past romance,
whom English poets of all periods have worshipped and looked
down upon; or they are of a kind rarer in English song but
quite as unreal—phantom evocations of the ewig-weibliche.
a type of purely physical sensuality summoned by the poet's imagination, as Marlowe's Faustus summoned Helen of Troy, to satisfy a longing beyond the reach of any mortal woman. John Freeman's *Muse Divine* is of the former kind in spite of her divinity; and D. H. Lawrence's *Seven Seals* is a fearsome revelation of the latter—a poem as rank and noisome as its author's novel *The Rainbow*, but, like that, a masterpiece of its sodden and grewsome kind.

Most of these Georgian poets seem to be enthralled by "the tradition of magic," as Louis Untermeyer called it in reviewing Walter de la Mare. It is a dangerous tradition, for magic is not to be had for the seeking, and even the great name of Keats will not suffice to conjure with. Nor may it be masked by a liberal use of words like *meet* and *haply*, *thou* and *thee* instead of the familiar *you*, and the archaic *eth* form of the verb. In this volume one finds few of the fairy footprints, though some of the poems attain a soft and limpid grace of quiet feeling and movement. The most "magical," in my opinion, is one of the simplest—*The Linnet*, by Walter de la Mare:

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Upon this leafy bush
With thorns and roses in it,
Flutters a thing of light,
A twittering linnet.
And all the throbbing world
Of dew and sun and air
By this small parcel of life
Is made more fair;
As if each bramble-spray
And mounded gold-wreathed furze,
Harebell and little thyme,
Were only hers;
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As if this beauty and grace
Did to one bird belong,
And, at a flutter of a wing,
Might vanish in song.

Mr. Abercrombie writes more austerely than usual, and his dialogue, *Witchcraft—New Style*, is an interesting study of a case of hypnosis, put into practicable blank verse, but descriptive rather than dramatic. Mr. Monro is ingeniously engaging, as usual, especially in *Dog*. Mr. Bottomley, in *Littleholme* as in all of his work, gives the impression of a strong spirit in chains—one wonders whether he will ever work free. William H. Davies is distinctly not at his best this time; nor Mr. Gibson, nor Mr. Drinkwater, nor Mr. Nichols; and hardly the most vivid of Mr. Sassoon’s war poems have been chosen from *Counter-attack*.

Of the newer poets, most of them have ghost minds. Indeed W. J. Turner says:

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I move among their tall grey forms
A thin moon-glimmering wandering ghost,
Who takes his lantern through the world
In search of life that he has lost.
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And another, Fredegond Shove, sings:

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The wandering shepherd star
Is not more distant gazing from afar
On the unreaped pastures of the sea,
Than I am from the world, the world from me.
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Two more conspicuous figures among the younger Englishmen, J. C. Squire and Edward Shanks, are descriptive and meditative in this volume, but not quite convincing: that is, their poems, although pretty well made, are yet *made*; they don’t seem a spontaneous and unforced creation.
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a sincere lyric utterance. Mr. Squire is now editing the new London *Mercury*, and Mr. Shanks was widely advertised last summer by being honored with the first annual award of the "Hawthornden Prize" of one hundred pounds, for his book, *The Queen of China and Other Poems*; the judges being Laurence Binyon, J. C. Squire and Edward Marsh, editor of the Georgian anthologies.

The second of these anthologies, the Miscellany, presents half again as many poets as the Georgian one, but on the whole reinforces the impression of that. It does not gain distinction by such entries as Laurence Housman, Gerald Gould, Laurence Binyon, or that vociferous balladist G. K. Chesterton, who comes galloping in on a steed as ancient as Don Quixote's, and about as fit for its job. One or two women's voices arrest one—Edith Sitwell, whose *Lady with the Sewing-machine* and *Solo for Ear-trumpet* have a grim sarcastic humor; and Muriel Stuart, whose brief narrative, *The Father*, is drawn tense and keen to its bitter climax.

Some of the young poets in *Wheels* seem more akin to us than the elder Georgians: Aldous Huxley especially, whose stark humor and bluff headlong style might almost come from Kansas. Sacheverell Sitwell, too, has a light inconsequent touch, more effective and less deliberate than his elder brother's; Sherard Vines' sardonic sincerity is arresting; and the startling war poems of Wilfred Owen, who, a week before the Armistice,

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Put on
Death's appalling chastity,
prove once more the waste of war.
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King George's Poets

On the whole, the more one reads modern English poetry, the more one appreciates the vitality and variety of our own. *H. M.*

A GOOD TEXT-BOOK


“Our first approach to the study of verse should be scientific”—is a significant sentence in the opening chapter of this carefully prepared and excellent work. Accepting the affirmation, provided one does accept it, this officer-professor proves an unusually good guide in the study of verse forms—for most rhetorics and other text-books in this subject are not only incorrect, but destructive to the point of blasphemy.

The author gives us a large number of illustrative quotations with able comment, and a calm and would-be-fair chapter on *Free Verse*.

