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No. V

Poetry

A Magazine of Verse
Edited by Harriet Monroe
February 1921

The Haunted Hat-shop
by Max Michelson

Officers' Mess (1916)
by Harold Monro

The Way Things Go
by Genevieve Taggard

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c.5

Mopola

DEAR POETRY: I always feel that I ought to renew my thanks for your enterprise and faith, which are so ceaselessly at work on the task of renewing me.

Ferdinand Schevill

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 **oetry**
A Magazine of Verse

VOL. XVII
No. V

FEBRUARY 1921

THE HAUNTED HAT-SHOP

MADAME. *A beautiful woman, prospective purchaser.
Her husband.*

The Woman. [Before the mirror.] No, no, thank you;
this one
Would cost too much. I will just—
No, no; I can not—

[Stands before the mirror, fascinated.]

A Voice. From beneath the garland on your hair
I drink your beauty.
Your soul is clothed
By your body.
Your limbs are swathed and clothed.
Your face is covered
With shadows.
Still I drink,
I drink.

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My greedy soul sips the beauty
Of each curve so delicate.
My eyes are golden bees—
Your mouth's a rosy flower.
Hold your body for your lover!
I delve
For dearer treasures.

From your fortress threefold
I will steal you for my own.
Thinner, softer, dearer:
I will shape your limbs for me,
And coil and uncoil your speckled hair.

Lightning rifts the face of the sky—
Little glints between the shadows,
Little holes in the face of the sky.
Stars . . . Eyes . . .

[*From some place behind the partition comes the peculiar
giggle of a woman.*]

Madame. This hat makes your face
A flower.

The Woman. But I have told you
I can not. [*Whispering is heard.*] What is this?

A Voice. Are you leaping
Up a mountain?
Are you skipping
Down a valley?

Are you hiding
In my body?
The horizon—
Is it you?
Flesh is weak wine
For the heart.

Madame. This place is
A little haunted.
I—I am really a fairy—the witch-fairy Genève.
You may own this hat
If you lend me your soul
For the time of a spell—
For the time it takes me
To boil the lizard's liver.

[*Giggling is heard again. The Woman makes for the door, beginning to take the hat off, nervously.*]

Madame. [*Very gently.*] I hold my souls very dear—
I never hurt them;
I never let harm happen to them.
They are my children; dearer.

The Woman. [*Angrily.*] No, no!

[*Madame holds her arm and whispers long to her soothingly.*]

The Woman. [*Laughing nervously.*] No, no!

[*Madame takes her arm. Partly drawn, she goes along. Madame whispers to her.*]

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A Voice. Hush, hush—
Hear her soft step . . .
Time, space and all
Lie—a crumpled rag—
Behind her . . .
Hear her step . . .
Her soft step . . .

The Woman. [*Laughing.*] Who?

Madame. Maybe a president
Of some bank.
Gentlemen . . . always
Highly recommended.

[*A man is dimly visible sitting at a little table on which is some wine.*]

The Woman. [*Attempting to draw back.*] I—I—
[*She hesitates, half fascinated. Her eyes and the man's meet. Husband and wife face one another, raging spasmodically.*]

A Voice. Leaves in the wind
Pirouetting,
Grimacing,
Puffing out—
Withering,
Withering.

The Woman. You!

Max Michelson

[*She stands against the wall, crying. Suddenly she bursts out laughing.*]

The Man. You!

[*He recoils with extreme contempt. After pacing the room, he speaks firmly.*]

Let us

Talk this over.

[*His gaze falls, and rests on the portières of a little room.*]

The Woman. Yes.

[*Laughs again.*]

The Man. [*Beyond himself.*] You!

[*He rises, but sits down again. His appearance becomes mysteriously changed.*]

The Woman. [*Her wet eyes close to his face.*] Who—
are you?

The Man. [*Earnestly.*] Who are we?

The Woman. We are strangers.

[*She repeats, crying tauntingly.*]

We are strangers!

The Man. [*Laughs loud and kisses her.*] This place is
haunted.

Max Michelson

OFFICERS' MESS (1916)

I

I search the room with all my mind,
Peering among those eyes;
For I am feverish to find
A brain with which my brain can talk.
Not that I think myself too wise,
But that I'm lonely, and I walk
Round the large place and wonder. No—
There's nobody, I fear,
Lonely as I, and here.

How they must hate me! I'm a fool:
I can't play bridge; I'm bad at pool;
I cannot drone a comic song;
I can't talk shop; I can't use slang;
My jokes are bad, my stories long;
My voice will falter, break, or hang,
Not blurt the sour sarcastic word—
And so my swearing sounds absurd.

II

But came the talk: I found
Three or four others for an argument.
I forced their pace. They shifted their dull ground,
And went

Harold Monro

Sprawling about the passages of thought.
We tugged each other's words until they tore.
They asked me my philosophy: I brought
Bits of it forth and laid them on the floor.
They laughed, and so I kicked the bits about,
Then put them in my pocket one by one—
I sorry I had brought them out,
They grateful for the fun.

And when those words of ours had thus been sent
Jerking about like beetles round a wall,
Then one by one to dismal sleep we went.
There was no happiness at all
In that short hopeless argument
Through yawns and on the way to bed
Among men waiting to be dead.

Harold Monro

THAT YEAR

ANODYNE

The days wear thin with longing—
There is a warmth in emptiness.
My palms have pressed so long
Against the fragile surface
Of these lonely hours—
Almost I touch your fingers,
Almost
I hear your voice.
I stand in the shadow of your absence
Looking through windows of sunlight:
Soon—soon you will be fashioned
Out of my longing,
You will live from the breath
Of my desire.

LITTLE THINGS

Little things I'll give to you—
Till your fingers learn to press
Gently
On a loveliness;

Little things and new—
Till your fingers learn to hold

Love that's fragile,
Love that's old.

I GIVE SMILES

You are the reaching out in me,
The supplication of my folded hands.
You are the breaking radiance of my hope—
My high desire.

I will give you a gay futility of smiles,
For I cannot fill the vastnesses
With which you stretch my life
To emptiness.

WITHOUT WORDS

The silence thins out—falls away
Before a vivid stillness
That we press
Nearer with words.
We say our usual ritual—close the day
With laughter, while the stillness spreads
A halo round our nodding heads.
Again we praise the little past, praise what is done;
Cling to the days we've lost,
And lose the hour we've won.

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HIGH DIVE

Shoot from the thought of fear
Into the air—
Taut, as if crucified on to
Infinite space!
Down through a shaft
Of wind—
A vivid, streaking void.
Hit!
The water at last
Brings back myself
To me!

MARRIAGE-CAPRICE

Let us not linger over a good-bye:
It is not fitting
That in this too casual life
I, who called you wife
So many weeks ago,
Should stretch past glory
Into present woe.
You are not more to me—
Leaning now against the lintel of my door
And quavering your stagy, "Nevermore to live with you"—
You are not more to me
Than a familiarity of face
And figure.

You ask if I remember
That Sunday in December—
Why treat finality
Elaborately?—
Weaving an intricate fatuity of sighs and words
About a simple ending,
Pretending that we
Achieve tragedy!

Quietly you cross the room—assume
That I am unaware of every beauty that there is
In you:
“We can be friends?”—oh, God!—you touch my hand
In the accustomed way,

And so
In the accustomed way it ends:
You do not go,
We are not friends.
And so it ends.

MISERERE

Little grief, come with me
Into a quiet place,
That we may play
Together.

O little grief, warm
My loneliness!

KINDNESS

Part the curtains gently—
Let them fall
In soft finalities of color
After you.
Let there be no certainty of doors
Between us:
Part the curtains gently.

