

Vol. XVII

No. II

Poetry

A Magazine of Verse
Edited by Harriet Monroe
November 1920

The Day that was that Day
by Amy Lowell
In Maine, by Wallace Gould
Eunice Tietjens
Florence Kiper Frank
Award of Prizes

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Earl Marlatt

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No. II

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 Poetry
A Magazine of Verse

VOL. XVII
NO. II

NOVEMBER 1920

THE DAY THAT WAS THAT DAY!

*THE wind rose, and the wind fell,
And the day that was that day
Floated under a high Heaven.*

*"Home! Home! Home!"
Sang a robin in a spice-bush.
"Sun on a roof-tree! Sun on a roof-tree!"
Rang thin clouds
In a chord of silver across a placid sky.*

Rachel Gibbs stepped up the path
To pass the time of day
With Haywood Green's Minnie.
"My, ef she ain't shut the door!
An' all the breeze this side the house too.
She must like to stew.
Minnie,
Minnie,

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You ain't gone out have yer?
I'll skin my knuckles ef I knock agin.
I wonder did she lock the door—
Well, I never!
Have you gone hard o' hearin'?
Have you—
Minnie, child, what's the matter?
Why do you look like that?
What you doin'?
Speak, I tell yer!
What you hidin' that cup for?
God A'mighty, girl, what you doin' with wood-alcohol
In a drinkin'-cup?
Here give it ter me,
An' I'll set it on the table.
Set down, Minnie dear,
Set right here in the rocker
An' tell me
What ails yer to be wantin'
To drink stuff like that?
There, there, you poor lamb.
Don't look so scared.
Just tell me all about it,
An' ease your heart.
Minnie, I'll have to shake yer
Ef you don't stop starin'
In that dretful way.
Poor Dear,

You just lay your head up agin me
An' let me soothe yer.
Poor little thing.
Poor little thing."

"Don't, don't, Rachel,
I can't bear it.
I'm a wicked woman,
But I jest couldn't stand no more."

"No more o' what?
Ain't yer Pa good to yer?
What's come over yer, Minnie?
My! I'm jest as sorry as I can be."

"Oh, it ain't nothin' like that.
An' don't be so good to me,
You'll make me want to cry agin,
An' I can't cry.
I'm all dried up,
An' it's like squeezin' my heart sick
To want to cry, an' can't."

"But what is it?
Ain't yer never goin' ter tell me?"

"Why there ain't nothin' to tell
'Cept that I'm tired."

"Now, look-a-here, Minnie,
No one don't drink poison jest 'cause they're tired."

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"I didn't drink it, as it happens."

"No, you didn't, 'cause I come in an' stopped yer.
But I'm mighty afeered you would have.
Lord, it makes me shudder."

"I guess yer right,
I would have.
An' I wish you'd ha' let me be.
Now it's all to do over agin,
An' I don't know/as I'll git the courage a second time.
I guess you ain't never been right down tired, Rachel."

"Well, never to the poison point, no, I haven't.
But what's gone wrong to wear yer out so?"

"The cat's sick."

"Minnie Green, was you takin' poison
'Cause you got a sick cat?
That's down-right foolishness."

"Yes, it does sound so.
But I couldn't face nussin' her.
Look here, Rachel,
I may be foolish, or mad, or jest plain bad,
But I couldn't stan' another thing.
I'm all fretted now
An' more's one too many.
I can't go on!

Oh, God! I can't go on!
I ain't got no more'n most women,
I know that,
But I fuss a lot more.
There's al'ays the same things
Goin' roun' like the spokes to a cart-wheel,
Ef one ain't a-top it's another,
An' the next comin' up all th' time.
It's breakfast, an' dinner, an' supper,
Every day.
An' the same dishes to wash.
I hate them dishes.
I smashed a plate yesterday
'Cause I couldn't bear to see it
Settin' on the sink waitin' fer me.
An' when I go up to make Father's bed
I git seasick
Thinkin' I'll have to see that old check spread agin.
I've settled it,
An' twitched it this way an' that,
For thirty year,
An' I hate the sight o' the thing.
Sometimes I've set an hour on the stair
Ruther'n go in an' touch it.
Oh, my God! Why couldn't yer let me be?
Why'd you have to come interferin'?
Why?
Why?"

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"Thank the Everlastin' Mercy I did!
But, Minnie, how long's this been goin' on?
I never had no idea anythin' was wrong."

"I don't know.
For ever an' ever, I guess.
Rachel, you can't think how hard it is for me
To set one foot after the other sometimes.
I hate lookin' out th' winder,
I'm so tired o' seein' the path to the barn.
An' I can't hardly bear
To hear Father talkin' to the horses.
He loves 'em.
But I don't love nothin'
'Cept the cat,
An' cats is cold things to cling to,
An' now mine's sick!"

"Don't take on so, Minnie.
She'll get well.
There, you rest awhile;
You can tell me afterwards."

*A wind rose, and a wind fell,
And the day that was that day
Hung against a turning sun.*

*The robin sang "Home! Home! Home!"
In an up-and-down scale of small, bright notes.
The clouds rang silver arpeggios*

Stretched across a pleasant sky.

"I wish I loved somethin', Rachel."

"Bless your heart, Child, don't you love your father?"

"I suppose so. But he don't mean nothin' ter me.
He don't say nothin' I want ter hear.
My ears is achin' to hear words,
Words like what's written in books,
Words that would make me all bright like a spring day.
I lay awake nights
Thinkin' o' hearin' things,
An' seein' things.
I'm awful tired o' these hills,
They crowd in so.
Seems sometimes ef I could see the ocean,
Or a real big city,
'Twould help.
Kind o' lay my eyes out straight for a while,
Everythin's so short here
My eyes feels crinkled.
I love laylocks,
But I git so tired o' watchin'
The leaves come and the flowers
Every year the same,
I'd like to root 'em up.
I've set an' set in the kitchen evenin's awful late,
Fer not bein' able to git up and light the lamp

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To go ter bed.
I'm all lead somehow.
I guess ef anybody did say anythin'
I'd be deaf
Jest with listenin' so long.
I'm plumb tired out."

"Look-a-here, Minnie,
Why don't you go away
Fer a spell?"

"Me go away!
Oh, no, I couldn't never do that.
I couldn't go no place.
I can't hardly git over to Dicksville
Fer my week with Aunt Abby now.
I'm all wrong away from home.
I can't do nothin'!
Nothin' at all.
I'm so awful tired."

"Minnie, did you ever love anybody?
Any man, I mean?"

"No, Rachel, I never did.
I know that sounds queer, but it's a fact.
I've tried to think I did,
But 'twarn't true.
I hadn't hardly no time for men-folks,
Mother was sick so long,

Amy Lowell

And then there was Father.
I never was much account with 'em anyway,
But I suppose I might ha' had one
Ef I'd fixed my mind so.
But I al'ays waited.
An' now I'm through waitin',
I'm through waitin' fer anythin', Rachel.
It's jest go, go, go,
With never no end,
And nothin' done that ain't to do over agin.
There now it's six o'clock,
And I must be gittin' supper.
You needn't move that cup, Rachel.
I ain't a-goin' to touch it.
I'll jest keep on now till the Lord takes me
An' I only hope he'll do it soon."

*The robin flew down from the spice-bush
And pecked about for worms.
The clouds were brazen trumpets
Tumbled along the edge of an apple-colored sky.
The shadow of the house
Fell across the path to the barn
Confusing it with the grass and the daisies.*

*A wind rose, and a wind fell,
And the day that was that day
Vanished in the darkness.*

Amy Lowell

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MODERN GREEK POPULAR SONGS

RIGI

Rigi weeps—Rigi weeps like the dove;
Rigi laments like the partridge.
Yachos says, "Girl white as snow,
Girl sweet as melons, tell me your sorrow."
"I search, Yachos, though I find it not,
I search for the plant which gives immortality."
Yachos goes to the mountain and he comes again.
"Rigi, I kiss your eyes—here is the plant."
Rigi carries the plant to her lips,
But Rigi weeps like the dove,
Rigi laments like the partridge.
"This is not the plant which gives immortality,
Yachos! This is the plant of love you have given me."
"Why should you weep, Rigi?
Is it not love which gives immortality?"
And Rigi's tears are dried.

