Poetry
A Magazine of Verse
Edited by Harriet Monroe
May 1922

Along Old Trails
by William H. Simpson
Silver Fog, by Winifred Welles
A Year, by Raymond Fischer
Carlyle McIntyre
David Greenhood

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How I wish that some English paper had anything like the authentic vitality of...  

**Louis Golding**

Vol. XX

**POETRY for MAY, 1922**

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ALONG OLD TRAILS

LOS LLANOS

AGAIN, O plains,
    I go your windswept ways,
With Indian, trapper, trader, pioneer—
Gray shadows all
On gray grass.

I am companioned—
Miracle most strange—
By youth
And its high dreams.

West, with the sun,
From rim to rim;
And then,
Beyond ken,
Tired miles of trails
On sod fresh trod.

So new
The billows of your grass—
So new
Your breezes, born each morn.

But old—so old—
The ghosts that pass.

HOPI SONG OF THE DESERT

You are so beautiful!—
Like the face of Ta-wa-wis-ni-mi.

I cannot speak the words
To tell of your too-much beauty—
You, the desert;
You, the going down of the sun;
You, my beloved.

If I could hold you,
If I could touch you!—
But you flee from me,
As runs the deer.

You are so beautiful!
If only my song
Could tell of your beauty!

[60]
Yucca is yellowing—
Hello, yellow!
Cactus is crimsoning—
Glow, glow, red fellow!
And in the mesquite bush is seen
A splash of green:

As when sunset colors spill
Their beauty down an evening hill.

No one rides the trail today—
Who cares if strange or lonely?
No one goes the desert way—
It is for beauty only.

BAREBACK

The winds ride bareback,
Swinging lassos.

Their reins hang loose,
Their knees cling tight.

The trees bend down . . .
Behind, rides the rain.
RAIN IN THE HILLS

Were I the rain
Coming over the hills—

I should be glad
That my cool fingers could ease the little fevers of dusty water-holes,
And caress curled leaves of the cottonwoods.

The herd,
Pawing, bellowing, would let me quiet them,
Standing in fresh pools by dusty water-holes—

If I were the rain
Coming over the hills.

NAVAJO

Your desert land is—
An old squaw,
Mumbling old words
Beside dead embers of old thoughts.

What she has told you
Is not told to me,
Though I ask.

Your desert land is—
Coyote,
Running alongside white horses
As the wolves howl.

What it has found out, running,
Is not told to me,
Though I ask.

TEWA SONG

Above the lands,
Above the seas,
You see, you know,
All mysteries—
    Sun Old Man,
    Moon Old Man!

Would I could fly
On widespread wing
Where whirlpools are
And flame-tips sing—
    Sun Old Man,
    Moon Old Man!

Die in the sea,
And rise at morn;
Thus would I go,
And thus be born—
    Sun Old Man,
    Moon Old Man!
DESSERT NIGHT

June moon of the desert,
   Sailing low—
The ways are free
   Where God's fleets go.

The palo verde
   You silver-tip;
The mesquite leaves
   With your ghost-glow drip.

Deep down in furrows
   Of wind-plowed hills
You shine, and their glory
   Overspills.

MAÑANA

Sí, sí, señor,
Should one ask, what for
This slumbering
When day is on the wing—

There is roof overhead;
On the table, bread;
On the vine,
Grapes for new wine;
Burros two;
And, querida mia, you.
Tomorrow—
Why trouble borrow?

**BURRO LOADS**

What do you carry, O burros gray,
Heaped high with loads, at break of day?
Pinyon for fires, when days are cold,
And old men shiver, so cold, so old.
Pinyon for fires, when coals are red,
And brown-skinned bodies are blanketed.
Pinyon for fires—like a crimson rose,
Flaming, in camps by the early snows.
Paisano, niña, or señor bold—
Light for their souls, as bells are tolled.

**LANDSCAPE**

Quiet of November waters,
White in the twilight—
A narrow rippled ribbon, thrown carelessly by anybody,
across faded fields. . . .

Troubled March waters,
Black in the noonshine—
In curves, pushing against the late snows, tumbling them in.

[65]
TREES

You root deep,
And reach skyward.

Something you say to me
That is under the earth.
Something you say to me
That is over the earth.

What it is,
Perhaps the closed eyes know.
What it is,
Maybe the folded wings know.

COUNTRY NIGHT

Night, you have soft fur,
And it is black;
I hear you purr, purr.

Night, you fly to my door,
A tired raven
From the world quarters four.
(Is your nest in the hedge
By the road,
Or on the moon's edge?)

Night, you are a sleepy girl—
Arms around my neck,
Your dark hair in a whirl.

[66]
INARTICULATE

O dumbness of tree
And of sod—
You can say so little to me,
So much to God!

SO LITTLE YOU ARE

I

O Earth!
So little you are
In the whirl of all worlds,
Through the long cold
And the long night.

I marvel
That the tips of the sun-flames
Find you
Across wide ways of the dark.

Or is it
That life
May come from its hiding?

II

O loved one,
So little you are
In the swirl of all souls,
Through the long days,
Through the long years!

[67]
I wonder
That the flames of my longing
Find you
Across wide ways of desire.

Or is it
That life
May come from its hiding?

DE NOCHE

O mother of all the dark!
Draw near, on tiptoe,
Blindfold me, and say:
Go to sleep—to sleep—to sleep.

If only the hills of the night would stay in their steadfast places—
Bulging bulk of the hulk of the range.
They creep, like a she-panther, to where I rest in the valley;
They come, down-tumbling, to where I lie on the pine boughs. . . .

The river runs away.
The aspens, by the runaway river, are afraid.

THE TRAIL UP-SKY

Too soon
Fades that last whiteness of the moon.

[68]
The face of noon is wrinkled, old—
Like Pablo's, of the sheepfold,
Who has seen all youth go by
On the long trail, up-sky.

Evening waits
At her turquoise gates
To fondle us,
And sing and sing,
With croon of mothering.

We ask not whither,
Ask not why,
On the long trail up-sky.

CAMPO SANTO

Inés, Anita, Tomás, José,
I sup with you, on my pilgrim way;

Craving the stillness of 'dobe walls,
And earth-floors trod by soft footfalls.

Yon campo santo is earthen, too;
Room in it for me, and room for you;

Little earth homes, for the weary—all
Who seek their sleep by the earthy wall.

William H. Simpson
ON THE ROAD

PROMENADING

As I went down to Baldwin's Pond,
The mud-hens dove from sight,
And then like corks bobbed bravely up
And paddled with delight.

Oh, green-blade rushes fringed the pool,
Eye-lashes delicate;
The waters were as calm as though
A seer should gaze on fate.

And reed-birds, piping holy notes,
Inspired me with such faith
That I walked on the shining pond
As though I were a wraith.

Yes, hand in hand with whitest flowers,
My heart beat mad and high—
I went a-walking (it was spring)
With lilies on the sky.