I hold out my hands
And my life goes from me;
I draw my thought
Through a profusion of vanities
And am not comforted:
I am a sleep-walker
Within this sunlit room.

You have done as I have bidden you,
And the act is heavy
With kindness.
There is no certainty of doors
Between us:
I grope for a beginning,
Or an end.

Marion Strobel

COMMUNION

I have spoken with the dead ;
From the silence of my bed
I have heard them in the night.
Their voices are as white
As altar candles. Their voices are as gold as wheat,
And clustered in the dark their words are sweet
As ripened fruit. Their voices are the color of dim rain
Over grass where spring has lain.
Their speaking is an orchard of delight.
I have heard them in the night ;
Their lips bloomed into heavy song
That hung like bells above me. You are wrong
Who say the dead lie still :
I heard them sing until
The cup of silence fell in two and lay
Broken by beauty of what dead men say.

There is no loveliness I cannot see.
There is no wall too stern for me.
There is no door that can withstand
The lifted symbol of my hand.

I know an ancient shibboleth :
I pass, for I have talked with Death !

Hildegarde Flanner

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VIGIL

My fathers' bones lie buried deep
In ribbed rock and shifting sea,
And yet my fathers vigil keep
Above the sentience that is me.

Along my brain's white commisures
Their lives, a subtle lightning, play,
Lighting the dusk in which endures
The psychic something that was they.

Within my farthest consciousness
The lightnings flash; electrons move,
And sweep from unformed lifelessness
To life which bids me hate and love.

REQUIEM

In dreamless, uncomplaining sleep
Beside the dreaming sea she lies,
Untouched by lyric loveliness
Of bird and wave and windy skies.

Yet, loving loveliness, she made
More lovely all she gazed upon,
And every May shall plead her cause
With silence and oblivion.

Wade Oliver

THE FOOL

He was an angel luckless to be born
Into our darker world and dimmer plan.
Although he wore the body of a man
It looked like clothes at second hand, so worn
That worldlier people pushed him by in scorn.
Patient, he set his clock as our clocks ran
And faithfully each day its task began—
Night found him still beginning as at morn.

He lost his job. No foreman could forgive
The hand that built for dream and not for pay.
Try as he might, he came at last to naught—
A lonely statue crumbling day by day;
Which somehow woke an echo in our thought
Of life forgotten in the greed to live.

Horace Holley

POEMS

CHALLENGE

I called—
But you answered not.

You who answer the wind
And the moan of the tossing tree,
You who answer the black whispers of night
And the vehement voice of the sea,

I call you—
Answer me!

THE COMPANION

You are the wave that ever
Batters our lonely shore;
You are in each sweet fruit
The bitter core.
You are the night that smothers
The day's last gleam,
And in the peace of sleep
You are the fitful dream.
You are the blackness hovering
In the heart of each golden flame;
You are the threat ever changing,
Yet ever the same.
You stand at the end of each path—

The immovable dumb rock of slate.
You are the weariness
Halting our leaden gait.
Yours is the voice of the wind
Over the frozen plain
And the dark hand of the Sower
Sowing the seed of pain.
You are the mist that hides
The promise of far green hills;
And on each budding faith
You are the frost that kills.

You are the Chastising Rod,
You are the Reckoning;
You are the Shadow that follows
Each Thing.

ADELAIDE CRAPSEY

You whom Death wrung
That you might thus achieve
Crystalline drops of beauty,
Do not grieve
That from the sun-drenched purple places
They gathered you so soon . . .

Envy us not who may,
With withered faces,
Watch the gray night suspend a haggard moon.

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FORTY-SECOND STREET

I stand and stare.
Peace is somewhere—
Peace of the big blue spaces . . .

Like fists, the brutal lights on white and weary faces
Fall fiercely through the livid air.
A dull roar rises from the seething places
Where, cold-eyed slaves driven by cold-eyed masters,
Six million hunted beings dwell.
Six million shapes from a machine-made hell
Push past through filth and icy sleet,
Push down and up and ever up and down
The Street.

God—rid me of these wan unholy faces!

I stand and stare.
Peace is somewhere—
Peace of the big blue spaces . . .

Somewhere, far in the fells I know,
The aged pines, with heads bent low
And folded hands like solemn congregations,
Receive the silent sacrament of snow . . .

Somewhere the stillness is so deep that you can hear
Planets and stars gliding through crystal spaces,
Clear burning in the frozen halls of time. . . .

I stand and stare—
At this mad pushing of a million feet,
At this wild thronging of the withered faces,
At this foul nightmare of
The Street.

Somewhere is Peace—
Peace of the wide blue spaces. . . .

DRIFTWOOD

To the dim-lit shore of the mind
Strange things come drifting
When the tide is high.
To the shore of the mind
Little waves run
Lifting,
With a murmured melody,
Frail forms that slip
From unknown isles away into the night.

In the gray twilight,
On a crest of foam,
Strange shapes are flung,
Without name, without home,
On the shore of the mind.
Strange things are spread
When the tide runs high
Before eyes that are blind—

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Pale things that lie
Dead
On the edge of the mind.

HILLTOP DUET

The Tree

Old Vagabond Wind,
Will you never take root?
Will you never settle down
To the soil,
And bear fruit?

The Wind

Old Stay-at-home Tree,
Will you never take wing?
Will you never break loose,
And roam free
Like a king?

Both

The earth is for you,
And the air is for me—
But the poor little fishes,
(Those little white fishes)
Must stay in the sea,
In the cold slimy sea—
Brrr . . .

Emmy Veronica Sanders

AN INTIMATE OF NIGHT

I am an intimate of night;
Its deep and dewy silences,
Its starry parallels of light—
Orion and the Pleiades.

I share the watches of the moon,
Its golden witcheries I share;
The secrets of the winds that croon
Down purple chasms of the air.

The lunar moth with emerald wings—
I know its path, I know its goal;
The lone night-thrush's rapturings,
And all the passion of its soul.

The gleaming glow-worm in the grass
Withholds no cryptic spell from me;
I sense all attars as they pass—
Their source, their fragrant mystery.

I am as one who walks alone
Through shadowed gardens of delight,
Seeing the Great Will on its throne.
I am an intimate of night.

Clinton Scollard

THREE SONGS

UNFAILING

When, like a flower, your loved one lies
 Beneath the grasses
 Sleeping the great sleep,
Go out unlonely to the folding hills—
 They will not let you weep.

When one by one your dreams have stolen by,
 And blackness fills the night,
 And pain and care,
Reach up for comfort to the leaning sky—
 The coming of the dawn is still a prayer.

RAIN

I

The golden sun is garish
 On the white wall of the day.
I close my eyes against it
 For a vision cool and gray.

Gray-fissued and gray-skirted,
 She sweeps across the plain
And wraps me in her softness—
 O Rain, my mother Rain!

Frances Shaw

II

A soft gray wall of rain
Shuts all the world away—
The voices of the toilers,
The urgent thoughts of day.
As silence or as night
It closes me about,
And shields me in a solitude
That shuts the loud world out.

I care not for the sun
Or where the winds blow free;
I love the folds of rain,
The mist enclosing me.

Frances Shaw

QUATRAIN

As old I am as that white, throbbing star,
Young as these herbs of spring that quickly pass.
My soul goes up the pathway of the star,
My feet go down the pathway of the grass.

Anna Spencer Twitchell

THE SOCIALIST'S MARRIAGE

Into the sunless office
Of the impoverished *Onward*—
Where sat a frugal tailor,
Long risen before his shop-bell,
Painfully writing leaders
For the beloved propaganda—

Entered a sound of singing,
A gust of fresh air blowing;
And past the presses walking,
A bride in a bright white dress.

Herself like early woodflowers,
So thrilling, pale and fragrant,
Unveiled she was and barefoot.
Her hair was bright and burning,
Her shadowy eyes most tender.