SONG

O my sweet dove, when I kissed you it was night; but the
night told it to the dawn, the dawn to a star, the star to
the moon.
The moon leaned down and told it to the sea, the sea told
it to the oar, and the oar to the sailor.
Thus it is that the sailor sings of our love.
The sailor says that you love me; and the oar, the sea, the

Antonin Proust—Eunice Tietjens

moon, the star, the dawn and the night repeat the echo of
his voice.
You only have not yet told it me.
But I know it!

SPRING

Sleep no more, my heart! March and May are come; the
swallows return; and the doves, two and two, descend to
the fountain.
Yesterday, returning from the isles, I passed before her
window. She was watering her basil, she was giving to
drink to her flower of mint.
She cut a spray of basil, she cut a flower of mint; and she
gave them me.
Sleep no more, my heart! March and May are come; the
swallows return; and the doves, two and two, descend to
the fountain.

THE RED FISH

I kissed her red lips; they dyed my own.
I wiped them with a kerchief, and the kerchief was dyed.
I washed the kerchief in the stream and the shores of the
stream were dyed; the waves of the sea kissed the shores
of the stream, and the sea grew red.
That is why the little fish are grown red also; that is why,
when I see them flickering, I think of Photini of the red
lips.

From Antonin Proust's French version: by Eunice Tietjens

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FOR BARBARA

Aged three and a little over

SLEEP THE MOTHER

Sleep, the mother,
Has taken her over.
She has slipped from my arms
Into the arms of this other,
Who has touched her softly,
Who has flushed her with dreaming.
This is not the same
Sleep who gathers men
Heavy with labor,
Women drugged with pleasure.
This is the mother
Of little children only,
Moving as a wind
From white spaces,
Flushing their faces
With a soft flame, holily;
To whom the mothers of the earth
Give up their children
Joyously, with a clean gladness,
With only a little sadness,
Such as hurts mothers
For their mortality.
For they remember also,

Remembering swiftly,
Death too is a mother!

But now her lashes curl delicately,
The blue veins of her eyelids
Show sweetly in the soft skin,
Her red mouth droops slowly. . . .

Hovering over
The child she is holding
Is Sleep, the white mother,
With arms enfolding!

ELF-CHILD

They'll get your rollicking spirit pretty soon,
Taming you to the observances of days.
They'll teach you how to tread the ordered maze,
Little wild baby dancing under the moon—
Not to go prancing at the call of the loon,
Mad little darling of the runaways!
Of conversation, manner, prim delays
They'll tell you—and nice use of the fork and spoon.

Oh please, oh please don't let it be all wasted
That you from streams have drunk a dear delight,
You who have lived with faery and have tasted
Delicate rumors, stirrings of the sprite.
Do sometimes put your fingers to your nose,
And still go dancing on your little toes!

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THREE SONNETS

From a sequence

I

Some certainty? Some light to guide the way
Pure-burning through the blackness or through murk?
Abstraction—such as Duty, Love, your Work?
O darling, if I could or might or may
Wrest it from living! I can't. What shall I say!
Because for you there's the individual quirk,
And my salvation grievously might irk
Your living soul that seeks a freer day.

So always, they tell, the generations go. . . .
Yet what's ahead! This world, this substance strange
Gradually we've fought clear of, but are slow,
Oh very slow, to fashion and arrange
And melt and mold—blows there an encircling fire
This very hour, white-hot from our great desire!

II

Suppose you have just a person for a mother!
I at the outset candidly must confess
I'm skeptical of my power to shield and bless.
Yet perhaps I'll do as well as she, that other,
Idealized! For I swear that I'll not smother
You—your athletic soul—with lusciousness,

Nor precepts redolent of the governess,
Nor padded quilts that serve the mind as cover.

So here we are: I having lived my years
Up to—I hope not half the time allotted;
You a beginner in this vale of tears,
Criss-crossed, they say, with sun and shadow blotted.
I can't assume omniscience. Here's my hand!
My diffidence I trust you'll understand.

III

Woman and freedom! Freedom—it is much.
You'll hear it often—the tale—how she has cast
Gradually the shackles of the past,
And so moves forth transfigured. Such and such
Emerges now the female. So and such
Is she and will be—nun, iconoclast,
Machinist, priestess of Eros, scholiast—
Does economist or artist give the touch?

And here you stand or toddle, innocent-clear
Of agony, and of lives and creeds that are breaking.
How shall it be when you are sonneteer,
You girl-child, new with the world that's in the making?—
You girl-child, who shall see what I can't see
Of what she is! Oh, tell it truthfully!

Florence Kiper Frank

THE DREAMERS OF DEATH

O Earth, I wonder if your trees and flowers
Have moods of death, through their unmortal hours,
Like us, your dreaming children. Or have they
Sprouted from your clay so short a way,
Rooted and planted in your procreant heart
So deep and warm and passionate a part
Of your great pattern and the mothering whole,
That they know only you, body and soul,
Seed of your soil, and root and stock and vine,
The fruit and flower only an up-thrust sign
Of your eternity?—that they are you?
How should they feel the change of old and new?
How should they dream of difference or death,
Whose withering, unto the utmost breath,
Returns into the re-creative sod,
To rise into re-petaled proofs of God?—
Whose fates are one with the on-sweeping way
Of beautiful progression and decay—
The sprout, the stem, the radicle, the spray,
Perfume and ashes of petals blown away?
How should their branches hold the smallest dread
That they must one day alter and be dead?
How should they shrink from death, who have no birth,
Who are not even children, who are Earth?
We only have forsaken you for birth,
Severed the cord that binds us, mother, Earth—

Julia Cooley Altrocchi

Sought separate life and individual breath,
And found upon the outer highway—death.
Until we grow into your heart again,
Strike root and live with you, we shall know pain,
And all the lonely terrors of our ways—
The disinherited and dismal days,
The suffering selves, the alien entities,
The strange desires and empty destinies.
Restore us deep into your deathless scheme.
Dissolve our little spirits, dream on dream,
Until they blend with wisdom of the trees,
Recurrent flowers and root-eternities.

Julia Cooley Altrocchi

THE TRAVELLER

I follow white roads to the north.
So straight they lie—
Through empty fields to purple hills
Stretched thin against the sky.

Yet, however far they lead,
Sorrow will send
Her messenger, laden to greet me,
At the road's end.

Anne Deacon

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TASMANIAN SKETCHES

SUPPLICANTS

In the shimmering heat
Of the noon-day sun
The parched purple hills
Kneel to snow-crowned Ben Lomond,
Holding out suppliant hands,
Craving a morsel of healing snow.

God-like, austere, unbending
Ben Lomond stands,
Deaf to their prayers.

GUM-TREES

The gum-trees during the spring rains grew so fast
That their boughs are weak
And cannot bear up the weight of russet leaves,
But droop towards the ground like willows.

With the sun behind, and a light wind stirring,
They are living fountains of flame.

SKY

The summer sky is just a bowl
Of old blue china:
The horizon hills serrate the rim,

H. W. Stewart

And the tops of the tallest trees
Etch patterns round the sides.

Sometimes I think those great air-planes
Will fly too high
And cut a jagged hole.
Then the Philistines will sell in their stores
Souvenirs
Made of the glittering shards that fall.

H. W. Stewart

CHILDREN AT PLAY

"The wind is whistling in the lane," said Sybil.

"Fairies whispering," said Jane.

"The leaves are sighing overhead."