It becomes a matter of wonder how so many books about poetry can be written and read. Of them all, one alone seems to hold something of the joy and delight, the unexplained enchantment of poetry—Max Eastman's *Enjoyment of Poetry*. I fancy he would not admit that our first approach to the study of verse should be scientific. It's a solemn way to study magic, though perhaps necessary for the production of magic that will hold its spell. *Mary Aldis*

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Dear Miss Monroe: I just happened to see, in the December number of POETRY, the unfavorable notice of the poems of John Russell McCarthy by E. C.

Mr. McCarthy's poems came to my hand a year ago at Christmas. That night, after reading them, I was so astonished and thrilled that I could not sleep. I had almost despaired of anything fine coming from our present-day poets. I thought so well of his verses that I wanted to know him, and asked him to visit me; which he did, in the Catskills, last summer. And on knowing him I liked him so well that I asked him to go with me this winter to California, as my guest. I wanted to show him the great Southwest. He came and was with us a few weeks. It made a great impression on him. One result of his trip here is a poem, Sea Gulls, which will appear in Scribner's Magazine.

I look upon his two little volumes as the most valuable contribution to American poetic literature that this century has seen. His work is bound to take rank with the best nature poetry in our literature, not excepting Emerson's.

I think Wild Asters, which you print in the same number with that flippant and impotent review of his books, is a little gem.

John Burroughs
NOTES

Only four of this month's poets have appeared before in the magazine:

Mr. Marsden Hartley, the cosmopolite painter and poet, has recently returned to New York after a year or more in the Southwest. In New Mexico he saw a good deal of the pueblo tribes, and the poems we offer reflect his impressions of them and their vividly colored country. The first one presents a dance festival of a semi-Christianized tribe at the pueblo of San Domingo.

Miss Edna St. Vincent Millay, of New York, is well known as the author of Renascence and Other Poems (Mitchell Kennerley). A new book of her more recent poems will soon appear.

Miss Helen Dudley is a young Chicago poet now sojourning in Santa Fe. Mr. Alfred Battle Bealle is a journalist of Birmingham, Ala.

The other eight poets appear for the first time in POETRY:

Mr. Carlyle F. McIntyre, of Los Angeles, is the author of In Conclusion, privately printed recently at Sierra Madre, Cal.

Capt. Sherard Vines, who has been in the educational service since demobilization, is a young English poet who has been represented in New Paths, Wheels and other anthologies; and is the author of The Two Worlds, published by B. H. Blackwell, Oxford, in 1916.

Miss Eda Lou Walton, a native of New Mexico, now lives in Berkeley, assisting in the English department of the U. of Cal. She has published little as yet.

Mrs. Mabel Barker Huddleston, of New York, published, in 1915, Script of the Sun (G. P. Putnam's Sons).

Edna Wahlert McCourt (Mrs. W. E. McC.), of St. Louis, Mo.; and Miss Mabel Cornelia Matson, of Hanover, N. H., have published verse in a few magazines. "Paul Tanaquil" is a pseudonym.

Miss Myrtle Eberstein, of New York, writes as follows in regard to her Woman-songs of the Herero:

"They are partly genuine African material, and partly remodeled by me. They have been quite literally translated, and are probably partly traditional and partly improvisations—the natives could not or would not say which. African songs are usually sung to the casual accompaniment of a beaten drum, and there is always repetition, more than I have given. These and other 'woman-songs' are chanted by the women at their daily tasks.

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"Among the Herero and many other native tribes in various parts of the world, a woman bearing twins is supposed to be possessed of demons, and is either killed with the children, or made to undergo long purification before she can mingle with her tribe again."

Mr. Fritz R. Vanderpyl, who is represented in our Comment this month, is a Parisian journalist, being art critic of Le Matin.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:
The Tempering, by Howard Buck. Yale Univ. Press, New Haven.
Wind and Blue Water, by Laura Armistead Carter. Cornhill Co.
The Hesitant Heart, by Winifred Welles. B. W. Huebsch.
Don Folquet and Other Poems, by Thomas Walsh. John Lane Co.
Chords from Alhíreo, by Danford Barney. John Lane Co.
Poems in Captivity, by John Still. John Lane Co.
The Poems in Picardy and Other Poems, by E. De Stein. E. P. Dutton & Co.
Outdoors and In, by Joshua F. Crowell. Four Seas Co.

ANTHOLOGIES:

TRANSLATIONS AND PLAYS:
Three Plays of the Argentine, translated from the Spanish by Jacob S. Fassett, Jr. Duffield & Co.

PROSE:
The Lure of the Pen, by Flora Klickmann. G. P. Putnam's Sons.
The Substance of a Dream, translated from the original manuscript by F. W. Bain. G. P. Putnam's Sons.
THE POET IN THE DESERT
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Of Poetry, published monthly at Chicago, III., for April 1, 1920.

State of Illinois, County of Cook. Before me, a notary public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Harriet Monroe, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that she is the editor of Poetry, and that the following is, to the best of her knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to-wit:

That the name and address of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager is Harriet Monroe, 543 Cass street.

That there are no bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders.

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