As thus the orphan Poverty
Came to her long-trothed lover,
I think I saw before them
The shadow of Saint Francis
Rise up to be their groomsman.

Sarah N. Cleghorn

THE WAY THINGS GO

ENDLESS CIRCLE

The tree we lay under,
The thunder, the thunder
Of my heart, and your wonder,
And our weeping . . .

Now we are old, we are worn, we are weary of sleeping.
There's an end to all sorrow: there must be an end to our
weeping.

Come with me, fly with me, find with me, laughing and
leaping—

*The tree we lay under,
The thunder, the thunder
Of my heart, and your wonder—
And our weeping.*

SEA-CHANGE

You are no more, but sunken in a sea
Sheer into dream ten thousand leagues you fell;
And now you lie green-golden, while a bell
Swings with the tide, my heart. And all is well
Till I look down, and, wavering, the spell—
Your loveliness—returns. There in the sea,
Where you lie amber-pale and coral-cool,
You are most loved, most lost, most beautiful.

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TROPICAL GIRL TO HER GARDEN

Withhold your breath!
Heavy in noon and sleepy as slow death,
Garden of sweets and sour,
The cluster of my body hangs
Odorous with flowers:
Stamen serpent fangs,
Sultry, in showers.

Withhold your hand!
My boughs are bent with gold, my face is fanned
With wings of bees that, thirsting, curve and kiss.
Under green leaves green tendrils coil and hiss;
Gloom-laden branches bear me down too much.
My yellow fruit will fall without a touch
From hanging long in sultriness like this.

MOONRISE MOCKERY

Move nearer, lover
Fearful of me and the moon.
I have put flowers in my bosom for you;
For you I am remembering
Hundreds of moons,
Half a hundred lovers;
For you I am heavy with the odor of love
And old days.

ZENITH

You and all the bulk of the huge sky
Crush me flat, my body on the sand,
Until I fling out my hands to clutch the little grains;
Until I struggle to see the little stars;
Until I try to think
Of the names of little lifeless things
I can escape to, when this is over.

MARRIED

Your face from my face slips,
Lover of my lips.
Holder of my heart,
For all our close companionships
We are apart.

Apart, apart, we are apart.

Crying beauty leaves me dumb,
Your fire cold and still.
I watch the hours of morning come,
And always will,
With this dull agony in my heart—
We are apart.

Strong, solemn, stupid-kind,
Parting, we leave behind
Silence where our footsteps sound
Dead on the hollow ground.

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With a singing river I used to run
Wild with wonder: now
There is no river, there is no sun,
Only an old vow.

And this dull chant goes through my head,
And this dull moan sinks in my heart:
Half of my body must be dead,
We are apart.

DROUTH

You cannot persuade us to stand lovely and unseasonal,
Perpetual spring and perpetual winter
Forever drifting petals across the picture of your existence.

Frames we can never be for the miniature of your days;
Nor can we decorate your sky
With a single branch of us chosen for the dashed loveliness
you prefer.

Nor can we die, petal by petal by petal,
Across thirty years, as you would have us,
Decorating by our death
The design of your days.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Oh, if my soul were lifted like a tree
Up from the little stones that lie on me!

If I could stand
Still on the hill and never move my hand;
No, never beckon, no, nor wave my dress,
But only wait in heavy breathlessness—
Just stand
Still on the hill and never move my hand—
He might come up for balm; he might go down,
Careless and comforted, to town.

LOST

Forever lost, like birds forever flying,
Searching bleak space;
Circling, and with the south-wind crying
Across earth's face:

Arrowed I fly, and like them lost forever;
Having once seen
Scarlet in a jungle, by a deep river—
Scarlet and green.

FOUND

I have moved west; I travel with the sun—
You cannot hold, you cannot hinder me.
There is no end for what I have begun,
There are no resting-places where I run
Until I am surrendered to the sea.

Genevieve Taggard

COMMENT

NOTES AND QUERIES FROM MR. LINDSAY

MR. VACHEL LINDSAY having recently returned from England, the editor asked him for an article setting forth anything he might wish to say about the trip, the poets, his recitals, his audiences, what he thought of them or they of him. Having heard, through Mr. Aldington, of one recital at the Poetry Book-shop at which various young English poets listened to *The Congo* and *The Kalliope Yell* not only open-eyed but open-mouthed; and having read in various English papers of the enthusiastic, though somewhat puzzled welcome given to "the jazz poet," "the American tramp poet" (both oddly undescriptive phrases) by poets and critics in London, Cambridge, and even old Oxford, the editor felt that the poet's own story would interest us.

Instead of a story, however, Mr. Lindsay sent a personal letter, refusing to write the article on grounds so suggestive that the editor asked, and finally obtained, permission to print the following extracts:

In Chicago, as in London, a certain public self is forced upon me by my friends—the Vachel I was to them many years ago; and I would as soon wear a plaster cast all over, or mediaeval armor. I suppose there is no living human being who more hates the formula of his yesterday, even if it is forced upon him with the finest affection by his dearest friends. I can be as ruthless with Springfield as with the opposition team in a football game. But I do not want to kick the shins, as it were, of friends so good as those of the literary world who understand me at all.

Notes and Queries from Mr. Lindsay

That is not all. I would give almost anything to escape forever the reciting and chanting Vachel. Except when immediately under the intense excitement that comes with facing an extraordinarily concentrated group of listeners, I dislike the very name of every poem I have recited except *The Chinese Nightingale*, which after all I now recite very seldom. My whole heart is set on escaping my old self (completely as I may, to be human and frail as we all are).

The only thing that made the English trip possible for me was to consider it the rounding up and last phase of my reciting life. I set January first, 1921, as quitting time. Everybody was very good, too good, to me in England; but I went there aping or recording, and as it were shouting, the Vachel of ten years ago—for one gets into rhyme only a self that is long dead. I do not like that Vachel very well. What then am I? Certainly when you and I first met, I had made my last water-color designs, my last decorative fantasies in gold and silver and silk. You do not even know about them—they are stuffed in great packages there behind the book-case. If I had been obliged to exhibit and explain them, old and dusty as they are, once a week till now, I would feel about them as I do about reciting. I do not want to be the slave of past performances or habits—I cannot endure to be such a slave, I care not what the apparent praise or reward. I am a dead man in my own eyes, and the only resurrection is in the new vista. . . .

The Golden Book of Springfield may be the poorest thing I ever wrote, but somewhere between the lines lies the hint of my new direction. It is a sort of apple-seed festering in my heart, as I said in the *Village Magazine*.

If I write about England, I want to wait a year or so and see if it still looks important. But I will say this—that the English poets are splendid men and women, and every one of them I met was hospitable and loyal to the last degree.

Will Mr. Lindsay's public let him grow out of his past? Does any public want anything of anybody but the expected thing? A poet's public is larger today than in Petrarch's time, Spenser's, Pope's, and more democratically minded; therefore it resents with a louder voice any effort at the kind of growth which implies change. Mr. Lindsay is

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like to find as many barriers to his escape from "jazz" as Mark Twain found between the professional humorist of a temporary mode and the great ironist of a larger scope which his admiring nineteenth-century world never quite permitted him to be.

Some of the English critics, however, see through the various disguises which Mr. Lindsay has imaginatively assumed. *The Observer*, for example, finds him "the most traditional of American poets," and rebukes his English publisher for omitting from the new book *The Chinese Nightingale*, the "finest and most splendid achievement in high poetry" of "the most remarkable American poet now writing."