THE SCISSOR-GRINDER

The scissor-man tramped into town. Ding-a-dong!
ding-a-dong!
He set his little grindstone down, and to its music hummed a song.
Old Grandma Dumpkins’ scissor-shears, he edged their blades so finely
That she cut off her children’s ears and made them sing divinely.

And Gaffer Smither’s pruning-hook he whetted to such keenness
That Gaffer trimmed the town, and took the shade away for meanness.

But furthermore, the butcher’s knife he rounded off so dully,
That cattle now enjoy their life and fill the milkpails fully.

Then—ding-a-dong! ding-a-dong! I saw his red hat top the hill;
But all night long I heard his song played by his brother watermill.

THE VISIT

My latch was lifted—a tall light crept in.
His wings were bleeding and his feet were sore,
His eyes were vacant as a wind-swept moor:
Most pitiful of glorious cherubim.
I fed him, as I thought an angel must
Be weary from a way so long and hard;
I bathed his feet and balmed his wings with nard,
Then sat before him, nibbling my poor crust.

[71]
“Oh, are you Death?” I asked him.—“I am Faith.”
“Then shall I be exalted?” “Nay, brought low.”
“What shall I have”—for he had risen to go—
“To prove I have not succored a fell wraith?”
“You shall have doubt and bitterness,” he said.
And hence it is that I am worse than dead.

Carlyle McIntyre

TWO POEMS

I HAVE WAITED FOR YOU LONG

I have waited for you long: the sun withdraws
To covert under the hills; I am alone;
No bell disturbs the evening monotone;
I seem to merge with those implacable laws
Which left the pyramid a graven pause
In some gigantic attitude of stone.
There is an advent I have never known,
There is an imminence that overawes.

Approach me, making pallor with your feet:
I have waited for you long, my cold white one;
Let not another muffled night repeat
The tragic gesture of oblivion.
Let all death be concentrated in your tread . . .
You will not walk with me when I am dead.

[72]
LITTLE LOU

To drink where the birds drink—
Oh, the draught's touch is tender and cool!
Think—
Scattered like soft buds over the brink
Of this delicate pool
The birds leave their kisses for you,
Little Lou.

To dream where the birds dream—
Oh, the wind on the leaves is drowsily wild!
Stream,
Feathers of slumber in magical number
Over our child. . . .
The birds breathe their pale dreams on you,
Little Lou.

To die where the birds die—
Oh, why is the woodland so hushed everywhere!
And why
Are all the leaves listless and limp in mid-air
Beneath a dead sky! . . .
The birds, they are dying for you,
Little Lou.
A PSALM FOR CATHLEEN NI Hoolihan

I—one of the grey sands, cousin to him that was crucified,
Who am come from the breast of Sheba to Caesar's
poisoned wine
Of which no Israelite may die—
Have not forgot the tang of grey sands
Nor the tang of keen black grasses.
I, who have danced in Rome,
And known Roman women of the dances,
I have not strayed from my tribe
Nor am I lost to my sires.
For today I came to an island
Green as my mother's song of Canaan,
Fragrant as rain on the flax by the Nile,
And I heard Cathleen Ni Hoolihan crying.

She silenced her grief, and when I heard her speak
Her breath was a breeze from a hill of blue flowers;
And though there was no crown upon her
I knew she was a queen;
And though she raised a queenly cheek and shoulder
I knew she was a slave.

Tell me who you are, O intruder on my sorrow!

I am one of the grey sands, cousin to him that was crucified,
Who am come from the breast of Sheba, majestic for all time;
Whose cheeks, like meat of the fig, were violet and white.
And, Cathleen Ni Hoolihan, I heard your crying.

[74]
She hid her white face in the sorrow of her hair,
That fell to the white petals of her feet.

LIBERTY

Wantonly I've been a freed man!
In a weary, checked freedom;

Far from the spinning in the pure blue of air,
Out of the hymnal curve of worlds.

And I wish I were caught by an orbit in tune
With the choral serfdom of stars.

Here, beneath the tree-tops even, I find
Among meadowing sheep random more sure than mine—

More sure than the frolic of pennies
And the eddy of men in the streets.

Hear, O Democracy:
Unless I be captive to rhythm
I am least free;
Unless the rose can hold me meek,
Or tiredness of dusk put me to sleep,
Unless I be creature of the morning,
Sheep of a shepherd,

I am gone far astray in liberty—
Homesick beyond song.

David Greenhood
IN WESTERN MOUNTAINS

I

He stood a moment at the weathered edge
Of the highest cliff, and looked far out with me
Upon great valleys ending in the haze,
And mountains that from haze drove up a wedge
Of snow in skies of lapis-lazuli.
Then something of the littleness of days
His life could span came to him dizzily;
And he, who boasted of his strength with men,
Turned back and grasped a little cedar tree
Near by, for safety; and he shut his eyes,
Shaken, and would not turn to look again.

Back from that cliff-edge, jutting to the skies,
He crawled, and spoke at last with heavy breath:
“God, what a place! What is it? Life or Death?”

II

Our words seemed much in vain.
How many Ages helped those heights attain
Such silence in the sun,
O silent One?

III

Faint jingle of little bells
And the half-heard shuffle of feet,
Glenn Ward Dresbach

High up on the mountain side,
    Crept down through the waves of heat;
And a gray thread wove through the wide
Cloth of the mountain side.

The burro train came down
    With ores men take apart
As the thing they love the best
    From the multitudinous heart
Of the mountain. But all I could see
Was a gray thread through tapestry.

Glenn Ward Dresbach

QUESTION

When I make ready to go to sea
The prairie ways keep calling me;
And when from the deep I'd be sailing home
I am beckoned seaward by the breaking foam.
Why need my heart be divided so—
Going when I stay, and staying when I go?

Flora Shufelt Rivola
POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

ROUGH WAYS

BURNT OUT

I started laying sod along the roof
   While the smoke thickened. Blown from tree to tree,
The fire came on. . . . At last I dropped the spade,
   And bitterly

I watched the timbers smolder and catch fire;
   Heard the flame chuckling at the work I'd done—
A pleasant mouthful! Even now I can't
   Quite see the fun.

BLIZZARD

All day the wind has sent along the trail
   A cry of battle. Now night falls again.
Swept through the dusk like horsemen spectral-pale,
   The charging snow-gusts spur across the plain.

Beneath their onslaught fades each wagon-mark.
   The winding road is captured. Mad to slay,
They thunder down upon me in the dark;
   They strike me, blind me—*I have lost the way!*

*Kemper Hammond Broadus*
A PORTRAIT

His eyes can be quite old and stern,
But I have often watched them yearn
Over an animal in pain;
And I have seen him through the rain
Carry young lambs into the fold.
If a September night turns cold
He leaves his sleep, and in the gloom
Covers the bushes that might bloom.
I know that when his eyes grow dim
The first young bud will shout to him;
For in the spring I see him kneel
Upon the rigid earth, and feel
With gentle hands among the leaves.
No glistening rim of frost deceives
His instinct for arbutus flowers.
He sings, during his working hours,
In a young voice a rousing song,
And sweeps the lagging work along.
To the delighted earth he brings
Abounding love of living things,
So when he climbs the slopes to meet
The rising sun, they kiss his feet!