"Songs of dying birds," Jane said.

"The vines are dripping with the rain," said Sybil.

"Diamond necklaces," said Jane.

"The toadstools perk their ugly heads."

"Cricket umbrellas," Jane said.

"The water beats against the pane," said Sybil.

"Clouds are tapping drums," said Jane.

"Let's go ask for sugar-bread."

"Let's do," Jane said.

Jack Merten

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G. H. Q., JANUARY, 1919

Remembering the flowers my mother's hand uncloses
Between her hedges spread with spiders' laces—
Narcissi pale and straight like April's rain,
The peony's deep stain,
Pansies with kittens' faces
And summer roses,
Whose yellow lingers from the summer dawn—
Remembering how she loves the rabbits on the lawn:
The barren desks and empty offices
Where nothing wise is done
Had nearly slipped my mind,
With all the deaf, the tongueless and the blind,
Whose works and pupils thrive beneath the sun,
Unlovely and unkind.

NOT HERE

Not here!—not here! I have been here too many years,
Have stumbled about the darkened room for a door,
Seeing only the phantom shafts the moonlight clears,
The broken bars of silver along the floor.

I can hear the women's laughter, a song half blown
Away by the wind; through all the dust I can smell
A garden wet with the rain. And I am alone.
Not here, old shadows—I know you, all too well!

Edmund Wilson, Jr.

FUGITIVE

You are the shooting star
That pales the Pleiades.
You are the frost
That fires the autumn trees.
You are the sunset
Upon cloud-lost peaks.
You are the silence
Music seeks.
You are the wind-winged dream
I waken to and banish.
You are the hands that beckon me,
And beckoning, vanish.

Across the grass
Yours are the white veils
Of obliterating snow
You are everyone I pass,
And no one that I know.

Susan M. Boogher

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THREE POEMS

FAMILY PORTRAIT

The picture hangs stiffly against the wall,
Rigidly framed within its final thought.

At the right, the faces of two children,
Emerging from straight dresses like round flowers in a pot,
Stare ahead wonderingly into a queer mist,
Whose changing shapes they need not fathom.

In this moment, their mother could not remember them.
She sits like someone suddenly blank
Before an unheard command.

Her tired breasts are trying, all by themselves, to rest.
Her legs, standing apart, do not know where they converge.
Her wandering lines have all halted a moment,
Like vague stray dogs, pausing along a street.

Her husband stands behind.
In his eyes is the peace of a blind man,
Whose unseen face scowls fiercely,
With his hands gripping hard surfaces.

The grandmother at the left, distant with age,
Worn like a kitchen knife to almost nothing,
Has gathered them all
Within the wrinkled labyrinth of her compassion.

Leo Grudsky

MELODRAMA

Your lips were attentive under my kisses
To desperate whispers of escape.

My sobs of renunciation
Lay stunned with your gratitude.

And when your petals, weirdly late,
Have graciously covered me,
Will my heart, a bit ashamed,
Smile at a distant fragrance?

IN THE MIRROR

I think I have taken
The shape that people die in.

Pallor of an urn in which
Inextinguishable ashes of hungers
Send up endless wreaths that whirl and vanish
With indifferent inevitability.

Death, powerless before the dead,
Becomes my shadow.

Leo Grudsky

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IN MAINE

THE PILGRIMAGE

At Lewiston, I went to the bridge.
I went to the bridge to linger there.
I wanted to look once more at the Androscoggin.
I wanted to watch its plunge between the cities.
As conquering hordes would appear through a breach in the
ramparts of a town,
so the Androscoggin appears through a break in the pines
at the crest of its falls.
As the conquering hordes would plunge from the ramparts
to the streets,
so the river plunges to its lower channel.
It is mighty.
It is august.

Nothing is changed.
There, as ever, are the mills that rise from the waters—
the old brick mills that were there when I was a child,
and that, by the light of the moon, seemed castles of old days.
They are not changed.
There, as ever, at the crest of the falls, are the ancient pines,
black, scraggy, that loom against the northern skies.
They are not changed.

Nothing is changed.
The greater falls,

amber and white,
silky, voluptuous, majestic, resplendent,
descend about the enormous boulders,
which, if viewed from the western shores,
form the face of the aged man.
The floods, just now, are mischievous.
On the brow of the aged man
they have placed a slab of ice—
a dunce-cap on the head of a scowling sage.
The sounding tons pour pompously to the lower basin.
From the basin,
scrolls of foam—
amber and white—
sweep down the river.

Nothing is changed.
The western cataract, tortuous, precipitous, vicious, furious,
darts away from the greater falls,
and, like a python striking from above,
lunges through the sluiceway of jagged boulders.
In the lower basin
it thunders wildly.
Writhing, lashing,
the deafening tons—
amber and white—
burst, as ever, into rolling mist that rises higher than houses.

Do the columbines still grow by the western cataract?
They used to cling to the rocks by the lunging waters,

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and there they nodded in the spray.
There I used to go for sanctuary.
I craved the holy silence of the din.

THE LAST TABLEAU

It is October. Let us go.
This is the grand finale.
Let us not wait for the curtain.
I am tired of curtains.

Look. The passions of the world are posing,
and Atropos is stepping to the stage.

Look. The gaudy mountains are vain.
They are using the lake as a mirror.
They are peroxide Amazons searching for wrinkles.

Look. The stagehands are already setting the stage for another show.

They are bearing the pumpkins from the fields,
and are pulling down the stacks of beans.
They are ploughing the fields.
They are closing their doors.
Glance at the gorgeous stage once more.
Then let us turn away.

Look. There is a mountainside of yellow maples,
and another mountainside of maples that are crimson.

Look. The meadow is a silken baize.
It is variegated with tawn and green.
The design is of hunters pursuing a fox
followed by dogs that sprawl in the air.
In the beech wood there is another baize—
a baize of flax.
The design is of scurrying chipmunks.
Beneath the pines there is still another baize—
a baize of hemp.
The design is of nervous deer that huddle together.

This is the closing scene. Now let us go—
before the lines of Atropos begin.

DIVERSION

Something is happening, at last,
now that the snowflakes are falling.

Something is happening.
It has been too long that nothing has happened.
The poor old year has been a bore.
She has been unkempt.
She has worn a faded calico dress too ragged for repair.
She has murmured of doom.
She has crooned of former profusions
of silk brocades,
rare perfumes,
or lovely lusts.

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I come to the forests.
Even now the forests are green and black,
but within them,
instead of the tawn of the spills,
there is the white of the snowflakes.

I come to the fields.
Even now the fields are tawny,
but across them there are streaks of white—
the white of the snowflakes on the frozen brooks.

I look at the skies.
Even now the skies are gray,
but the gray of the skies is enlivened with streaming white—
the white of the snowflakes.
The snowflakes are falling,
to circle,
or wander,
or dart,
or float,
all like children at play—
like desperate children
awaiting the sound of the school bell.

Something is happening, at last,
now that the snowflakes are falling.

POSTLUDE

By night, in autumn, do you ever listen
for the waterfowl that are leaving the north?
In the east, there is, perhaps, a harvest moon—
a golden moon in a porcelain sky—
and there are, perhaps, big stars that flare
in a pellucid indigo.
The fields and the meadows are of bronze.
The stark stump fences are of silver, unburnished.
The squashes and the pumpkins are of gold, unburnished.
But do you ever listen for the cries
of the waterfowl that are going away?

In the cold, clear mornings of autumn days,
do you ever watch for the waterfowl?
The squashes and the pumpkins glisten with frost,
and their blighted leaves,
all limp,
all black,
droop, like the wings of slumbering bats.
The winds, indifferent, listless, murmur among themselves.
Disclosing ripe apples,
red or russet,
the bronze, tattered leaves
flutter or sidle to the ground.
But do you ever search the skies
for the waterfowl that are going away?