One fortunate effect of the trip has been a reminder, to the self-contained Englishman, that poetry is essentially an oral art. British readers are advised to "intone it [the Lindsay poetry] aloud—it is onomatopoeic and strange and barbaric, but by no means just wordy." Thus if Mr. Lindsay carries out his threat to cease reciting, he has already done a troubadour's work, and may claim the right to discard that role, along with his youth and his tramping outfit, and pass on expectantly to fresh woods and pastures new. Will he find new poems there? Probably, being a poet. But, in any case, let us hope that he will find himself and freedom.

The "new direction" in *The Golden Book of Springfield* seems to point toward the sublimated Utopian novel. Springfield, in this poet's imagining, is an imperfectly shin-

ing city of God, a froward city to be loved and chastised and redeemed. And Springfield is but the type of many cities of these states, each bright and dark, each in need of a stern rhapsodic lover. *The Golden Book* would point the way of redemption—would light a torch to lead the way. If both the way and the goal seem not closely enough visioned for apocalyptic clarity, still the book never falters in high pride and “passionate praise.” It is a protest against cheapness of soul, in city or citizen, from the man whom William Rose Benét salutes as “the most intensely individual and blazingly romantic poet of this generation.” Indeed Mr. Benét, in the *New York Evening Post*, traces kinship with Poe and John of Patmos himself.

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In another letter Mr. Lindsay calls attention to a series of coincidences tending to strengthen his conviction of the inspirational vitality of the Middle West. He writes:

At the very hour when I was bringing out my *Golden Book of Springfield*, the Macmillan Company was also issuing Edgar Lee Masters' *Mitch Miller* and *Domesday Book*, both in their fashion indicating Mr. Masters as a veteran member of the Springfield Prognosticators' Club. At that very same hour the Publication Department of the Russell Sage Foundation was bringing out Shelby M. Harrison's *Social Conditions in an American City*—an intensive scientific study of Springfield, Illinois, based on ten careful reports by the survey staff. At that very hour Harcourt, Brace and Howe were publishing Sinclair Lewis' *Main Street*, a close-up view of a middle-western town which is having a phenomenal run. And at that very same hour the presses of Alfred A. Knopf were issuing *Moon Calf*, by Floyd Dell, a very dissimilar, but highly praised study of a mid-western town that might well be specifically Springfield. And at that very same day and hour B. W. Huebsch

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was sending forth Sherwood Anderson's *Poor White*, another mid-western study, and prognosticative in its fashion.

This extraordinary coincidence—along with the necessary and striking contrast between these books and between their authors, yet all tending to the same end—is almost miraculously prefigured in Chapter III of *The Golden Book of Springfield*. It is a coincidence that can scarcely be passed by without remark, and that certainly should be studied. It is far more rewarding than any data so far furnished from the mystical world by Patience Worth, Sir Oliver Lodge or Conan Doyle.

Without attempting to analyze this mystical significance, one may agree that the Middle West is having its innings in much of the most honest, the least tricky and commercial, literary work of our immediate time. Incidentally, we may rejoice that applause in England has not swerved Mr. Lindsay from Springfield; and that POETRY—so the *Golden Book* assures us—is still for sale at Coe's Bookstore in the year 2020 A. D.

What is it like, I wonder—Number III of Volume CCXVII of POETRY?
H. M.

REVIEWS

OUR GREAT CARL SANDBURG

Smoke and Steel, by Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

Not long ago *Chicago Poems*; two years ago *Cornhuskers*; now *Smoke and Steel*. Three solid, thick, healthy books of poetry. This last has an up-to-date industrial look that reminds one, befittingly, of spikes and shingles and red-painted skeletons of new skyscrapers.

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Slang. Shakespeare too had a gift for this wayward gab; and in the times when play-writing was an art in England, it was used profusely and called "roaring." This of Carl Sandburg, however, is not exactly "roaring"—it is a mixture of the best English there is with the language of workers and criminals, and with Carl Sandburg's own swift metaphors. A purely and originally American language it is, and a language of today.

Nature has entered this book. Many things of this earth, many things of that heaven, of that sky, that moon, that sun, are said in this book in beautiful words: words that the sun colored, the moon bleached, the heavens sanctified, the earth gave roots to, as to marvelous trees. Alley rats and workers throw a whim-glittering slang over their dead and their sorrows; here human tragedy is told with a whim and a smile, or a snarl. The whimsical word is a mystic question, the whimsical word is the answer of the queer God of today; in the little grin or the broad smile hides the way a human heart of today loves.

The two poems of the first group, *Smoke and Steel* and *Work Gangs*, open up the chances for a coming *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* of the new and the coming mechanical cities. Now they are only a great promise.

The *People who Must* . . . the poet most mystically one of them.

Broken-face Gargoyles—here the slang becomes a dizzy dance and a mad jazz. The future cries out in a whirlwind of fun and terror, the mystery laughs and weeps.

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Mist Forms recalls to our minds two beautiful earlier poems—*Pearl Fog* and *Last Answers*:

All the last answers go running back to dust and mist,
to dust and mist.

Over the poet's resignation and renunciation songs arise, "changing scarfs" of our fate, "changing scarfs" of the whims of wind and sun, question-mark twists of mist and smoke. Incidentally, Chicago itself is the symbol, the city of drab smoke and blue mists: the city that dolls up and is a great lady with her morning blue mists around Lincoln Park; the city that is an old busy sad hag, dragging her rags of smoke around her drab new down-town. In the smoke and the dirt Carl Sandburg alone finds youth, human tenderness and hope—tomorrow; in the blue mists, the eternal yesterday and tomorrow blended together. When we are reading him we believe him.

Accomplished Facts is the humility of man doing big things, the pride of man doing little things; crowning both, the peace of sleep and death—*matushka*, the good nurse.

Passports, in terms of rocks, seas, birds, trees—all written up in new colors, new-ancient colors flung again under the contemplating heavens by a man. So many colors, so many of them, that we're dizzy. Is this a rich man—You tell 'em!

Circles of Doors, "the ends opening into new ends always"—that is why in this decrepit young country we have so old, so wise, so very wise a poet. Shall we itemize this great man? Here goes:

Everything asks, and the silence of everything answers. I know, I am sad, I have great pity in my heart for you. Here, in the song, the secret—the song keeps it; the mystery grins, it smiles, it is a sad beautiful mother. The mystery has a thousand beautiful faces, each of which whispers a few words, a poem. The mystery's most beautiful child is Tomorrow.

But Carl Sandburg's perfect book is yet to come. There are faults and limitations to this fine work. One limitation is the lack of lust and desire. Rather, the desire in it is so high that we humans cannot call it desire. Evidently there is a price to be paid for serenity; and I may point this out only because everything human seems to be in this book. His chief fault is this: *Hats, The Mayor of Gary, Blue Maroons, Manual Labor, Vaudeville Dancer*—these are not poems, they are simple statements; compositions in which the power of suggestion depends on the mere words and not on the poetic spirit which should pervade them; the poetic spirit is lacking. Here, and in some very short unsuccessful poems of the last two groups, the poet, instead of being wise, sees if he can trick wisdom into a phrase or two; if, perchance, before the eyes of the sensitive reader, wisdom appears, the poet should get no credit for it. When the poem would be humorous it is instead foolish as in *Soup*.

Another sign of the same defect is the unwarranted reiteration of such words as *wishing, answering, asking, I ask, I know*. This shows the mystic becoming self-conscious and losing his magic.

But there is cosmic humor here:

This was in the savvy of the Chaldeans.

And poems almost foolish, sweet as the babble of mothers to children, testify that the last word may be foolish and sweet, foolish and childish, that the last wisdom may be a child's.