Mildred Weston
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

CREEDS

I

Men build rough high walls
Along straight narrow lines
And call them—Creeds.

Men carve distorted shapes
Upon the rough high walls
And call them—Truth.

Men put fantastic rags
On those distorted shapes
And call them—Beauty.

Men keep, forever,
Within those rough high walls
And call it—Right.

Men manacle their minds,
Fearful lest they scale the rough high walls
And be free.

Men blind their eyes,
Fearful lest they see the mysterious world
And be wise.

Men deafen their ears,
Fearful lest they hear
Enthralling music calling them beyond
And go.
Men creep onward
Between those rough high walls,
Those grotesque walls, those queer-decked walls,
And call themselves saved.

II

I am not saved,
But, friend, weep not my lot;
For I was born of sun and earth,
And the stars are relatives of mine.

I am brother to the wind,
And the sea is a sister of mine.

I am kinsman to the wolf,
And the lamb is a cousin of mine.

The blood of the eagle is part of me,
Part of me is blood of the dove.
The blood of the lark flows through my veins,
And the venomous blood of the snake.

My mother nestles the pine,
The columbine, aster and rose.

My mother fosters the oak,
And the violet suckles her.

My mother gives life to the palm,
And the poppy grows red at her breast.
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

Yes, and nothing trammels me—
Save men, my most beloved fools!

Men would deafen my ears, blinder my eyes,
Manacle my mind!

Ah, my kindred, I’ll have no walls around me!—
No rough high walls, no queer-decked walls.

IMMORTALITY

I am immortal as a burst of song,
That quivers from the thrush’s throat
And sinks to silence.

I am immortal as the kiss of love,
That wakes the world to melody,
And leaves a memory.

I am immortal as the laughing hour,
That throws her leaven on the sodden heart—
And trips away.

I am immortal as the purple dusk,
That drugs the weary brain to dreams,
And fades.

I am immortal as the wind of March,
That woos the barren earth to life—
And passes.

[82]
I am immortal as the stubborn hills,  
That breast the storms of centuries,  
And wear to sand.

I am immortal as the living sun,  
That flames a moment in eternity,  
And sputters out.

Hush—hush—hush! Steady as footsteps in the sand,  
I hear two other oars crunch in their locks—  
And look now, how my boat rocks  
To feel another boat close by—  
So close, so close, that if I reach my hand . . .

Who are you, who am I,  
To halt each other with a cry?

Let us continue blurred and lonely,  
Touched by each other's trembling only.  
It is so seldom two can be  
Each for each a mystery.

[83]
A YEAR

Before the snow had melted from north slopes
John Mortimer could feel the coming spring.
The imp that stirs the sleeping roots of trees,
And sends the sap up to the highest twigs,
Was in his blood. He envied the gaudy rooster
Who from his throne upon the leaning gate
Shouted his challenge through the morning air
Across the sleeping fields where snowdrifts lay.

One morning, going townward with the milk,
He offered Mary Allindale a ride.
Her father was a queer old man who worked
A little farm, and sometimes played his fiddle
Half the night after his work was done.
She taught the village school. John never knew
How pretty Mary was until that day.

Dusky horizons, deep blue skies where clouds
Float slowly, in the distance three black specks—
They must be horses and a man plodding
Along the boundary line between the gray
Of last year's life and the black earth new-plowed.
Resting upon a bed of last year's leaves,
At noon John Mortimer could see tall ranks
Of ripening corn; he dreamed of growing stock
And bigger barns, and Mary Allindale.

The evening wind blew sweet across the fields
Of clover when at last he went to her.
It brought them tell-tale odors of the farms
They passed, the faint warm smell of growing corn,
The cool and heavy incense of the stream
That wanders half asleep through Watson’s pasture.
A whip-poor-will was crying in the birches
By the bridge; the stars were tiny points
Of gold above, and the road was dim and gray.

John Mortimer said little, for it seemed
That Mary Allindale belonged to him
That night; the stars and mist-hung road were his,
And awkwardly he took her in his arms.
All the way home he heard her stifled laughter:
He called himself a fool and vowed that he
Would think no more of Mary Allindale.

II

The mower sang from dawn until the sun
Was overhead; from noon hour until night.
When hay was in he started on his barn.
He liked the sound of hammers at the work,
And liked to see the visioned barn take form.
August came, and turned green fields to gold.
Now binders moved across the sunny fields;
Men followed them and left the grain in shocks.
The threshers crawled along the country roads—
Great Chinese dragons. Men brought them loads of grain
To be devoured in a cloud of dust.

When the barn was done his neighbors came in crowds,
But Mary did not come. Shrill fiddles scraped,
Feet stamped and shuffled; but he stood outside.
So she preferred to him a good-for-nothing
Fiddling fool who scarcely owned the clothes
Upon his back. "They've gone out west to make
A fortune; then they'll study music." The moon
Came from behind a cloud and grinned at him.
A screech-owl laughed from somewhere in the dark.

III

A steady thud and clump of horses' feet;
A single crow seemed frozen in the sky—
Borne on the cruel wind it drifted by.
John Mortimer plowed on from dark to dark;
He cut his fields in furrows for the frost
And snow to smooth. But earth had lost its goodness—
He did not care whether it shone or rained.
The days when sun poured down like golden wine
Did not deceive—he knew the world was wrong.
IV

The tiniest stream is hushed when winter comes.
It cannot whisper to the passing banks
About the great green ocean and its ships.
The days when it has run before the wind
Laughing and beckoning with hands of foam,
The nights when tired of play it has crept up
Some distant bay and murmured round the piling
Of silent rocks, are all forgotten now.

And winter hushed the whispering memories.
He swung his ax all day and had no thoughts
Except the quiet things about his work
That come unsought to every worker's mind.

One morning, going townward with the milk,
He stopped to give the new schoolma'am a lift.
Though he had often passed her on the road
He had never known how beautiful she was.
Though snow still lay in drifts on northern slopes,
Though trees and roadside brush were white with frost,
John Mortimer could feel the coming spring.

Raymond P. Fischer

[87]
POETS and prosers have discussed in many volumes man's relation to his environment, but how much we are what surrounds us is still an open question.

For nearly ten years POETRY has been at home in the not-over-spacious room to the left of the entrance of 543 Cass Street. By the time this number is issued we shall have torn ourselves away from this cubic box of memories; we shall have shifted our furniture and files, our books and back numbers, our gallery of poets' photographs and other pictures, our tempers and temperaments, our hearts and hopes and hospitalities, to a strange place as yet unenriched by history, leaving this atmospheric chamber, doubled in the big Victorian mirror over the mantel-piece, to the coldly calculating advances of the medical department of an insurance company.