Wallace Gould

COMMENT

THE P. S. A. PRIZES AND OURS

THE editors of POETRY give annual testimony to their belief in prizes, scholarships and other endowments as a benefit to the arts; and—especially in the art of poetry, the most ill-paid of them all—as a slight acknowledgment of their value before the public, which is too ready to count values exclusively in dollars. Human judgment, represented in committees of award, being fallible, such tributes may go, in fact often do go, to the wrong persons; but these mistakes, in our opinion, do not negative the advisability of such endowments, which should increase, both in number and size.

Thus the Poetry Society of America does well to raise five hundred dollars annually as an honorarium to the American poet publishing the best book of verse during the previous calendar year. This year a particularly fit committee of award had the disposal of the honor: Edwin Arlington Robinson, whose distinction requires no emphasis; John Livingston Lowes, whose *Convention and Revolt* is the most enlightened study of modern poetry yet written; and Alice Corbin Henderson, from the first an associate editor of POETRY. In these appointments the officers of the P. S. A. did their best. If they had been equally careful in preparing the list of 1919 books for the committee to choose from, commendation would be complete; but it will appear below that at least one important book of the year was either never

The P. S. A. Prizes and Ours

included in, or was definitely withdrawn from, the lists sent to two of the committee.

The award, as recently announced in the papers, is a tie between *Poems*, by the late Gladys Cromwell, and *The Song of Three Friends*, by John G. Neihardt. Because of Miss Cromwell's most lamentable death, the Society very properly gives the entire five hundred dollars to Mr. Neihardt; but the public should remember that honors are equal.

While we must disagree with half of the award, believing that *The Song of Three Friends* is fundamentally unsound as a work of art, still we may congratulate its author upon receiving half the honor and all the money. Mr. Neihardt has been from the first an enthusiast true to his ideals. In 1907 his career as a poet began with *A Bundle of Myrrh*, a book which then seemed progressive and ultra-modern. If he lost his stride, became so entangled in worn-out theories and formalities that a troop of younger poets have passed him by, still he has done enough so that we need not regret the leaf of laurel, nor the paltry purse which is all too slight an enrichment to a poet compelled to live austere in order to keep faith with his art. Moreover, his book is part of a large design celebrating a big American subject—the conquest of the West by the pioneer. And while we believe that his reach has been beyond his grasp, that his manner is quite out of accord with his matter, still no one can present claims to infallibility, and time alone will pronounce the final verdict.

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With Miss Cromwell's half of the honor we are much more in sympathy, as our review of her book last May would indicate. The emphasis thus placed upon a book of profound feeling, expressed with a lyric precision austere and delicate and beautiful, can but add to the universal sorrow for this poet's tragic and too early death.

The awards present an interesting study of contrasting personalities and opinions. When the *New York Times* report came in, the writer, being absolutely without inside or outside information, set out to solve the psychological-arithmetical puzzle of the different judges' votes. After announcing the award, *The Times* said:

Amy Lowell's *Pictures of the Floating World* and Clement Wood's *The Earth Turns South* each received three points in the voting; while *Starved Rock*, by Edgar Lee Masters, received two points and Marjorie Allen Seiffert's *A Woman of Thirty* and Eunice Tietjens' *Body and Raiment* received one point each.

Each judge gave three points to his first choice, two to his second, and one to his third; making eighteen points in all from the three judges. It seemed probable that Mrs. Henderson's first choice was Miss Cromwell; and inevitable, after a perusal of Professor Lowes' book, that his first choice was Miss Lowell. But the two winners received four points each; therefore Miss Cromwell must have had one point from another judge—probably Prof. Lowes. So all the third choices were disposed of, Mrs. Seiffert's one point probably coming from Mrs. Henderson, and Mrs. Tietjens' from Mr. Robinson. Therefore Mr. Neihardt could not have been anybody's first or third choice, and I was con-

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fronted with the incredible fact that Mr. Robinson must have given first place to Clement Wood's book. Thus the list was complete as follows, and the president of the P. S. A. authorizes the announcement that it is correct:

Mrs. Henderson:

Poems, by Gladys Cromwell.

Starved Rock, by Edgar Lee Masters.

A Woman of Thirty, by Marjorie Allen Seiffert.

Professor Lowes:

Pictures of the Floating World, by Amy Lowell.

The Song of Three Friends, by John G. Neihardt.

Poems, by Gladys Cromwell.

Mr. Robinson:

The Earth Turns South, by Clement Wood.

The Song of Three Friends, by John G. Neihardt.

Body and Raiment, by Eunice Tietjens.

The list presents an extraordinary scattering of opinions, three competent judges voting for six different books in the nine places! A close contest and a divided honor, the winners receiving each less than one-fourth of the eighteen points listed. Apparently it would be better if the first vote were merely tentative, the judges conferring later and arguing the matter out to a more satisfactory conclusion. Such a conference would have prevented the injustice referred to in the following letter:

Editor of POETRY: While I am not permitted to disclose the source and the nature of my proof, I assert, and am prepared to prove to the committee of the Poetry Society of America, or to any other body empowered to investigate the matter, that the judges of the best book of poems by an American author published during the year 1919, did not pass upon all the books of poetry published during that year. Without fault on the part of the judges, two of them did not see or consider *Starved Rock*, which was published by the Macmillan Company in early December, 1919. The award,

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therefore, under any rules possibly applicable to such a decision, is void.

While feeling, as I have always felt, that such contests and decisions are unimportant and valueless to everyone, deciding, as they do, what judges cannot decide, the cause of American letters suffers injury and a certain degradation in the circumstance that a prize award of \$500.00 has passed without the judges going over all the books published during the year for which the award is made. I should not be surprised, if the contest were reopened, that Mr. Neihardt would win the prize; and I should be glad for an excellent thing done if he did. It is all the more necessary, in that case, that his honorarium should be freed of doubt.

Edgar Lee Masters

Besides this award, the P. S. A., clinging to an unfortunate habit, gives two prizes—of \$150 and \$100—to the two poems receiving the preferential vote—first, from members of the society who heard them read anonymously at the five regular meetings in New York last winter; second, from members who voted on the ten poems so preferred, which were submitted to them in pamphlet form. These prizes have been awarded to *The Dancer at the Shrine*, by Amanda B. Hall; and *Two on a Hill*, by Leonora Speyer.

Without reference to these poems or any others, the manifest objections to the artistic principle, or lack of it, involved demand re-statement: first, the poems anonymously read at these meetings are a haphazard collection; second, the members voting at each meeting represent, not the society in general, but merely its New York contingent, and their vote is given hastily, from one or two casual hearings; third, the general membership of the society, receiving the pamphlet containing the ten preferred poems, cannot be expected to vote with much interest for prizes which represent merely

The P. S. A. Prizes and Ours

a local effort to give zest to the "higher vaudeville" of the monthly New York meetings.

The prizes awarded every November by the staff of POETRY follow the example of the current exhibitions of painting and sculpture, which have been the magazine's model ever since it began: that is, they are an effort to discover and honor the most distinguished poems which have appeared in *our* current exhibition—one year's issues of the magazine. We wish we had as many prizes, and as large ones, to dispose of in our *Announcement of Awards* this month as the jury at the Chicago Art Institute, which will give to fortunate American exhibitors medals of gold, silver and bronze, accompanied by money awards of \$3400, divided into \$1500, \$1000, \$500, \$300 and \$100. And we eagerly present, to men and women of sufficient wealth, the rightful claims of the art of poetry to numerous scholarships, for the benefit of gifted young poets who deserve and need them. Such scholarships are common in the other arts, although clever young painters, sculptors, architects can earn a very good living. The claim of poets to such recognition and assistance is the strongest of all, because they can earn little or nothing by the practice of their art.