But we are not through complaining. *The Liars* is not a good poem: it's thin; it's bad propaganda. Not that propaganda shouldn't be; but if it does not make for fine words it is either bad propaganda, or it's insincere, or it tries to propagate what it shouldn't. There are other poems in the book that are good propaganda. And another thing: this book is one of broad-hearted, unrestrained, generous sympathies, so that we are sorry to find in it one or two poems in which there is rather the bad than the good spirit of slang—an unsympathetic boisterousness (*High Conspiratorial Person, Proud and Beautiful*).

And now we may go on praising. Sandburg is tender and motherly. All sad things are sweetened for him by his great tenderness, his great pity. The way smoke comes over the world is as tender and mysterious as the way sleep comes over a man. Sometimes slang lags and becomes a plain coarse English, humbler and sweeter; the fierceness and vigor of slang lag, and the world is then a mystery for tired eyes half-open, half-wishing, half-sleeping. Sometimes the tenderness is so very high, so very pure, that it is not tenderness any more but only height: like heaven, where God is; very cold, like peaks; very distant from us, from petty human

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loves and hatreds, like the love and hatred of God; high as the look in Sandburg's eyes, cold as granite too, as the look of his grey eyes. And there is mystery carried along by things like their shadows; and sometimes in the shadows are roses, sometimes the green of the seas, sometimes dust, sometimes sleep, sometimes smoke, sometimes steel looming. And always a thought of the end, recurring like an old clock, striking the hour. There are poems where the tenderness snarls, as the tenderness of a lioness defending her cubs. There are poems, like *White Ash*, that have burnt to a white ash in the heart of the poet. There are old-style majestic poems with the lines running about the same length; and a poem about insanity, testifying that the secret of insanity concerns love and song more than scientific research. In all of them there is a great stern lesson: a lesson of health and strength, the lesson of two cold granite eyes.

Carl Sandburg grinning, giving only half answer, is Carl the Swede. Tender and sweet, motherly Carl Sandburg, vast Carl Sandburg, is Carl the American. And one may call him American only if one knows such solid American types as the workers and criminals he sings the language of—the forgotten, submerged world where the oldest essences of life are preserved and continually renovated; in contrast with the world swaggering—puritanism and business, which one knows too well. He is the poet of America's good qualities; he bears witness to God that America is after all a living country. And—if we exclude Walt Whitman—he is, in the words and metaphors, the wealthiest

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writer America ever read. I lay a bet—and take all the chances—that no novel or book of any kind published in the whole world within the last ten years contains as many different words as this relatively short book of his.

Quotations? Let's give the book a royal chance—let's open it at random:

And then . . .
Loosen your hands, let go and say goodby.
Let the stars and songs go.
Let the faces and years go,
Loosen your hands and say goodby.

Listen awhile—the lake by night is a lonely woman, a lovely woman, circled with birches and pines mixing their green and white among stars shattered in spray clear nights.

The sea-mist green of the bowl's bottom is a dark throat of sky crossed by quarreling forks of umber and ochre and yellow changing faces.

Only, slam me across the ears something . . . and hunt for a white star
In my forehead and twist the bang of my forelock around it.
Make a wish for me. . . . Maybe I will light out like a streak of wind . . .

Enfin, it's poetry! Long live Carl Sandburg, to sing the song of his own beauty, and to tell God about Chicago, America, the world!
Emanuel Carnevali

A SINGER

Flame and Shadow, by Sara Teasdale. Macmillan Co.

The quality of immortality is a curious thing, as unanalysable as a scent caught on the wind, or a tint in the dawn

sky—as unanalysable, and as definite. The printer's ink lavished on poetry today flows like a mountain torrent. The poems interest, they stimulate, they comfort, they intrigue, they wake the gamut of emotion, and they seem to satisfy. Till suddenly a poem comes with this curious quality of immortality, and there is a sensation deep in one's subconscious self as though a clamor of voices had ceased suddenly and a little bell had rung somewhere in a deep silence.

Sara Teasdale has achieved this quality perhaps half a dozen times in her short life. Whatever else may be uncertain in the poetic upheaval of today, we can at least be certain of this.

The detractors of her work say that it is monotonous, that it is all in the same key; and in a sense they speak truly. Her lyrics—and in this latest book she seems to have abandoned the only half-successful attempts of some of her earlier books to write more sustained poems—are always intensely personal, always in a minor key whether they express sadness or joy, always wistful and full of yearning. A book of them at a single sitting is certainly too large a dose.

Yet though this is true, as a critical judgment this dictum has no validity, since art must always be judged by what it has, not by what it lacks. And this monotony is typical of all the pure lyricists. Herrick has it, Pierre de Ronsard, Walter von der Vogelweide, Verlaine, Heine, A. E. Housman—go through the list as you will, you will find it every-

where. But who quarrels with Herrick because he did not also write *Paradise Lost*, or with Walter von der Vogelweide that his name is not found on *Faust*? And who, in the years to come, will quarrel with Sara Teasdale that she did not write *Spoon River*? It is enough in this world of half things to have done one thing perfectly.

In no other field of poetry is there so wide a divergence of personal preference as in this field of lyrics. So immediate and so intensely personal is a lyric that the response to it depends on the reader's own knowledge of the emotion described. The greatest lyrics are those which combine magic of music with the most universal subject. What many of our present-day poets fail to realize is that not even magic of utterance will make a great poem on a subject which is itself a bizarrerie, and which can therefore find no emotional response in the normal reader.

The divergence of preference in the field of lyrics was pointedly shown some years ago in the deliberation of a jury on which I served, which was to award three prizes for poems. One prize was for the most notable piece of work among those eligible, one was an encouragement prize, and one was for a pure lyric. The first two were awarded without much difficulty, but when it came to the lyric prize, out of six jurors there were six determined opinions, and only great forbearance made any compromise possible.

What existed there exists always. Indeed I am of the opinion that among the best lyrics of any lyricist it is not so much the intrinsic value of any given poem as the "im-

ponderable" personal preference of the anthologist which decides which shall be immortalized. Who knows what particular bent of the unknown compiler of the Chinese *Book of Odes* gave us the lyrics we know rather than others equally well written? Criticism by the mind goes only a certain distance in judging a lyric. After that the heart speaks, and there is no forecasting its ways.

Yet Sara Teasdale need fear nothing from this diversity of preference, since no anthologist has failed, or will fail, to find half a dozen poems completely to his liking among the many which she has wrung from a frail body and a shimmering spirit.

This latest volume, *Flame and Shadow*, is in no great way different from her other volumes; though, having been written during two years of loneliness and pain, the poems are a little more sombre than some of the earlier ones. Magic is here as always. Let each choose for himself.

For myself, if I were the ultimate anthologist, I should add to her established quota of perfect lyrics two from this volume—one called *Let it be Forgotten*, which was printed in POETRY, and this one, *On the Dunes*:

If there is any life when death is over,
These tawny beaches will know much of me;
I shall come back, as constant and as changeful
As the unchanging, many-colored sea.

If life was small, if it has made me scornful,
Forgive me; I shall straighten like a flame
In the great calm of death, and if you want me
Stand on the seaward dunes and call my name.

E. T.

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A SCORE OF FIRST BOOKS

Candles That Burn, by Aline Klimer. Geo. H. Doran Co.
The Hesitant Heart, by Winifred Welles. B. W. Huebsch.
Arizona and Other Poems, by Elise Pumpelly Cabot. E. P. Dutton & Co.

The Cobbler in Willow Street and Other Poems, by George O'Neil. Boni & Liveright.

X *The Dark Wind*, by W. J. Turner. E. P. Dutton & Co.

Escape and Fantasy, by George Rostrevor. Macmillan Co.

Quests, by Sylvia H. Bliss. Privately p'td, Montpelier, Vt.

Songs of the Dead, by Margaret Napier. John Lane Co.

Poems, by Charles Reznikoff. N. Y. Poetry Book-shop.

A Whisper of Fire, by Agnes Ryan. Four Seas Co.