But we cannot depart without saying goodbye, without consecrating our farewell by recalling the things which have happened, the people who have entered or lingered, in this old haunted and haunting room. Once it was part of a dwelling which, erected soon after the Great Fire of Seventy-one, housed the family and the books of Ezra McCagg, owner of the largest private library in Chicago. For two or three decades the house stood among congenial neighbors—abodes of the quality, set in spacious grounds. But the quality, including the McCaggs, scattered, and

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Moving business penetrated—at first on tip-toe, hesitatingly. The American Bankers’ Insurance Company bought the place and connected it in the rear with a new building, the two right-angling an apartment-house on the corner. And while their alterations were still fresh, in the summer of 1912, the inexperienced prospective editor of a poets’ magazine-to-be, entered the Ohio Street door one morning in search of a North Side office in the neighborhood.

Whom should she find in possession, as president of the insurance company, but one of the magazine’s guarantors—Mr. James P. Whedon of happy memory, one of the most generous of all because his fortune was always moderate. Soon the editor and her first associate, Alice Corbin Henderson, were hospitably installed in one of the two rentable rooms beside the Cass Street entrance, their good friend adding office-desks and chairs to their meagre business equipment. From this room, during that summer of 1912, the first letters and circulars went out in search of contributors and subscribers, and hither came those first responses on which depended the vitality of the magazine.

Ezra Pound’s first letter, for example—I have often recorded the cordiality of his co-operation as POETRY’s first representative abroad. Along with him came through the mail the other first imagists—H. D. and Aldington, W. C. Williams and Flint and Cannéll. John G. Neihardt greeted us with a tragedy; Joseph Campbell with The Piper; Allen Upward with his Scented Leaves from a
Chinese Jar; Joyce Kilmer—long before the brutal War which killed him—with *Trees*; John Reed—heroic beloved vagabond—with *Sangar*; Mrs. Conkling with her musical-minded *Symphony in a Mexican Garden*, which, arriving in the nick of time for our first number, aided us in antedating a proposed Boston contemporary who had threatened to requisition our title. And so on—those important early contributors who enriched the magazine with their own values.

The excitement of the adventure is what I remember best from that first experimental year. The novel enterprise hovered, in the mind of the public, on the delicate border-line between the sublime and the ridiculous; and our own minds trembled between a thrill and a laugh. If pride was inflated by authoritative words from poets and critics, it soon collapsed under expert stabs of wrath or ridicule. If a few new and unknown poets aroused our hopes of genius, hundreds astounded us with self-satisfied mediocrity or worse. We were dashed between extremes, like a rubber ball in the play of a juggler; and the thing least expected was what happened next.

Who led the long procession of distinguished visitors whose faces and words now haunt these walls? I think Rabindranath Tagore was the first of the then-unknown—but-now-famous bards who have actually darkened the Cass Street door and sat in our "poets' chair." Tagore, the sage of Bengal, whom we had thought of as in England or maybe India, but who wrote to us from Urbana,
Illinois, upon his first appearance in English in Poetry's third number—December, 1912. And the second was Lindsay, who followed his General Booth to Cass Street that first winter, sealing his bardship with the hand of friendship. Witter Bynner and Arthur Ficke, the Damon and Pythias of the art, were among the early arrivals; and Agnes Lee Freer, a newly married resident of Chicago; and Helen Hoyt, who soon graduated from her commercial post into Poetry's office; and Maxwell Bodenheim, then mute and inglorious.

And so on. The magic transformation of abstract name-carrying entities into living, breathing men and women, was then, as it continues to be, the editor's high reward. Poets, it became evident, were not mere voices far away, but human beings who could come into Cass Street and even develop into friends. During our second twelvemonth there were important miracles in this kind. Amy Lowell, pilgrimaging from Boston to Chicago with poems under her arm, seemed a prophet of change—was East coming West at last? was an era passing, and a new one on the way? As if to give answer, here came Carl Sandburg walking solidly into the office when the fateful year 1914 was new or perhaps unborn; entering with his strong hand out and his slow rich loyal voice uttering words of greeting.

In the spring arrived two British poets from opposite curves of the world. The illustrious William Butler Yeats changed from a Poet Enshrined into a living
Irishman who could give tit for tat to George Moore’s imaginative gossip about him which had just appeared. In his honor POETRY “eased out” of Cass Street long enough to give a banquet which has since been recognized as a milestone in the path of the “new movement.” And along in April or May, one afternoon when the editor was alone, entered, on his way home from the South Seas, a handsome young Englishman then still obscure—one Rupert Brooke, a member of the “Georgian” group whose first anthology had but recently appeared. How peaceful was the day—how remote the possibility of war—to this blond young poet whose spirit was to “straighten like a flame” at the then-so-imminent bugle call, and run into the war-god’s deadly arms with a song!

Sara Teasdale, John Gould Fletcher, Edgar Lee Masters—these and many others, from Missouri, Arkansas, Chicago, the Seven Seas, were Cass Street guests of those early years. Later came Robert Frost and Wallace Stevens—opposite poles of the renaissance. The procession goes on still—may it find its way into Erie Street—the procession of shadow-shapes assuming flesh and blood.

Nor should we forget the others—the countless visitors who have arrived at our doors but never in our covers. They come with verses, mostly by mail but often in person; some modestly, some over-sure. They ask for criticism which, if granted, rarely satisfies the urge or ache within. They can not be classified—they are as varied as other growths of the living earth. Rich and poor, bourgeois
and bolshevik, refined and coarse, tragic and absurd—they have played their different parts in Cass Street, strangely unlike but moved always by the same motive: the longing to express themselves, to reveal their naked souls.

If these walls could speak—these walls that we are leaving! They have heard everything discussed and torn to bits—men, women, poems, theories, tendencies, the war, the peace, marriage, divorce, clothes, coiffures, eyebrows, the abstract beauty and the ultimate defeat, life, death and immortality, the weather and the curve of a dog’s tail. And they have listened through hours of silence, with nothing ringing but the telephone, while the editor wrote, in old-fashioned long-hand, countless breathlessly-brief notes to poets; or summoned spirits from the vasty deep to infuse wit and wisdom into her editorials, and help her come to the end with a flourish—as now, when she must test POETRY’s personality by shifting its environment, as she signs a final farewell to old Five-forty-three.

H. M.

REVIEWS

A WOMAN WITH A HAMMER


“The most casual reading—if such a thing were possible—of Mrs. Wickham’s work reveals the strength of
her candor, the intense singleness of her purpose," writes Mr. Untermeyer in an introduction that makes one admire the shrewdness of the gentlemen who chose him for his task. And without wishing to disagree, the hesitant reader may be permitted to wonder what candor and a purpose may have to do with an art. In the present case, they seem to resolve themselves into pugnaciously put platitudes, like the following:

Am I your mate because I share your bed?
Go then! Find each day a new mate outside your house.
I am your mate if I can share your vision.

