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

Louis Golding

Vol. XX No. III

POETRY for JUNE, 1922

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"Suppose," he thought, "there are invisible beings, fairies, elves; Suppose rheumatism is nothing but Robin-pinches; Suppose a wind is only the beating of fairy wings And fairy fingers doffing your hat to invisible majesties."

He sat on the bench motionless.
The dust sifted upon him,
Leaves caught upon his clothing,
Vagrant sheets of paper wrapped about his feet.

"Chance is decent and does not leave the silent things exposed.
She covers the stone with moss, and spreads
A coverlet of mold upon the unmoving things."
"Suppose I stayed here a year?
Would the elves come and cover me with leaf drift, and
dust
Carefully shaken over me?
Would they sow seeds under my feet?
Would the moss grow from the clay on the soles of my
shoe?
Would I be wound in spider-webs?"

II

Another one sat down beside him
And cut his world in two.
He moved back as if to drag back the severed half,
But the other one held it tenaciously.
His very shadow was a seal of possession, ineffaceable.
For a moment they sat still, taut,
Like two who tug at a rope.

"Pleasant day?"

"Pleasant day!"

And so they fused their world with sticky speech.

"I was wondering how it would be
To be a year in one place—
For the rain to soften you, and the wind to mold you,
And the dust to fill in your cracks."

"You would be a tree then:
Your toes would drip into roots;  
Your arms would be long brown branches  
Holding leaves like cups to fill with sunlight and dew.’’

“If I were silent  
The invisible realms would open about me;  
The unseen people would build a road between my feet—  
They would build a city in the shadow of my knees,  
Like cities built below mountains.  
I might be their sphinx, satiate with questions.’’

“There is no invisible world  
Except the worlds you do not see.  
These can be reached by travel.  
Your stillness will not be inviolate—  
All things using life will apportion you  
With shrewd husbandry:  
The birds will inherit your head and your shoulders;  
Hungry things will not spare you;  
Insects and beasts will dispute your flesh,  
And bound your body for dwelling-places.’’

“There is no need of travel—  
Stillness will invite these other worlds  
That are delayed by distance.  
The wind will plant about my feet  
Their final flowers;  
The rivers will wash their soil under my roots;  
The travel-urge will throw
Their curious sampled people out to me.
The other worlds I mean are mixed with this—
They course within our life
Like floods within the ocean."

"I do not think these things—
They walk like strangers out beyond my mind;
Only of this world, which I see suddenly
Like clouds disclosed by lightnings.
Love came to me suddenly;
Hatred armed my hands once,
And I knew remorse.
Hunger and a red wound
Taught me the thin texture of life."

"They say the sky is distance only,
And the color of distance is blue.
And that is why violets, who have the distance of fragility,
Are blue.
Since there are larger worlds around us
There must be smaller other-worlds within us,
If one could find them."

"We who are within the waiting-rooms of existence
Should not peer into the deeper halls,
Nor tempt the attendants with our lauding curiosity."

"Can you not watch how the ceilings and the walls
Mark the backs of other rooms?
Can you not let your mind tentatively therein?"
"No—I would still suspect it."

"Well—?"

"Well—I’ll be going; good-day?"

"Good day!"

And one man walked away, brushing from him crawling words;
While the other sat still,
Wiping from his world
The stains of conversation.

THE MIST

Is death a mist
In which life becomes invisible?

Yesterday
The world ended in mist.
It lay shrunken by immobility
Into a gray coffin.

The steeple rose,
Prodded and pricked the mist
Like a question
Investigating doubt.
Its dim spire

[121]
Found the horizon new arranged
In stories.
The world became strange,
Ungrateful
Of the jagged lights
That seamed its veils.

To me, walking,
The long road unravelled
A guiding string;
And my eyes
Carried before and behind
Its constant small visibility.

I faced the mist-made microcosm—
Where pebbles are boulders,
Puddles lakes,
Sidewalk-cracks long chasms,
The curb a precipice;
Where towers flew,
Roofs floated like rafts;
And smoke wreaths
Were like dark veins
Under a skin.

Is death a mist
In which life becomes invisible?

Isidor Schneider
I am sad for the beauty that is dead:

For the sunset that I saw tonight
As I walked on a hill.
For the tangle of clouds in the light
Where the rim of the sun was showing still.

For the breath of a lily slim and pale
That I brought from the forest yesterday.
For the song of a lark on an old fence rail;
For a ground-wren’s nest in the last year’s hay.

For three slim dogwoods on a mountain-side,
Like ghost trees whitely nodding at the grass;
For a field of buttercups upon a river bank—
For a jaybird jeering shrilly as we pass.

For a wild rose by an alder tree—
For a ginger bloom more fragrant than the rose.
For a swallow sailing by with sapphire wings
Where a waterlily in the shallows grows.

For all the things that are passing and are fair;
For the shortness of the hour that gave them birth.
For the paucity of human hearts that care;
For all the things that are only of the earth.

I am sad for the beauty that is dead.

Joseph Andrew Galahad

[123]
NIGHT ABOVE THE TREE LINE

You berries, that are full of the dark dusks
Of mountains and the moisture of chill dews,
Swell on your stems and break your ripened husks
For lips which it would wither you to lose—
If there are lips to what is wandering here
Feeling you underfoot in the rocky night,
Moving about like wind, blowing you clear
Of mists, hanging your leaves with drops of light.

Listen! There is a sound of water falling
Down the dark-shafted night into the trees.
Wild birds that should be quiet now are calling.
How shall I sleep tonight, troubled with these?
The cool wind through the moon's invisible strings
Blows like a striking of clear silver bars;
The great black peak shudders and leaps and swings,
And I am blinded by the fall of stars.