Passenger, by Helen Dircks. Geo. H. Doran Co.

Moods, by Mercedes de Acosta. Moffat, Yard & Co.

Clouds and Cobblestones, by Hortense Flexner. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Merchants of the Morning, by Samuel McCoy. Doran.

Life's Minstrel, by Daniel Henderson. E. P. Dutton & Co.

Vanitas, by Paul Eldridge. Stratford Co.

Spindrift, by James L. McLane, Jr. Four Seas Co.

Shining Fields and Dark Towers, by John Bunker. Lane.

Spires and Poplars, by Alfred Raymond Bellinger; and *Four Gardens*, by David Osborne Hamilton. (*Yale Series of Younger Poets.*) Yale Univ. Press.

Poems, by Frederick T. Macartney. Sydney T. Endacott, Melbourne, Australia.

The Concert and Other Studies, by R. D. Jameson. Privately printed, Madison, Wisconsin.

In spite of the prohibitive cost of paper and print, in spite of the still-reputed unsalability of poetry, never in this magazine's history were we so swamped with new books in our specialty, never did so many young poets get their first offerings between covers. To review adequately even the best of these books is absolutely impossible so long as the magazine is limited to its present size. We are compelled to group them in this fashion if we would give our readers even a hint of the quality of these young aspirants.

The astonishing thing, perhaps, is that so many of these first books are good, or at least promising. The twenty or more listed above represent only a fraction of those we have received, most of the others being consigned to a limbo of charitable silence. More than half of the above list—perhaps the best of them—may be classed as meditative and confessional, with love as the favorite, sometimes the only subject. These poets seem sincere—each one seems to say his own word and not another's, to give us a genuine expression of genuine emotion; and most of them have read modern poetry to some purpose, for their style is simple and direct, not "over-appareled," even when they use the most conventional forms.

One may fitly begin with Mrs. Kilmer's spaciouly printed book of fifty lyrics, the spirit in it is so gallant and the best of the poems are so fine an expression of the simplest, most poignant emotion. The poems which refer

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to her dead husband and dead child, especially *I shall not be Afraid* and *To Rose*, wring one's heart by saying the unexpected thing—the little true thing which seems not to have been said before; and they say it with perfect spontaneity, and without a single merely ornamental word to vary their quiet color. The happier poems, while more conventional, are never artificial, and in certain more or less whimsical ones the poet's children are vividly and individually alive. We cannot pass on without quoting *I shall not be Afraid*:

I shall not be afraid any more,
Either by night or day.
What would it profit me to be afraid
With you away?

Now I am brave. In the dark night alone
All through the house I go,
Locking the doors and making windows fast
When sharp winds blow.

For there is only sorrow in my heart;
There is no room for fear.
But how I wish I were afraid again,
My dear, my dear!

The Hesitant Heart, by Winifred Welles, also expresses personal emotion in the simplest terms; but it records, as the title indicates, a less poignant experience of life. "I have no beauty that is all my own," the poet sings; and the few love poems have the tenuosity of a dream—indeed, dreams are here less tenuous than experience. The groping wistfulness of a shy creature, sensitive to beauty, is revealed as with a delicate hand drawing away chiffon veils:

I've lived so long companionless
In this old house bowed down with years,
I've learned to welcome loneliness,
Converse with dreams and sit with fears.

Elise Cabot, who writes of, and probably from, *Arizona*, is a freer spirit, born under bluer skies. "I awake—my love fills the world!" she cries; and, "There is in life but one investment—spending."

I throw my heart away,
As a bird who sings all day
Giving her song away.
I cheer the passers-by,
And lonely souls who die
All shrivelled and unfed.
Just so my heart I spread.

The book has vital energy stirred by the keen winds of beauty. But the freedom of spirit should be matched with a freer technique and more modern diction. Both the prose poems and those in rhyme are haunted by ghosts; *thou* and *thee*, *doth*, *deem*, *knoweth* and *formeth*, etc., would drag us away from our own time, far away from Arizona. The love poems especially are seriously marred, their sincerity threatened, by this defect.

George O'Neil is more fortunate in exact metrics than in freer forms. In fact, some of his love songs and nature poems, usually done in quatrains or sonnets—such lyrics as *A Little Song*, *An Old Chapel Yard*, *Margot*, *Portent*, and *Song of Love's Ending*, almost justify the praise of Professor Lowes on the cover and Zoë Akins in her preface; for they have emotional fervor and a certain shapeliness and

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beauty of tone. We should like to quote *Portent* with its poignant close; here is the *Song of Love's Ending*—all but the first quatrain, which is marred by a weak line:

Summer is slowly fading, failing—
Golden-green of her beauty fled;
Time has sighed, the rose is paling,
Some of its glory dead!

O falling leaves and summer spent!—
What I would change I do not know.
Death is not sorrow since Love went . . .
But if my dreams should go—

W. J. Turner, who has been in the recent Georgian anthologies, is not only haunted by echoes—he goes in search of the rare, the erudite:

I am a hunter after wayward words,
That I may press them into service meet
For their rare beauty.

And he tries experiments with word and sound repetitions—*Sea Madness*, for example, is an over-studied chiming of soft sounds. The emotion gets smothered in its too conscious utterance; it is “sucked pale” by the poet’s hunger for the sweets of beauty, sweets that become insipid with over-indulgence:

The orange glooms in the half-dawn,
The white walls are pale glimmering dreams.
Trees haunt them, stream-still, dim-illumed,
With round gold fruits on green boughs borne.

Mr. Turner gives us too much of this kind of thing—his “strange places” are poetized away into thin air. He has a delicate touch undoubtedly, but we look in vain for that “frightful strength” which the *Athenaeum* accords him.

In George Rostrevor's *Escape and Fantasy* one may find now and then a beautiful thing. *The Voice* is a sincerely ecstatic love poem of almost disembodied passion—too long to quote, unfortunately, but this brief *Elysium* is in the same mood:

Hushed their feet fall
On the dewy grass;
In robe rhythmical
Shining they pass:
Lovers who for bliss
Grave and rare and deep
Need no clasp or kiss,
Or lovers' sleep.

Quests: Poems in Prose is a young poet's essay in biblical rhythms—done with a fitful and inconsistent use of biblical diction. However, in these five *Quests*—*Of Day and Night, of Nature, of Love, and The Eternal Quest*—a strong spirit is revealed in close intercourse with the sources of life. Many of these low-toned utterances say nothing new, but they are not mere platitudes because of personal grace, touches of loveliness. And the poet has a high pride:

I open doors before you. You may pass through or turn away, as you will.

There are doors which I will open that shall never close. You will see the open doors, and before you are aware you will have passed through.

Charles Reznikoff's brief free-verse poems are sometimes as incisive as a hokku; for example:

We heard no step in the hall.
She came
Sudden as a rainbow.

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And here is one in rhyme:

The troopers are riding, are riding by,
The troopers are riding to kill and die,
That a clean flag may cleanly fly.

They touch the dust in their homes no more,
They are clean of the dirt of shop and store;
And they ride out clean to war.

Margaret Napier's *Songs of the Dead* would be more "highly individual," as Edward Garnett calls the book in his preface, if *Spoon River* had never been written. Also the free verse in which these grave-meditations appear is of a crudity! But the love-story emotionally unfolded by the lady lying underground is touching; and in one brief poem, the best in the book, we have it with telegraphic brevity:

O God, out of the pit do you hear
My cry?
I was cold, I was cruel,
I was faithless.
I am sorry, I am sorry—
I am sorry!