Nor is one entirely ready to question the possible necessity of this explanation to the person addressed. It is simply that one, as a male in general, has a right to a sort of hypothetical intelligence; for a poet is, presumably, addressing the more illuminated of mankind.

Nor, again, should a reviewer allow himself to be too greatly piqued by a technical insult to his sex; and the present reviewer does not purpose to be so. But even perspicuous generalities do not constitute poetry, and platitudes are not perspicuous; and a perusal of this sort of poetry in quantities enforces boredom. This poet, like too many others, becomes more interested in the reason for her unhappiness than in the unhappiness itself; and, having reasons that are commonplace enough, there is no subtle evasion in her statement, nothing to disguise, however thinly, the barrenness of trodden ground.

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A Woman with a Hammer

When she essays a more lyric mode, she is equally stale, and her staleness is even more obvious to the average eye:

With other thrift I turn the key
Of the old chest of Memory,
And in my spacious dreams unfold
A flimsy stuff of green and gold,
And walk and wander in the dress
Of old delights and tenderness.

In The Cherry Blossom Wand she achieves something of a literary grace, perhaps slightly more than that; and in Sehnsucht an epigram that is really very hard and well done; but otherwise there is little in the book to commend. I quote Sehnsucht:

Because of body's hunger are we born,
And by contriving hunger are we fed;
Because of hunger is our work well done,
And so are songs well sung, and things well said.
Desire and longing are the whips of God—
God save us all from death when we are fed.

Mrs. Wickham's handling of sex-problems is too obvious, coming after Lawrence, for serious consideration; indeed, her handling of all topics, coming after someone or something else, is so. Nothing is so awkward to the mind of him addressed as a belated irony.

"She is, in quick succession, burning hot and icy cold; she is driven from fiery antagonisms to smoldering apathy; she is acutely sensitive, restless, harassed," writes our commentator, approaching his climax; and most of us will leave him with the field.

Yvor Winters

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POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

WOODWINDS

*We, the Musk Chasers*, by Loureine Aber. Ralph Fletcher Seymour.

The most significant men of this poetic era have surrounded themselves, like the princess who slept for a hundred years, with brambles of objectivity, striving to insure inviolableness, man being resentful of intrusion. All the while the women have given themselves from day to day without reserve. There are rare exceptions, of course. But in the main it is the man who is on his guard, and the woman generous, in poetry and in life. So Loureine Aber has written without subterfuge; as though, like Marie Bashkirtseff, for her own journal. She speaks not alone of and for herself, but puts in order the chaotic protest and exaltation of numberless inarticulate girl-voices. There are in this age so many printed, and in a measure “successful” poets, that one forgets how many times that number of sensitive spirits are more silent than the dumb. For them it is not so simple a matter to net the flickering moth of emotion and mood and preserve it in adequate expression. Quite often the deterrent is laziness and a Nietzschean desire to exhale a god and a universe in one breath. Poetry, says the aspirant, with eyes “in a fine frenzy rolling,” is a matter of inspiration and she grasps feverishly at *vers libre*, perverting it into undigested prose divided arbitrarily into lines, unmindful of the euphonic devices by which it can be given beauty and charm. Loureine Aber has done

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her service not for these, but for the thousands of girls in cities, either born speechless or submerged in a bedlam of typewriters, adding machines, and switchboards.

Miss Aber makes use not of a niggling rhythm of syllable for syllable, or a subtle rhythm of vowel, but of a large rhythm of word and phrase, so large in swing as to be almost Sandburgian. In it there is more than a trace of the influence of popular syncopation—

Go so far, and halt your tracks,
Catch the first glimpse, turn your backs. . . .

Her work is done with commendable neatness and frugality. I have mentioned Sandburg in connection with rhythm; the resemblance goes deeper than that. But Loureine Aber has lopped off all extraneous material and presented herself in the kernel. Here are no polemics or propaganda. One is often tempted to do with poetry as a friend of mine does with the drama when she divides it into problem plays and good plays; or, to say with Yeats and emphasize well the last word: “One makes of one’s struggle with oneself poetry; of one’s struggle with others, rhetoric.” The self is not in the poet, as in elementary forms, a simple whole like the cipher. Rather in the higher organism it is a grouping of rebellious and often anarchistic parts; and in every such being the struggle is both common and unique. Moreover, this is an age of acute self-consciousness, as witness not only its verse but its novel, such as it is—the more diffuse form, therefore the fuller evidence. In order to be authentic one must have
the keen observation and the frank speech of a surgeon. One has, however, the option of distilling one’s speech into the essence of itself. This Miss Aber does not do. She is very simple, but gives glimpses, as in *Old Man*, of an elemental strength that may be developed far:

Dawn sprang wildly to her lips,
And the little hard breasts burst as a waterfall over the rocks.
I, the dark pine at the precipice neck,
Lunged and was still;
Then swiftly, as wild birds go to the kill,
Toppled, and ran with her youth to the sea.

They said I was wanton and cruel
To have taken her youth at the height,
To have matched the great might
Of my years
With her slender beauty and tremulous fears . . .

I tell you, I lunged and was still,
Then swiftly, as wild birds go to the kill,
Toppled, and ran with her youth to the sea . . .
Pity me!

Though one may disagree with the poet on “beautiful hills” as a necessary adjunct to the concept of God, *God in the City* is as strong an indictment against those who “wrought pigsties out of gauze” as though it were legally drawn up, witnessed, signed, and sealed. It is a universal confession:

Beautiful hills,
Valleys . . .
And all the other things we think of when we think of God,
Are not here.
I find myself at a loss to formulate much good,
And so I simply say “God!”
As you call "Fido!"
And let it go at that.

If Miss Aber has not yet reached her poetic majority, she is at any rate among the few one would have bring their gifts to perfect fruition through a study of the masters, new and old, and through the sacrifice of ease.

I should like also to add an appreciative word to Mr. Seymour for the format of this book, and to Mr. Blackwell for his delicate decorations.

Pearl Andelson

QUAKER-GRAY AND ROSE

*Willow Pollen*, by Jeannette Marks. Four Seas Co.

In this first book of verse, with its non-committal cover of quaker-gray, I like best the poems in which Miss Marks' clear, sharp and often whimsical mind is in the ascendency over her emotions.

In some spirits pain is a flame that flares and consumes till the burning consciousness lights up all around it; in others, a smouldering ache that, however it be heaped with green withes, throws up a screening smoke. In the groping cries of some of these songs of pain I feel a lonely and proud spirit that has been hurt much, but the hurt has blurred instead of sharpening expression.