Most foreign nations are more liberal with such awards than our own. France has several, including the liberal Prix Goncourt. England grants Civil List pensions to a few poets, and there are private endowments as well. For example, the Hawthornden Prize of one hundred pounds, with a silver medal, for a work of imaginative literature, of

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which Edward Shanks carried off the initial award last year, has just been awarded, for 1920, to *Poems New and Old*, by John Freeman (Selwyn & Blount). The judges were the same as last year—Messrs. Lawrence Binyon, J. C. Squire and Edward Marsh. H. M.

REVIEWS

A LAURELLED POEM

The Song of Three Friends, by John G. Neihardt. Macmillan Co.

This book has not hitherto been reviewed in POETRY, because it seemed unnecessary to repeat criticisms fully suggested, in February, 1916, in a notice of *The Song of Hugh Glass*, the first poem published of its author's projected epic series, though the second in artistic order. But the recent P. S. A. award to this book, as one of the two best American books of verse of 1919, asserting as it does at least the second choice of men like Mr. Robinson and Professor Lowes, seems to call for a more complete statement of our exceptions to the committee's verdict, our reasons for thinking this poem "fundamentally unsound as a work of art."

The reasons are essentially one—the discord between the story and the style. The poet's project—a series of narratives presenting that most romantic period of American history, the winning of the West by adventurous wanderers and traders—is an heroic adventure itself, and not more

deliberate a literary plan, perhaps, than most epics. But having started, he lacked the native human spirit, the unconscious courage, of his heroes—he couldn't give himself wholeheartedly to his adventure, let his subject carry him, but must needs load it with all the rhetorical and legendary impedimenta of many races, many literatures. He set out carrying not only the "heroic couplet" of Pope, and all the archaisms of so-called "poetic" language, now quaintly rococo; but also all the approved lesser-classic traditions of epic form and style. These details of manner, when applied to a story of wild-western pioneers, effect a discordant incongruity, at times absurd. The following examples are typical:

Gauche girls, with rainy April in their gaze,
Cling to their beardless heroes, count the days
Between this parting and the wedding morn,
Unwitting how unhuman Fate may scorn
The youngling dream.

.
Now at whiles
The kiote's mordant clamor cleaves the drowse.

.
And lustily the hewers sang at whiles.

.
Thus merrily the trappers took their ease,
Rejoicing in the thread that Clotho spun.

.
For Ilion, held
Beneath her sixfold cerement of Eld,
Seems not so hoar as bygone joy we prize
In evil days.

And this, of a troop of trappers having a grand old drunk:

What roaring nights of wassailing they knew—
Gargantuan regales—when through the town

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The fiery liquor ravined, melting down
The tribal horde of beaver! How they made
Their merest gewgaws mighty in the trade!
Aye, merry men they were!

Now, the point POETRY has been insisting on for eight years is that this kind of thing is not only false taste but fundamentally bad art. Not only does it artificialize the tale, in the same way, but to a greater degree, that Pope artificializes Homer; but it entirely misses, indeed violates, its flavor—a flavor which a first-rate poet approaching his job in a sincere and honest spirit, would have caught with all its wild barbaric tang. The reader faces an elaborately wrought-out incongruity, which forces him to one of two courses: either he must adjust his mind to the poem as an example of the china-shepherdess type of art—a type developed with a certain sincerity by the artists of Du Barry's highly elaborated court, but rather strained in our democratic place and period; or he must reject the poem altogether as mere confusion and absurdity—the leaning of a second-rate mind upon traditions unfit for his chosen subject; and therefore a false presentation, a mere prettifying and belittling, of the wild epic grandeur of our pioneer history.

Let us seize, for the moment, the first horn of the dilemma, and discover, if we can, what Messrs. Robinson and Lowes found in this book to justify even second place in their lists. Admitting that Mr. Neihardt's trappers "willed to tarry" instead of decided to camp, and "rejoiced in the thread that Clotho spun," and looked like "unhappy spirits"

A Laurelled Poem

on the "dim far shore of Styx" when scrambling from enemies; and that a western girl's beauty can't be asserted without reference to Helen, Iphigenia and Iseult: admitting, indeed, the poet's pseudo-classic assumptions and prejudices, we may find good lines, vivid figures, and passages of resounding rhymed eloquence; also a very proper strengthening and simplification of style toward the tragic climax of the tale. For example:

A cedar of a man, he towered straight.

He shuddered, gazing where the gray sky bled
With morning, like a wound.

A trailing flight of southbound whooping cranes,
Across the fading West, was like a scrawl
Of cabalistic warning on a wall,
And counselled haste.

And this, of a mare found dead after escape from a prairie fire:

She had run,
With saddle, panniers, powder-horn and gun,
Against the wind-thewed fillies of the fire,
And won the heat, to perish at the wire.

The narrative pauses for long, classically wrought similes; and the fight between the two great-bodied men is described with almost Homeric—no, Vergilian—dignity. Then the murder, the fire, the murderer's blurting-out of the truth, and the weird vengeance of his little companion—all these are dramatically presented. A good workman is Mr. Neihardt, however mistaken his design. The poem has a beginning, a carefully wrought climax, and a shaped and conclu-

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sive end. The poet's art elaborates and artificializes, but it does not sprawl.

Probably Mr. Robinson and Professor Lowes felt that Mr. Neihardt had done, in good workmanlike fashion, what he set out to do. But it would be interesting to know how far they sympathized with his aim and method. Prof. Lowes may not have completely rid his mind of "classic" prejudices in spite of all that he grants, in his *Convention and Revolt*, to Amy Lowell and other truly modern poets; but it is the Robinson of *Merlin* and *Lancelot*, never the Robinson of *A Town down the River*, who gave Mr. Neihardt the leaf of laurel.

H. M.

LIGHTS AHEAD

Broken Lights, by Glenn Hughes, University of Washington, Seattle.

This book may be the first sign of a revolution—it was accepted by the English department of the University of Washington instead of a thesis for the master's degree. This is the only instance, so far as I have been able to find out, of an American university considering creative work worth an advanced degree. But others will follow.

The preface is written by the head of the department, Dr. Frederick Morgan Padelford, who is widely known as a literary scholar. Dr. Padelford points out that "the creation of art is at least as severe a test of culture, and of

refined and disciplined thinking, as the ability to reason sagely upon the art created by others."

Broken Lights is not great poetry, but it approaches great poetry much more closely than the average master's thesis approaches great research, no matter how many rainy days have been spent in dark attics—or libraries. The worst poems in the book are in the section entitled *Pro Patria*. Mr. Hughes is such an orotund patriot as might appropriately preside over a Harding or Cox rally. The best poems are those which deal with the fancies of youth, its half-remembered sorrows and its vagrant, many-colored joys. They manifest an appreciation of fragile beauty, and in many cases an appropriate deftness of touch, marred, however, by a certain clinging to the conventional. Mr. Hughes shows promise.

Here are two-thirds of a poem whose first sentence is its title:

God made the dark for silence. Mark the hush
That falls so swiftly on the purpling hills.
The feathery singers crouch within the brush,
Leaving but dreamy echoes of their trills.

Sound is no more. Those drooping poplars there—
Tall shadowy fingers that seek out the clouds—
Whisper no longer; bathed by the soft air,
They merge with Silence and assume her shrouds.

The importance of the book lies not so much in what it contains or promises for its author, as in what it promises for letters in American colleges wherever professors of English have enough vision. *Nelson Antrim Crawford*

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A FLAG OF TRUCE

Something Else Again, by F. P. A.: Doubleday, Page & Co.
Types of Pan, by Keith Preston: Houghton Mifflin Co.
Including Horce, by Louis Untermeyer: Harcourt, Brace
and Howe. *Idylls of the Skillet Fork*, by Payson S.
Wild: Ralph Fletcher Seymour. *Farm Voices*, by Don
C. Seitz: Harper & Brothers.

We know you hate our lines so free—
Pray do not hate our charity.