The term "free verse" seems to cover a multitude of sins in the minds of many young poets and their publishers. Of course it has passed far away from the original meaning of "*vers libre*," which meant, in French prosody, rhymed verse in lines of unequal length; and we have a right, perhaps, to use even the French term loosely. Modern "free verse" is cadence verse as distinguished from verse in exact metrics. But it is not, as the late Mr. Howells wittily called some of its alleged manifestations, "shredded prose." Miss Napier, and the three ladies next to be no-

ticed, apparently have not arrived at the remotest suspicion of the presence of poetic rhythms in cadence verse—rhythms which are, it is hardly necessary to say, as subtle as the most richly cadenced iambics. One demands something more than the patter-patter of a rabbit from even the youngest vers-libertine.

Agnes Ryan is simple and sincere; but when the late William Marion Reedy found her "as poignant sometimes as Fiona McLeod" he must have been stressing her emotional motive rather than her technical accomplishment. In rhyme she is less crude than in the freer forms, but one looks in vain for adequate expression of her wistful mood.

Indeed, young poets suffer, rather than gain, from over-praise. Helen Dircks' poems also have, as her husband, Frank Swinnerton, says in the preface, "the quality of a beautiful candor," the candor of youth and innocence. But as yet she has so little to say that the poems are extremely slight. The rhymed ones are promising, belike; but she might well have waited for more mature experience.

Mercedes de Acosta's brief meditations on *Memory*, *Faith*, *Love*, *Joy*, etc., are printed in broken lines, but that is the only indication they offer of any attempt at poetic rhythm. There is genuine feeling in these little human vignettes, a situation is often vividly and picturesquely presented—but why confuse the issue by a verse disguise?

The other books in the above long list are in a lighter vein; written with serious intention, perhaps, but touching off life, or its episodes, more casually. Most of these poets

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would be suspect in Russia just now, for they express the reactions of us comfortable bourgeois—a point of view amusingly presented in Hortense Flexner's *Inheritance*:

Prometheus, pitying men,
Dared the long wrath of gods,
Thongs and the vulture—
To bring to earth
The fire
Before which I drowse
In utter well-being.

Miss Flexner's other reactions have often charm, and occasionally a stinging shaft of wit. Her *Old Lady of the Sonnets*, for example, is delicious.

Samuel McCoy would interpret life in terms of old romance, like the Benét brothers. Titles like *The Argonauts*, *Voyageurs' Song*, *The Old Tavern*, carry his symbols—even *Thompson Street* is gilded by this color. This poet's temptation is toward a loose and expansive style, but *The Mother*, *The Bondwoman*, and some of the war poems are closer and more stern.

Daniel Henderson also is "life's minstrel"—he dreams lightly in a mood of romance, a pleasant and facile rhymester. He scarcely escapes that limitation even in the war poems, of which *Alan Seeger* is one of the best. This quatrain is its finale:

He kept his rendezvous—in that dark place
His life became a ransom for his race.
Hark now! His song is on the nation's breath—
His memory shall have no tryst with death.

Paul Eldridge, whose "thoughts are little clowns," "silver flutes," "shaven monks," and other prettily symbolic

things, is rather empirical in his use of free verse. But his *Vanitas* presents with grace a pleasant, sometimes whimsical, drawing-room acquaintance. He sums it up thus:

I played with God,
And now I understand—
His dice are always loaded!

James L. McLane, Jr., who follows the safe levels of iambs and rhyme, has also a light touch upon passing emotion. *Spindrift*, though his second book, is still rather sophomoreic; indulging in *deem's*, *ere now's*, and numerous clichés, and delighting too youthfully in prettiness. But there is some promise in it.

John Bunker's book has the bad luck to be over-emphasized on its cover. "A modern of moderns," its author is called; "a mind attent upon the last patient step of a progress real and unafraid," etc. We are led to expect "clear singing—serene, hopeful and melodious."

After all this, what do we find? The "And oh, but it was gay!" kind of thing, the careful avoidance of any trace of originality—in short, the persistent commonplace. Here is the way this "modern of moderns" begins a long poem to Francis Thompson:

Mayhap I seek thee. All the forespent years
Haply I traversed, waiting thy lone voice.

The Yale Series of Younger Poets is a good intention on the part of the Yale University Press, imperfectly evidenced thus far by four small pamphlets. Of these the first, by Howard Buck, we have already said a good word for; and

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the second, by John Farrar, has not reached us. The other two poets, Mr. Bellinger and Mr. Hamilton, seem to have been, like Mr. Buck, in the A. E. F., but their reactions to war and other subjects are much more mild. Mr. Bellinger likes ballades and rondeaux, Mr. Hamilton prefers sonnets; otherwise one could hardly tell them apart. These boys may be poets some day, but they and their editors should have done some harder thinking before offering their freshman verse to the cold public.

One opens Mr. Macartney's *Poems* with the hope of getting something "different" from Australia. But the sonnets, rondels, and other rhymes are conventional, and the poet's experiences are like those of everyone else. It is conversational verse, a few office sketches being the best.

As a close for this rambling article, one may be permitted a tardy word about Mr. Jameson's book, which, through an accident, has been waiting three years for the recognition it should have had at once. For here is a college boy of real promise, singing his own round songs of girls, professors, concerts, love, truth, and all the rest of it. We may hear from Mr. Jameson some day; meantime *The Song of Death* is something to remember. Here are the first two stanzas:

Death to the young man, fighting in the trenches,
Is but a fever of the proud young flesh.
It will come quickly, like discovered beauty,
Taking the soul of him while its strength is fresh:
 Taking the soul of him,
 Dancing it away from him,
 Proudly commending him
 While his strength is fresh.

Death to an old man, living in his memories,
Is like an enemy, familiar and yet feared.
Grasping at his white hairs, it will break the back of him;
It will drink the soul of him, and fumble round his beard.
It will drink the soul of him
Like a draught of whiskey,
Taking his memories
From his old white beard.

These "first books," winging in from all points of the compass, present a good deal of talent, of promise. But the keenest critic can not tell which of the young poets they introduce will persist to even approximate fulfilment.

H. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

A WORD OF PROTEST

Editors of POETRY: May I venture to comment, through the medium of your correspondence section, on Miss Monroe's review of the *Others Anthology for 1919*?

I cannot think that Miss Monroe would wish to have one sentence, in particular, stand unchallenged: "POETRY . . . having published all but four of the twenty-six poets represented before ever they became 'others'."

In the first six months of 1919, *Others* (the magazine) brought out Evelyn Scott and Haniel Long, and printed Lola Ridge and Emanuel Carnevali, who up to that time had not appeared in POETRY. Altogether, I would estimate that POETRY published all but seventeen.

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I am inclined to think that Miss Monroe intended, instead of "published," to say, "received manuscripts from." It is not improbable that all of the twenty-six poets in the anthology submitted manuscripts to POETRY in their "proud-spirited youth."

It would seem that Miss Monroe would be rather apologetic than arrogant toward *Others*, a magazine with no endowment whatever, which has yet managed to publish first T. S. Eliot's *Portrait of a Lady*, *Rhapsody on a Windy Night*, *Preludes*, and Wallace Stevens' *Peter Quince at the Clavier*. There are many others, most of which may be found in Miss Monroe's anthology, *The New Poetry*.

I had hoped for a more dignified review than this. It seems a bit gratuitous for the editor of a magazine of the standing of POETRY to institute invidious comparisons between POETRY and another magazine which has apparently gone under.

Let Miss Monroe remember that there is still "proud-spirited youth" in this country, and such ungenerous guerilla politics as this will not help to reconcile it to the shortcomings of her magazine.

John W. Crawford

Note by the Editor: Mr. Crawford is mistaken in certain of his details, for five of the six poets he mentions were published in POETRY from one to five years before 1919. In the case of Evelyn Scott the editor was mistaken.