The cleavage between Miss Marks' mental and emotional approach gives a curious effect of duality of personality. Sometimes it seems as though the verses must have been written by two esthetically dissimilar personalities. On one page you will find the innocent sentimen-
tality of a piece of album verse, and on the other such acidly lovely lines as these from *White Hair*:

> All the warmth has gone out of white hair;
> It only answers to the wind,
> And lifts and stirs like creeping snow
> Close to the frozen scalp of earth.

This disparity can no doubt be partly explained by the inclusion of early poems, but it is surprising to find such pallid stuff as *Your Sunlit Way* between the same covers as a sharply-faceted poem like *Stars*, with its molded form and finely pointed thought.

Often you feel how this southern woman loves the sun. In *Calendar*, where the tender, intimately whimsical gossip about nature recalls Emily Dickinson, the sun is likened to “a bee, a big bee, a burning bee.”

Throughout the book are scattered delightful whimsicalities, and stanzas from which luminous images leap like sudden lights out of a mist. Sometimes with an unexpected line Miss Marks can push out the walls of a narrow room into an unlimited horizon. Take the rose-gray magic of this conjured picture:

> Sea gulls I saw lifting the dawn with rosy feet.

In Jeannette Marks’ more intense moods—*Sea Gulls*, from which the above lines are taken, *Dragon* and others—there is a note of hysteria, a desperate, half-fascinated peering into the depths where

> myriad eyes
> . . . float and sway, stab, sting and die away.

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You feel the terror and curiosity of a romantic imagination that is drawn by the sinister-grotesque into the darker ways of fantasy. But always in this nature the romanticist is in eternal conflict with the moralist—no mind-made moralist at that, but one into whose quivering soul is bitten, as with an acid, a sense of inescapable responsibility for others’ woes.

For me the charm of *Willow Pollen* lies in those verses where the poet’s heart is quiescent, and the alert and supple mind is free to play delicately, as in *Cloud*:

```
Tut, it is a ship as plain as anything,
Full-spread to find the silver edges of the world
Where ships and island daffodils
Burn, follow sun, dip,
Cling to the shining brim like flapping butterflies...

And the “sky”...
Now you tell what the sky is!
```

In the last two lines you touch a certain elfin quality in Miss Marks’ mind, a quality that is emphasized in the delicious sleep song, *Rose Toada*:

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Shoo, Rose Toada, Shoo!
Jewelled red eyes for you.
Shoo, Rose Toada, Shoo!

Hoosh, Rose Toada, hoosh!
Little green snake in the bush.
Hoosh, Rose Toada, hoosh!

Bizz, Rose Toada, buzz!
Gold on its wings and fuzz.
Bizz, Rose Toada, buzz!
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*Lola Ridge*
POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

**Vicarious Experience**


Though Miss Flexner’s poetry builds up the picture of an attractive and cultivated personality, and though her verse is always polished and sometimes sparkling, it is never heart-wringing. It has not, one imagines, wrung the heart of the poet. We find her deeply moved by a number of things—a newspaper account of a pogrom, a child’s death in a charity ward, the futility of war. Her sympathetic scope is wide: she sees, with a pitiful vision devoid of mockery, the tragedy of approaching age in the life of a rich and shallow woman; she has a wistful comprehension of a child’s day-dreams. But all this is, after all, vicarious experience. One misses the swirl and rush of unimpeded personal emotion.

We find also a generous sprinkling of “poetic” themes and words—*Helen* and *asphodel*—with an occasional charming *vers de société*, of which we may instance *For an Old Lady to whom Sonnets had been Written*; and less often, such a skilfully wrought interpretation as *The Death Mask of an Unknown Soldier*. For the rest, we learn that the poet loves April blossoms, the colors green and gray, the little child next-door—facts agreeably but not memorably recorded. Some of the love-lyrics have fragrance and charm, but none of them seems deeply motivated. There is hardly a poem in the book that seems to have sprung into being because of an irresistible inner urge.

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Too frequently these poems are weighted down, verbose: Miss Flexner uses words unsparingly, a defect not excused even by the intrinsic and evocative beauty of many of her favorite words. This criticism does not hold true of her free verse, however—clever, frequently humorous flashes from an active mind, which serve to counterbalance the easy sentimentality of the lyrics.

As a proof that the volume contains much that is lovely, it is only fair to let the poet speak for herself, as she does very characteristically in *Four Things*:

Four things I cannot remember  
In the fulness of their grace,  
Wind of the spring, curve of the sea,  
The moon's pale touch on a white birch-tree,  
And your kiss upon my face.

For though I cherish and hold them,  
The heavy winter through,  
Spring is more gay, the sea foam-wrought  
And the birch, are lovelier than I thought;  
And a kiss is always new.

*Muna Lee*

**JEAN COCTEAU**


M. Cocteau has been described as the "enfant prodige" of contemporary French literature. As to whether this description conveys the whole truth about him or only a part, opinions will necessarily differ. His latest book of poems reveals both his weaknesses and his strength.
POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Whatever else may be said about them, the fact remains that here is the expression of a very definite personality reacting to an extraordinary degree to visual and tangible stimuli, and endowed with both imagination and fantasy.

Indeed, so vivid are the impressions this poet receives, and so contemptuous is he of the ordinary rules governing the use of language, that in the attempt to fuse the one with the other the result is frequently baffling, even to the most intelligent reader, and must be often completely incomprehensible to the majority. This must be counted a fault, if clarity and universal intelligibility are reckoned as characteristics of the greatest art—and most people take this view. Similarly, contempt or neglect of form can be pushed to extreme limits, and this is a reproach to which M. Cocteau evidently lays himself open. But once these points have been conceded to the—not necessarily carping—critic, it must be admitted that the poems themselves merit serious attention, even if they fail to arouse universal admiration.

We are conscious that the poet is, as it were, walking on a tight-rope all the time; or at least on some level to which the ordinary reader is, to say the least, unaccustomed. To vary the metaphor, we might compare him to an excessively agile mountain goat who will soon be lost sight of by his pursuer unless the latter in his turn manages to reproduce, with tolerable exactitude, each perilous leap from peak to peak so carelessly undertaken by the quarry he pursues. Indeed, unless the
reader possesses the power not only of making mental leaps, but of making the same mental leaps as the author of these Poésies, he will often find himself hopelessly left behind and floundering in valleys of apparent nonsense.

This poetry is elusive in the extreme, obeying, it might almost be said, no rules but those of the author's imaginative caprices. M. Cocteau reminds one at times of Humpty Dumpty in his treatment of words. "When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean different things." "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all."