Perhaps, if I start out humbly with the above technically perfect couplet, Mr. F. P. A. will in his next book (and I hope there will be one) omit his emphatic and frequent damning of *vers libre*. For why let a poetic prejudice get into a book of verse? And *Something Else Again* is the cream of the variety that B. L. T. aptly christened "not poetry—but verse."

The thoroughness with which Mr. Adams draws the last giggle from the many-chambered vat of humor makes a reviewer shudder at the prolific possibilities of his writing serious verse seriously. In *Something Else Again* there is a blithe determination to appeal to all classes—to everyone—which is proclaimed by a highly specialized versatility in international, local, political, rural, patrician, plebeian, and plain rare, universal humor: humor that delights without being bombastic or crude, that strikes a happy medium between the "Hence, loathed melancholy!" and the sweetie-collect-your-gloom-in-some-other-nightmare attitude. And

there is no obscenity, and no sentimentality; which are the two tiresome, customary adjuncts of the tiresome, customary, would be humorist. Mr. Adams has learned the lesson which that pioneer in paragraphing, Mr. Bert Leston Taylor, taught him: namely, that only by a rigid concentration on humor, and a strict aversion from all other emotional reactions, will the laugh take care of itself. And while mentioning Mr. Taylor, I want to thank him again for a number of poems in his book, *A Line-o'-Verse or Two* (Reilly & Britton Co.); especially *In the Sun*, which has been as helpful this summer as ever:

Shine on, Old Top, shine on!
Across the realms of space
Shine on!
What though I'm in a sorry case?
What though my collar is a wreck,
And hangs a rag about my neck?
What though at food I can but peck?
Never *you* mind!
Shine on!

Shine on, Old Top, shine on!
Through leagues of lifeless air
Shine on!
It's true I've no more shirts to wear,
My underwear is soaked, 'tis true,
My gullet is a red-hot flue—
But don't let that unsettle you!
Never *you* mind!
Shine on! (It shines on.)

B. L. T. and F. P. A. are the genuine humorists, while the others—Preston, Untermeyer, Wild and Seitz—are only facile rhymers with some humor. Preston, a stepping-stone

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between the two classes in spite of his disastrous serious moments; Untermeyer, with his parodies and paraphrases, mildly amusing, painstakingly clever, quite unspontaneous—neither flesh, fish, nor fowl; Wild with his ponderous fun further encumbered by an exhaustive use of dialect (I am aware that dialect gives atmosphere—a cloudy atmosphere); Seitz with his gentle humor, quiet philosophy, casual rhythms and rhymes, like a pleasant, lazy, effortless smile.

But, to revert to Mr. Adams, I want to quote the amusing *Unshackled Thoughts on Chivalry, Romance, Adventure*:

Yesterday afternoon, while I was walking on Worth Street,
A gust of wind blew my hat off.
I swore, petulantly, but somewhat noisily.
A young woman had been near, walking behind me;
She must have heard me, I thought.
And I was ashamed, and embarrassedly sorry.
So I said to her: "If you heard me, I beg your pardon."
But she gave me a frightened look
And ran across the street,
Seeking a policeman.
So I thought, why waste five hours trying to versify the incident?
Vers libre would serve her right.

L'envoi (my own)

I like you, Mr. F. P. A.
But say—
Vers libre is not
Prose that's all dressed up
And no
Place to go.

Marion Strobel

CORRESPONDENCE

A WORD FROM MR. WALEY

Editor of POETRY: Perhaps you will allow me a few words of reply to Mr. Fujita's review of my book on Japanese poetry.

He quotes my translation of the poem about the salt-burners, and says, "Reading the translation one wonders what it is all about." "In the original," he continues, "I feel the quietude of a spring evening," etc.

Now the unexpressed connotations of the poem, detailed by the reviewer, are quite as easily derivable from the statements of the translation as from those of the original. From the translation any intelligent European reader would deduce, just as Mr. Fujita does from reading the Japanese, that the sea is calm, that there is no wind, that a boat or two may be crossing the bay, and so on. What the translation unavoidably lacks is beauty of form. The originals, I can assure Mr. Fujita, have (if I may take the poem he quotes as an example of what an *uta* does convey to him) just the same connotations for me as for him. And I think that the translations would suggest to anyone sufficiently familiar with English the same unexpressed inferences as the originals do. Certainly the word "salt-burners" would not, as Mr. Fujita suggests, convey the idea of "witches" to any Englishman.

It is not necessary for the translator to detail these inferences and connotations, as Japanese often do when intro-

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ducing us to their poetry; for he addresses himself solely to persons of an imagination sufficiently active to supply the background for themselves.

In short, Mr. Fujita admits that I understand the expressed, but doubts whether I understand the unexpressed in Japanese poetry, thus assuming that I have no poetic imagination, which, without further proof, seems to me ungenerous. We are in general so much clumsier than the Japanese that I think they are sometimes tempted to forget that we poor creatures have any wits at all.

Arthur Waley

A POET'S PROTEST

After reading the Announcement in the last POETRY

The printer and the binder,
The printer's devil too,
And all except the poor contrib!—
What can the devil do?

The office must be paid for,
The added price of coal;
And everything keeps going up
Except the poet's dole!

And still he sings, though hunger
Should make his stomach squirm.
What bird could sing so loud a note,
With such a slender worm?

Anon

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARDS

Following our agreeable November custom, the editorial staff of POETRY has the honor of awarding three prizes for good work printed in the magazine during its eighth year—October, 1919, to September, 1920, inclusive.

We regret to announce that Mr. H. C. Chatfield-Taylor has been obliged to resign from the Advisory Committee because of residence in California and consequent inability to keep in close touch with the magazine. Therefore he has not voted this year, and we are compelled reluctantly to withdraw his name from the cover, and to miss his immediate presence in our counsels. Since the very beginning of the magazine which his enthusiasm and liberality helped to found, his keen intelligence and disinterested independent judgment have been of the utmost value, and we accept his resignation only under compulsion.

Mr. Richard Aldington, as London correspondent, was requested to vote, but in a letter of recent date he waives his right, as he lacks some of the year's issues.

Fortunately we are able to give a "young poet's prize" again this year, through the liberality of Mrs. Edgar Speyer of New York. This prize is intended as a mark of distinction and encouragement for a young poet, comparatively unknown as yet, who has not yet published a volume.

We refrain this year once more from repeating awards, but we mention with special honor the following poems of the past year by poets who have previously received our prizes:

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Smoke Nights, by Carl Sandburg (February).

A Prayer for my Daughter, by William Butler Yeats (November).

To the River Beach, by H. L. Davis (June).

Maura, by Marjorie Allen Seiffert (October).

Songs from a Book of Airs, and *New Mexico Folk-songs*, by Alice Corbin, are exempt because their author is a member of the jury. And translations are not considered.

Hoping that our contributors and readers will grant to the members of the jury honesty of judgment, and will not demand infallibility, we now announce the awards:

The HELEN HAIRE LEVINSON PRIZE of two hundred dollars, for a poem or group of poems by a citizen of the United States, is awarded to

WALLACE STEVENS

of Hartford, Conn., for his group of poems, *Pecksniffiana*, published in the October, 1919, number.

This prize was founded in 1913 by Mr. Salmon O. Levinson of Chicago. Previous awards have been as follows:

1914—Carl Sandburg, for *Chicago Poems*.

1915—Vachel Lindsay, for *The Chinese Nightingale*.

1916—Edgar Lee Masters, for *All Life in a Life*.

1917—Cloyd Head, for *Grotesques*.

1918—John Curtis Underwood, for *The Song of the Cheechas*.

1919—H. L. Davis, for *Primapara*.

Announcement of Awards

The prize of one hundred dollars, offered by an anonymous guarantor for a poem, or group of poems, without distinction of nationality, is awarded to

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

of New York, for her poem, *The Beanstalk*, published in the May number.