But all that, as he insists, is not important. What is important, and much to be regretted, is that the review of the *Others* anthology in our December number should have seemed "arrogant"—indeed, "ungenerous guerilla politics"—when no irritation was felt or intended. Indeed, this eight-page article, unusually long and de-

tailed considering our space, was supposed to be extremely complimentary!

In September, 1915, POETRY offered the glad hand of welcome to the new-born *Others*, saying: "It is the little magazines which should be encouraged and subscribed for. The great magazines are mostly engaged in the same game—that of getting a million readers. But each little magazine represents someone's enthusiasm for a cause or an art. It represents self-sacrifice, courage, some vital principle." From that time until now, POETRY has frequently complimented *Others* as the most vital and interesting of its contemporaries. We have deeply regretted that no enlightened New Yorker offered to serve the art by financing the magazine, and that therefore its career was lamentably brief. An open forum for radical experiment is almost a necessity to the healthful progress of any art. One organ, whether perfect or imperfect, is not enough—there should be *Others*.

NOTES

Mr. Max Michelsen, formerly of Chicago, but now a resident of Seattle, has been a frequent contributor to POETRY and other special magazines.

Mr. Harold Monroe, of London, is well known as the author of a number of books of verse, of which *Trees* and *Strange Meetings* are the latest; and as editor of *The Chap-book* and proprietor of the Poetry Book-shop, which is a publishing house as well as a familiar rendezvous for poets.

Mr. Horace Holley, of New York, is the author of *Divinations and Creation* (Mitchell Kennerley) and of other books, both verse and prose.

Mr. Clinton Scollard, of Clinton, N. Y., is the author of numerous books of verse.

Frances Shaw (Mrs. Howard Van D.), of Chicago, is the author of *Songs of a Baby's Day* (A. C. McClurg & Co.) and of a small privately printed volume, *Ragdale Poems*.

Miss Genevieve Taggard, now of New York, has spent most of her life in Hawaii, going thence to Berkeley, a few years ago, where she studied for three years. She is now interested, with a few

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other poets, in a new special magazine, *The Measure*, to be issued soon in New York in the interest of the art.

Miss Anna Spencer Twitchell, formerly of Colorado Springs, is now a resident of Los Angeles.

Miss Marion Strobel, of Chicago, has been for the past year an associate editor of POETRY.

The other four poets in this number are new to our readers:

Miss Hildegarde Flanner, though a former resident of Norwalk, Conn., and now of New York, is a recent graduate of the University of California. Her poetic sequence, *The Girl*, which received a prize last autumn from that institution, has just been distributed privately, by the H. S. Crocker Co., of San Francisco, in a limited edition, with very beautiful decorations in black, red and gold by Porter Garnett—one of the most exquisite *tours de force* in book-making ever issued in America.

Mrs. Emmy Veronica Sanders, a native of Holland and graduate, as doctor of laws, from the University of Amsterdam, is now a resident of New York.

Dr. Wade Oliver, of Brooklyn, is in the department of bacteriology at the Long Island Hospital.

Mrs. Sarah N. Cleghorn, of Manchester, Vt., has been a frequent contributor to other magazines.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:

Poems, by Haniel Long. Moffat Yard & Co.

Experiences of a Greenhorn and Other Poems, by Rev. F. Grantham, Danbury, Iowa.

Light, by Herbert Everett. Privately printed, Grantwood, N. J.

The Lynching Bee and Other Poems, by Wm. E. Leonard. B. W. Huebsch, Inc.

A Music-teacher's Note-book, by Henry Bellamann. N. Y. Poetry Book Shop.

Red Earth, by Alice Corbin. Ralph Fletcher Seymour, Chicago.

The Magdalene and Other Verses, by Dolf Wyllarde. John Lane Co.

Red Autumn, by Arthur Crew Inman. E. P. Dutton & Co.

PLAYS:

Plays by Jacinto Benavente, translated by John Garrett Underhill. Charles Scribner's Sons.

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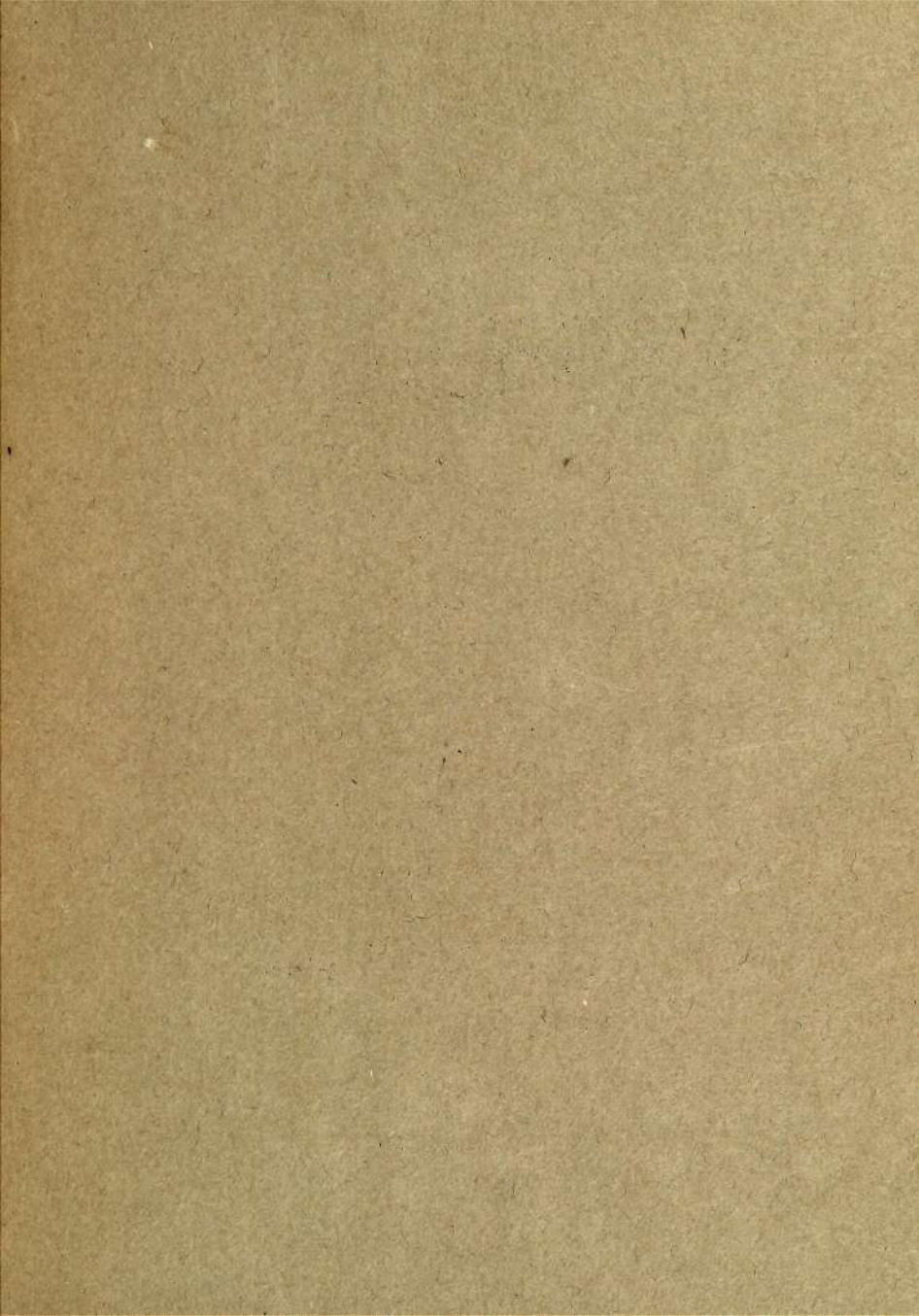
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