But none of this is said in condemnation. Certain means are proper to certain ends, and the ultimate test of a poem, as of anything else, is whether it achieves the effect intended. And it must at once be conceded that M. Cocteau's poems do this in nine cases out of ten. Take, for example, Ascenseur (of course unpunctuated):

Tant de douceur
dans notre moelle
c'est un masseur
graissé d'étoiles
Gabriel artificiel
en tombant du ciel
freine un peu

On m'a parlé d'un ascenseur extraordinaire à New York
il donne le baiser du vacuum cleaner
et on vous retire en bas comme une loque

Petite cabine vernie
abominable douceur

La mort fauche avec son aile
tous les échelons de l’échelle

une ébauche
d’agonie

Le mât de hune
huilé de lune

on touche le bouton à gauche
à l’angle de la vitrine

La lune douche l’estomac
ouvre la bouche

ut de poitrine

Here we have, in a few lines, all the physical and psychological sensations connected with our experiences of lifts; and the whole poem is on a definitely imaginative level.

Le Voyage en Italie is another good example of M. Cocteau’s style, and while it is far too long for quotation, it is rich in happy phraseology and striking images, such as:

Rome Le pape a enfermé tout le monde dehors
Shelley a toujours eu l’air
d’une grande fille noyée

Naples A Paris ce soir
il fait un temps de concierges dehors

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While the nostalgia of this most Parisian of Parisians amongst the monuments of Rome and the "plafonds lourds" is eloquently voiced in the following poignant lines:

\[
\begin{align*}
J'ai besoin de Paris et des Champs Elysées \\
j'ai besoin de Paris je ne suis pas de Rome \\
je ne suis pas de Moscou Marie \\
rue d'Anjou douceur angévine \\
pauvre Marie j'ai mal à mes Champs Elysées.
\end{align*}
\]

In *Batterie* the poet reveals another side of himself—his love of the sun and of the contrast between the black skins of negroes and the azure skies under which they live and toil. This note is of frequent occurrence, but nowhere is it more eloquently expressed than in this hymn to the sun, which is one of the most formal of the poems in this volume:

\[
\begin{align*}
Soleil je t'adore comme les sauvages \\
à plat ventre sur le rivage \\
Soleil tu vernis tes chromos \\
tes paniers de fruit, tes animaux \\
Fais-moi le corps tanné, salé \\
fais mon grand douleur s'en aller \\
Fais braire la cigale en haut du pin \\
fais-moi sentir le four à pain. \\
Fais-moi répandre mes mauvais rêves \\
soleil, boa d'Adam et d'Eve! \\
Fais-moi un peu m'habiter \\
à ce que mon pauvre Jean soit tué.
\end{align*}
\]
The poem is too long to quote in its entirety, but it is one of the most striking in the collection—a collection redolent of the exoticism of ships and ports, American bars and sky-scrapers, negroes, films, ice-cream sodas and the melancholy of swings and roundabouts—the whole seen through the eyes and filtered through the sensibility of a highly cultured, versatile, imaginative, curious and extremely modern mind.

"Carte Blanche" is a reprint of a series of articles which appeared in *Paris Midi* during the summer of 1919. They treat of a variety of subjects, ranging from a discussion of the latest movements in French music and painting to essays in sheer reporting, such as the description of the *Défilé de la Victoire*, at the peace celebrations on July fourteenth, 1919. They furnish another example of the versatility of M. Cocteau and of the never-failing lightness of his touch and the quickness of his comprehension. The paper devoted to Landru is full of good things, and a model of this kind of topical essay.

Landru inaugure le retour du Fait-Divers civil. Avec lui le chien écrasé retrouve ses droits. . . . L'amoureux médiocre brûle des souvenirs. . . . n'est-il pas plus simple de brûler toute la dame? . . . Si Landru se livrait à cette liquidation, j'aime l'imaginer au coin du feu, tisonnant les cendres de sa belle d'un air rêveur et soupirant: "Du courage—il ne faut plus penser à tout cela."

Perhaps some readers will prefer M. Cocteau's prose to his verse: enough has perhaps been quoted to reveal the quality of both. 

*Rollo H. Myers* [108]
OUR CONTEMPORARIES

MORE NEW MAGAZINES

If new magazines may be assumed to indicate a certain vitality in the art they represent, modern poetry may be congratulated; for its voices are speaking everywhere, in organs from leaflet to folio size. Some of these organs are for poets only, but most of them admit him with writers of tales, critics, sometimes limners and composers.

Here is The Beacon, published in Oxford, England, by B. H. Blackwell, who has given so many young English poets their first appearance in small volumes beautifully made. The Beacon "aims to deal broadly and constructively with three essential and inseparable things—Education, Religion and Art." The first number, introduced by a poem by Tagore, and A Credo for a New Era by Stephen Graham, contains interesting articles and drawings, but little in our special province.

Broom, our international Roman contemporary which is now in its fifth number, has lost Alfred Kreymborg from its staff. Harold A. Loeb now conducts it in Rome, and Lola Ridge has recently become its American editor, her office being at 3 East Ninth Street, New York.

Another international monthly began in Barcelona, Spain, last February. Prisma proclaims itself "una revista internacional de poesia," and enriches its first number with Opffer's portrait of Carl Sandburg, an article on the latter by Louis Butcher Lee, and translations of
nine of his shorter poems, including *Jan Kubelik* and *Cool Tombs*. Indeed, Spain has been sending us a number of magazines of late. Two from Madrid are *La Pluma*, now in its third year, and the first three numbers of *Indice* (*Revista Mensual*).

And another impending international is *Secession*, which, "instigated at Paris, opens fire this spring at Vienna, will march on Berlin, and eventually establish itself in New York. . . . It will, in its early numbers, expose the private correspondence, hidden sins, and secret history of its American contemporaries—*The Dial*, *Little Review*, *Broom*, *POETRY*, etc."

From the far antipodes comes *The Australian Poetry Annual of 1922*, published by the Melbourne Literary Club, and presenting poems sometimes creditable, but not yet exciting or suggestive of the locale.

*Youth*, the Chicago monthly which we welcomed last autumn, must have been beloved of the gods, as it died with a promptness befitting its title. To *The Wave*, also published by Steen Hinrichson, we may wish a longer and more prosperous life. Its editor is Vincent Starrett, and it contains poems and prose by a number of our friends; also, in the second number, a group of beautiful wood-cuts by Birger Sandzen.

*The Reviewer*, of Richmond, Virginia, now in its second volume, is discovering some interesting material in the South. We quoted last month one of Mrs. Peterkin's bits of Negro folk-lore.

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More New Magazines

From here and there come tiny leaflets of local verse—for instance, *The Bard*, from Dallas, Texas; and *The Poet’s Scroll* from Sherwood, Oklahoma. No strong evidence of genius in these, but they represent each a group and an aspiration.

CORRESPONDENCE

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE P. S. A.

To the Editor: Please let me say a word as to your correspondent’s report of the P. S. A. annual dinner.

She begins with an interested reference to other dinners—banquets of Shoe-lace and Ribbon Manufacturers, Flower and Feather Manufacturers—which may have been held that evening at the Hotel Astor and which might have appealed to the avowed Rabelaisian taste of your reporter more than did the dinner which she attended. The poets were “decorous”, she complains, they were “all in standardized evening array.” So, as far as I could observe, in spite of her having written verse, was your reporter.