This prize, or other prizes similar in intent, have been previously awarded as follows:

1913—Vachel Lindsay, for *General Booth Enters into Heaven*.

1915—Constance Lindsay Skinner, for *Songs of the Coast-dwellers*.

1915—"H. D.," for *Poems*.

1916—John Gould Fletcher, for *Arizona Poems*.

1917—Robert Frost, for *Snow*.

1918—Ajan Syrian, for *From the Near East*.

1919—Marjorie Allen Seiffert, for *The Old Woman*.

The prize of one hundred dollars offered by Mrs. Edgar Speyer, of New York, under conditions noted above, for good work by a young poet, is awarded to

MAURICE LESEMANN

of Chicago, now sojourning in Santa Fe, N. M., for his poem, *A Man Walks in the Wind*, published in the April number.

Five other special prizes, usually of one hundred dollars each, have been previously awarded: to Louise Driscoll, for

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Metal Checks, as the best poem of the war received in competition and printed in our War Number of November, 1914; to Wallace Stevens, who receives this year the Levinson Prize, for *Three Travellers Watch a Sunrise*, adjudged the best one-act poetic play received in a prize contest—July, 1916; and three times to young poets, viz.:

1916—Muna Lee, for *Foot-notes—III, IV, VII*.

1918—Emanuel Carnevali, for *The Splendid commonplace*.

1919—Mark Turbyfill, for poems of 1917, 1918 and 1919.

Besides the above three awards, and the poems by former winners of POETRY prizes listed above, the following poems receive honorable mention:

Introspection, by Harold Monro (March).

Stones for Russia, by Baker Brownell (October).

Poems by a Child, by Hilda Conkling (July).

Council Talks, by Lew Sarett (November).

Sleep Poems, by Agnes Lee (June).

Under the Sun, by Oscar Williams (September).

High Places, by Mary Austin (January).

The Stone-age Sea, by Helen Hoyt (March).

The Little Cow-girl, by N. Howard Thorp (August).

Bindlestiff, by Edwin Ford Piper (January).

Pity Not, Hopi-tuh and *The Fog Ghost*, by William H. Simpson (January).

After Rachmaninoff, by Ralph Block (March).

Announcement of Awards

From the Frail Sea, by Genevieve Taggard (June).
The Burned House, by Grace Fallow Norton (February).
At the Top of the World, by Elsie A. Gidlow (October).
An Awakening, by Wilton Agnew Barrett (December).

The following translations also receive honorable mention:
Early Snow—a No Play, by Komparu Zembo Motoyazu,
translated by Arthur Waley (March).
French-Canadian Folk-songs, translated by Edward Sapir
(July).

THE PRIZE POEMS

Pecksniffiana, which wins the Levinson Prize for Mr. Wallace Stevens, is a group of fourteen poems. We reprint four of them:

FABLIAU OF FLORIDA

Barque of phosphor
On the palmy beach,

Move outward into heaven,
Into the alabasters
And night blues.

Foam and cloud are one.
Sultry moon-monsters
Are dissolving.

Fill your black hull
With white moonlight.

There will never be an end
To this droning of the surf.

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PETER PARASOL

*Aux taureaux Dieu cornes donne
Et sabots durs aux chevaux*

Why are not women fair,
All, as Andromache—
Having, each one, most praisable
Ears, eyes, soul, skin, hair?

Good God!—that all beasts should have
The tusks of the elephant,
Or be beautiful
As large, ferocious tigers are!

It is not so with women.
I wish they were all fair,
And walked in fine clothes,
With parasols, in the afternoon air.

THE PLACE OF THE SOLITAIRES

Let the place of the solitaires
Be a place of perpetual undulation.

Whether it be in mid-sea
On the dark, green water-wheel,
Or on the beaches,
There must be no cessation

Of motion, or of the noise of motion,
The renewal of noise
And manifold continuation;

And, most, of the motion of thought
And its restless iteration,

In the place of the solitaires,
Which is to be a place of perpetual undulation.

THE PALTRY NUDE STARTS ON A SPRING VOYAGE

But not on a shell, she starts,
Archaic, for the sea.
But on the first-found weed
She scuds the glitter,
Noiselessly, like one more wave.

She too is discontent
And would have purple stuff upon her arms,
Tired of the salty harbors,
Eager for the brine and bellowing
Of the high interiors of the sea.

The wind speeds her,
Blowing upon her hands
And watery back.
She touches the clouds, where she goes,
In the circle of her traverse of the sea.

Yet this is meagre play
In the scurry and water-shine,
As her heels foam—
Not as when the goldener nude
Of a later day

Will go, like the centre of sea-green pomp,
In an intenser calm,
Scullion of fate,
Across the spick torrent, ceaselessly,
Upon her irretrievable way.

We reprint the poem by Miss Edna St. Vincent Millay
which wins a prize for its author:

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!

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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
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;

The Prize Poems

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!

With the following poem Mr. Maurice Lesemann wins the prize offered by Mrs. Speyer:

A MAN WALKS IN THE WIND

Being so tired, it is hard to hide from you;
It is hard to walk any longer in the night and the wind.
I have gone among brown trees, I have crunched the blue
Frost-bitten grass under my feet, I have stood
In parted thickets, caught in the crackling leaves,
I have seen the brush-piles on the ridges fired,
I have watched the twisted smoke that weaves
Blue strands in the black branches of the wood;
And now, being tired,
Being tired now and worn enough for rest,
Would it not be safe, would it not be very good
Tonight, to find it in your breast,
In your wise breast where this is understood?

Do you remember another night of wind,
Moonlight and wind, when it was all
The sky could do to keep from reeling upon us in shame—
When, breathless, we held it there
From slipping down about us with your hair?
Do you remember a night last fall
When the wind whirled us and whetted us to flame,
And whirled the leaves and whetted us to flame,
Whipped out your dress and would not let us be,
And drove us along the prairie, two shadows clinging,
And dropped us at the foot of a tree?

That was September before the frost:
In the morning the prairie was gray with mist

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And the grass was matted white where we had lain.
And the arms of the elm, the grizzled arms of the elm,
Pawed at the wind for something that was lost,
And knotted up with pain.

Fall comes to fall again,
And I walk alone, I walk alone in the wind
I cannot master the beauty of the night.
I walk alone. The poplar fingers rise
Tall and awful among white glittering stars.
Surely this is the most sorrowful delight
Of any man, to walk alone with a dream.
Do you hear the ripple singing in the stream?
The beauty of the poplars strikes me down.
The wind over the grass—I had not known
The wind was such a lonely thing.
The wind cleaves me with beauty to the bone,
And the gray clouds that brush the fields and fling
Gray darkness on to the driven prairie, and fold
Their lonely silence around the hills, and fly
On to the upper night, to the upper air—
They have beat me clean, they have beat my body cold
With beauty. Do you hear the wild geese cry?

And now the dark is heavy in my head,
And in my heart all the sorrows have come home.
I am tired—you do not know how tired I come.
You would not care tonight? You would not care,
But let your hand wander through my hair?
There would be no hurt now, we are both too tired.
I would finger the soft silk of your dress the same
As long ago, when you were first desired,
As long ago when the wind whirled us to flame.

For we know the bitter tune the wind sings;
There will be silence now, there will be rest,
And eyes will heal after the wind stings,
And I shall hear your heart under your breast
Moving across time with a great flow.
And we shall hear no more the wind's calling,
But only the silence of it falling and falling,
And always the room will throb quietly and slow.

NOTES

Miss Amy Lowell, of Brookline, Mass., requires no introduction to readers of POETRY. Her latest book is *Pictures of the Floating World* (Macmillan Co.).

Eunice Tietjens (now Mrs. Cloyd Head), of Chicago, is the author of *Profiles from China* and *Body and Raiment* (Alf. A. Knopf).