She follows with a saucily lackadaisical account of the program, some of it accurate. The gist of the remarks that bored her was very much akin to the gist of the leading editorial in the April *Poetry*: “Local loyalties are turning with deep enthusiasm toward the arts.” She would evidently prefer a clever monopoly—perhaps
in Chicago. She missed the deliberate intimation of the evening. Some of us realize that New York is quite as provincial as Chicago; and the Executive Committee deferred at the January dinner, all along the line, to speakers from the other provinces.

She instances with relish Miss Lowell's challenge to the Society. Miss Lowell, a critic who has quaintly and ably won for herself the right to be blunt, assumed an absence of "sharp clash" and "critical emotional insight" from the Society's meetings and announced her preference, as one often does, for her own judgments and methods of expression. Miss Lowell was largely wrong in her assumption. Her "clash", this time, was rather flat than sharp, for the reason that she was recklessly judging, by meetings of other poetry groups, the regular sessions of the P. S. A., where there has certainly been more "sharp clash" than at any smaller contemporary gatherings of poets anywhere, whether public or private. As to "critical emotional insight", it is easier to talk about than to exhibit, especially at a dinner.

Miss Dudley concedes "an hour of values contemplative and exciting." That seems to me a fair ratio in a professional program. She complains of "four hours of futility." During two of those hours, she and the "army captain" she mentions were free to contribute at their own table whatever they desired of Rabelaisian stimulus and general interest. If they chose to contribute "futility", it was their own fault.
From the President of the P. S. A.

Large dinners, whether social or professional, are not ideal means of intellectual or emotional exchange. In lieu of something better, they have become an occasional method of assemblage for the membership of organizations. The P. S. A., in addition to its monthly meetings of give and take, chooses to listen quietly once a year to some group or other of members and guests. This year all the speakers, except Mr. Chang Peng Chun, were Americans, from widely different parts of the country. There were no expatriates even. Only one of them had been heard before by the Society. Some of them may have been dull. So were some of their critics. But none of the speakers, if you will forgive me, made the lapse of mistaking mere smart distemper for "critical emotional insight."

That sort of lapse, if you will forgive me again, is becoming too frequent in the pages of Poetry. Miss Dudley is not the only offender. Are there no stages, dear editor, between the stodgy and the supercilious? Are there no happier ways of avoiding one kind of emptiness than by substituting another? Is sharp crash valuable to you? Must a crackling of thorns boil the pot and the poet? Is even prose less important than pose? Should a magazine which has shown signs of health permit itself these amusing but unlovely sounds of literary indigestion?

Incidentally let me thank you for printing in a recent issue an honest and thoughtful article by Mr. Baker Brownell.

Witter Bynner
A WORD FOR MR. GUEST

To the Editor: I suppose you will hardly care to print a brief protest against your condemnation of Mr. Guest. Let me say at once that I entirely agree with you that his verses are not poetry, perhaps not even literature, in your and my sense of the term. Neither is the bulk of Longfellow. Yet both Longfellow and Mr. Guest touch the human heart in a fashion quite out of the reach of most of the estimable writers who monthly adorn your pages. Mr. Guest's trivial little poems impart something—perhaps not much, but something—of the sweet high consecration of rhythmic ecstasy to the common things that make up the daily experience of millions of readers who would be quite insensible to Ezra Pound and Amy Lowell. Also, I think you vastly over-estimate the importance of Mr. Guest's reward. It is precisely proportioned to his production: dull, sordid dollars, and the loud vociferation of the thick-breathed vulgar which your finer-natured poets would instinctively disdain. And I disagree totally with your view that Mr. Guest is a menace to literature. On the contrary, I do not believe that his verses distract one single reader from a better order of poetry, while they may lure many readers, through the medium of his rather obvious music, to something much more worth while. Surely you do not imagine that, if Mr. Guest were altogether eliminated from a world of which I esteem him a considerable benefactor, the circulation of Poetry would be increased by
A Word for Mr. Guest

a single subscriber. Those who read Guest will never read Sandburg, and those who read Sandburg will never read Guest. Why not let each reader have what appeals to him and helps him? 

Gamaliel Bradford

NOTES

The initial Blindman Prize of $250 has been awarded by the Poetry Society of South Carolina to Grace Hazard Conkling, for Variations on a Theme, which was named by Miss Lowell, the appointed judge, as the best of many poems submitted in a contest open to all poets writing in English.

Mr. William H. Simpson, of Chicago, who has appeared in POETRY before, has been for years in the service of the Santa Fe railroad, of which he is advertising manager. Extensive travels on and from this road have interested him in our south-western wonderland and its aboriginal life. Mr. Simpson used to write verses in his youth, and of late he has resumed the art more seriously.

Mr. Carlyle McIntyre, of Los Angeles, has also appeared in POETRY, but has not yet published a volume. A book, published some years ago by a poet of almost identical name, is not his.

Mr. Glenn Ward Dresbach, of El Paso, Texas, will soon issue his third book, In Colors of the West (Henry Holt & Co.).

Mr. David Greenhood, now a resident of San Bernardino, Cal., was a member of Witter Bynner's poetry class at the University of California a few years ago.

Flora Shufelt Rivola (Mrs. Charles) of Yankton, S. D., is another familiar contributor.

The other poets of this month appear here for the first time.

Mr. Raymond P. Fischer, formerly of Chicago, is now in Upland, Cal.

Winifred Welles (Mrs. H. H. Shearer), of New York, is the author of The Hesitant Heart, published last year by B. W. Huebsch.

Mr. Joseph Auslander, born in Philadelphia of Spanish and Russian parentage, and a graduate of Harvard, is now studying at Oxford, England. His poems have appeared in various magazines.

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Mr. Kemper Hammond Broadus is the young son of Edmund Kemper Broadus, of the faculty of the University of Manitoba in Alberta, who appeared in early numbers of Poetry, and who has just published a book on the Poets Laureate of England.

Mr. John H. Gavin lives in Chicago, Miss Mildred Weston in Pittsburgh, Pa.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:

Open Shutters, by Oliver Jenkins. Will Ransom, Chicago.
The Power of Love and Other Verses, with Addenda, by Irving S. Richter. Privately printed, Brooklyn, N. Y.
A Silver Pool, by Beulah Field. Moffat, Yard & Co.
White April, by Harold Vinal. (Yale Series of Younger Poets.) Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn.

ANTHOLOGIES AND TRANSLATIONS:

A Chapbook, by seven students of the University of Columbia, Vancouver, B. C.
The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri (line for line Translation), by Melville Best Anderson. World Book Co., New York, N. Y.

PLAYS:

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Of Poetry, published monthly at Chicago, Ill., for April 1, 1922.

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

That the name and address of the publisher, editor, managing editor is Harriet Monroe; business manager, Mila Straub, 332 E. Erie street; owner, Harriet Monroe.

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

That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the two said paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant’s full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by her.

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