Florence Frank (Mrs. Jerome A.), of Chicago, author of *The Jew to Jesus and Other Poems* (Mitchell Kennerley), will soon publish in *Drama* two poetic plays for children. One of her comedies will be presented this season by Arthur Hopkins.

Julia Cooley Altrocchi (Mrs. Rudolph A.), of Chicago, is the author of *The Dance of Youth* (Sherman, French & Co.).

The other six poets are new to our readers:

Mr. Wallace Gould, of Madison, Maine, is the author of *Children of the Sun* (Cornhill Co.), and a contributor to the special magazines.

Mr. Jack Merten, now living in Cambridge, Mass., was one of the editors of *Youth: Poetry of Today*.

Mr. H. W. Stewart, of Trevallyn, Tasmania, is the author of *A Tribute of Verse to Australia's Heroes*, a small pamphlet containing a few poignant poems of the War.

Mr. Edmund Wilson, Jr., lives in New York; "Anne Deacon" (a pseudonym) in Pasadena, Cal.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:

Leda, by Aldous Huxley. George H. Doran Co.

Aurelia and Other Poems, by Robert Nichols. E. P. Dutton & Co.

The House of Dust, by Conrad Aiken. Four Seas Co.

Advice and Other Poems, by Maxwell Bodenheim. Alfred A. Knopf.

The Township Line—New England Narratives, by Albert Frederick Wilson. Harper & Bros.

Heart of New England, by Abbie Farwell Brown. Houghton Mifflin Co.

The Three Taverns—A Book of Poems, by Edwin Arlington Robinson. Macmillan Co.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

- Japanese Hokkus*, by Yone Noguchi. Four Seas Co.
The Saga of the Seventh Division, by Helen Emily Forbes. John Lane Co., London and New York.
Verses from Fen and Fell, by Thomas Thornely. (Second Edition.) University Press, Cambridge, England.
The Return and Other Poems, by Remsen Du Bois Bird. The Periodical Press, San Francisco.
The Fourth Watch, by Roy Ivan Johnson. Cornhill Co.
Rhymes of a Tropic Tramp, by George Gatlin. James T. White & Co.
Fairies and Chimneys, by Rose Fyleman. Geo. H. Doran Co.
Rhymes of the Wild and Woolly, by Phil LeNoir. Privately printed, Santa Fe, N. M.
My Lady of the Search-light, by Mary Hall Leonard. Four Seas Co.
Agnus Dei, by Nancy Campbell. Four Seas Co.
Songs of the Wind on a Southern Shore and Other Poems of Florida, by George E. Merrick. Four Seas Co.
Kora in Hell: Improvisations, by William Carlos Williams. Four Seas Co.
Spindrift, by James L. McLane, Jr. Four Seas Co.
Songs of the Dead, by Margaret Napier. John Lane Co.
From a Flat House-top, by Charlotte Hardin. Four Seas Co.
Passenger, by Helen Dircks. George H. Doran Co.
The Kaleidoscope—Poems for the People, by Sherard Vines. C. W. Daniel, Ltd., London.
Flowers in the Grass (Wiltshire Plain-song), by Maurice Hewlett. Constable & Co., London; E. P. Dutton & Co., N. Y.

ANTHOLOGIES:

- Lillygay: An Anthology of Anonymous Poems*. Vine Press, Steyning, England.
The Rhymers—A Book of Pennsylvania Verse (Vol. II), edited by Cornelius Weygandt. Privately printed, Philadelphia.
Dreams and Voices—Songs of Mother, Father and Child, from the Writings of American and English Poets of To-day. Compiled by Grace Hyde Trine. Woman's Press, New York.

PROSE:

- Free Verse and Its Propaganda*, by Llewellyn Jones. Sewanee Review, Sewanee, Tenn.
H. L. Mencken, by Burton Rascoe, Vincent O'Sullivan, and F. C. Henderson. Alfred A. Knopf.

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Of Poetry, published monthly at Chicago, Ill., for October 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:

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

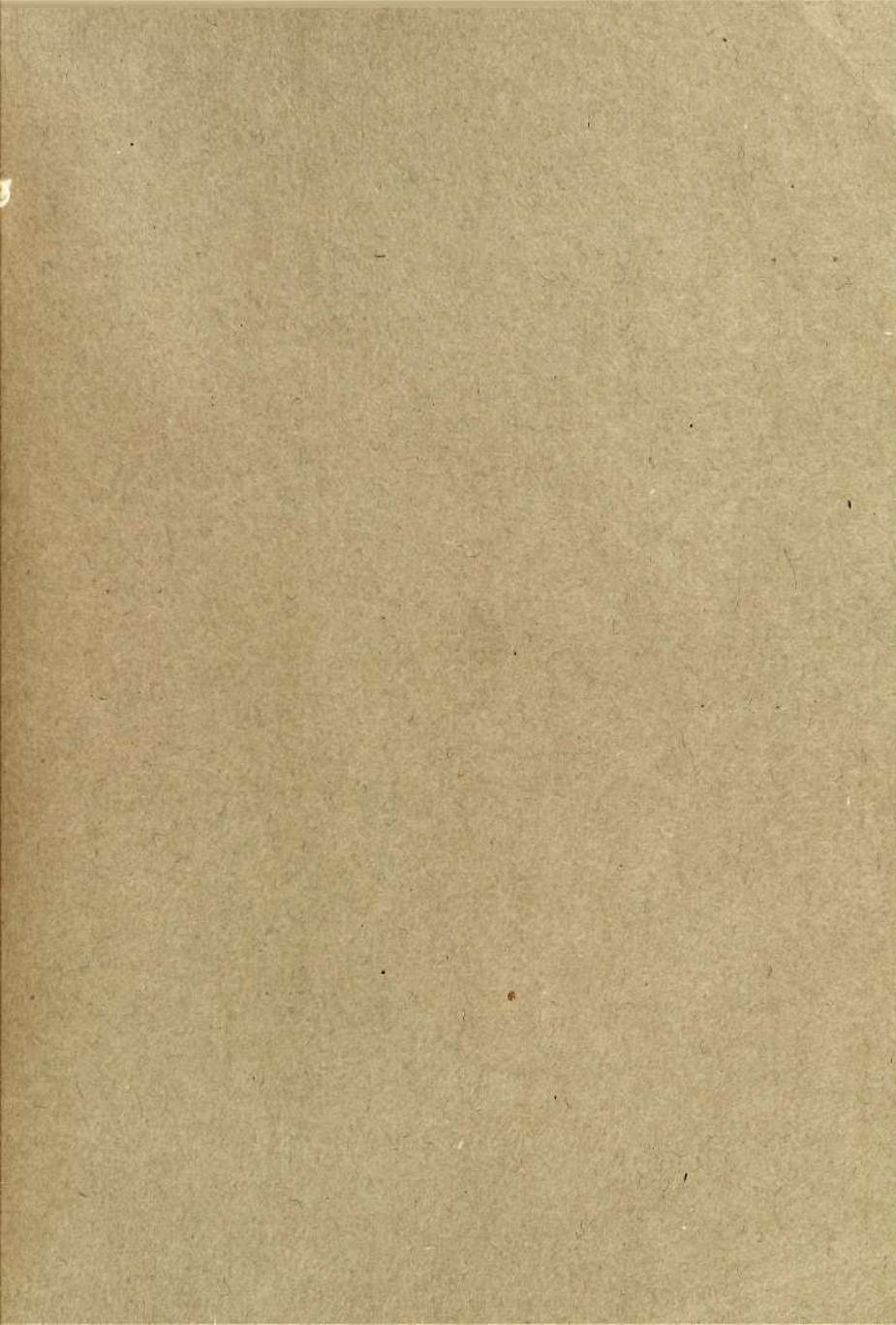
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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 8th day of October, 1920.

ROBT. B. KEE,

(My commission expires June 30, 1924.)



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there must be great audiences too.

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