I cannot rest. I cannot quiet my limbs.
A sense of climbing keeps my body burning,
And the white flame sweeps over me and dims
All that inclines within me toward returning.
Did I see only earth once long ago,
And only flesh in faces turned to me?
Sleep? Rest? With my senses shaken so
And the world's valleys lost so dizzily?

[124]
Raymond Holden

Why have I come so near the fearful stars
When what is in me is so much a want
Of utter dark too thick for any wars
Of flesh and spirit dazzlingly to haunt?
I do not know. I do not want to know;
Only to make a fire of weariness
And fling myself upon it, and burn, and go
Thinly, like smoke, to wind-walled quietness.

Raymond Holden

THESE FIELDS AT EVENING

These wear their evening light as women wear
Their pale proud beauty for some lover’s sake,
Too quiet-hearted evermore to care
For moving worlds and musics that they make;
And they are hushed as lonely women are—
So lost in dreams they have no thought to mark
How the wide heavens blossom, star by star,
And the slow dusk is deepening to the dark.

The moon comes like a lover from the hill,
Leaning across the twilight and the trees;
And finds them grave and beautiful and still,
And wearing always, on such nights as these,
A glimmer less than any ghost of light,
As women wear their beauty through the night.

David Morton

[125]
MAXIXE

Los enanitos
Se enojaren

(Old Mexican Song)

The Mexican dwarfs can dance for miles,
Stamping their feet and scattering smiles;
Till the loud hills laugh and laugh again
At the dancing dwarfs in the golden plain,
Till the bamboos sing as the dwarfs dance by
Kicking their feet at a jagged sky,
That, torn by leaves and gashed by hills,
Rocks to the rhythm the hot sun shrills.
The bubble sun sketches shadows that pass
To noiseless jumping-jacks of glass
So long and thin, so silent and opaque,
That the lions shake their orange manes, and quake,
And a shadow that leaps over Popocatepetl
Terrifies the tigers, as they settle
Cat-like limbs cut with golden bars
Under bowers of flowers that shimmer like stars.
Buzzing of insects flutters above,
Shaking the rich trees’ treasure-trove
Till the fruit rushes down, like a comet whose tail
Thrashes the night with its golden flail.
The fruit hisses down with a plomp from its tree,
Like the singing of a rainbow as it dips into the sea.
Loud red trumpets of great blossoms blare
Triumphantly like heralds who blow a fanfare;
Till the humming-bird, bearing heaven on its wing,
Flies from the terrible blossoming,
And the humble honey-bee is frightened by the fine
Honey that is heavy like money, and purple like wine;
While birds that flaunt their pinions like pennons
Shriek from their trees of oranges and lemons,
And the scent rises up in a cloud, to make
The hairy swinging monkeys feel so weak
That they each throw down a bitten cocoanut or mango.
Up flames a flamingo over the fandango;
Glowing like a fire, and gleaming like a ruby,
From Guadalajara to Guadalupe
It flies; in flying drops a feather . . .
And the snatching dwarfs stop dancing and fight together.

FRIENDSHIP

No foe could strike this blow—
Could draw this blood, this tear!
By the deep wound I know
A friend was here.

Daniel Henderson

[127]
"The sky is great and the land is great and the ocean is great," said he;
"And a bird is a lovely thing in the air, and a supple fish in the sea;
And a horse is a beautiful thing to watch, running so gay and free.

"But a ship that is built of land-grown oak, with her sails in the wind," said he,
"And who goes and comes in the very thick of the calm and storm of the sea,
Is light as a bird and swift as a fish, and like a horse runs free!"

THE COWS

I have seen cows that lay in the summer meadows,
Hearing the sound of breezes amidst the grass
While every hair in the sunlight glittered with rainbows.

Oh, but they were bland and placid and smooth and beautiful!
Their mates were great bulls with curl-matted horns
And the bellow of lions.
Their offspring were playful and gay,
Elizabeth Coatsworth

With innocent staring eyes.
Laborers toiled in the fields to find them food for the winter,
And built them against the wind dark temples scented with hay;
While women eased them of milk
That swelled their udders at twilight.
I have seen cows that lay in the meadows like gods,
Breathing forth peace that smelled of dampness and clover.

STREAM

Like a troubadour riding to battle,
Flinging his sword in the air
And catching it
As he sings,
The stream comes in white armor down the hillside.

BROADWAY

That man has the head of a goat and the paunch of Silenus,
As he walks down the sidewalk alone conventionally going to dine.
His little bright eyes are glancing, his little hard feet are prancing
As though all the crowd about him were maenads and fawns in a line.

[129]
The horns of the motors for him are puffed by the cheeks of centaurs;
The buildings and shops are cliffs, draped and festooned with the vine.
The little cane that he swings he has used on the ribs of his donkey
When the ground was rocking with laughter and the trees were reeling with wine.

AT VERSAILLES

I have watched the hours pass along the walks of Versailles Among the drifting autumn leaves:
Madame Four-O’Clock a tumble of silken skirts and smiles, On a donkey her lover lured forward with brown southern pears.
Madame Five-O’Clock, pouting among the petunias; Flower-face, flower-hands, flower-breasts barely sheathed in her bodice.
Madame Six-O’Clock languishing by a balustrade, Her thin yellow hand on the head of a black page. And Madame Seven, a white shadow among the tree-trunks, As still and as arch as the statues upon their pedestals. Elizabeth Coatsworth
PORTRAIT OF A HOUSE

Far from a town
I know a house that's a girl's dream come true.
And there is one room done in blue,
In queer still blues, with shades drawn down.

In a room near
Are candles, thick as a man's arm,
Of yellow wax, and then a warm
Great golden bowl of burning bloom;
And past, there is a little room
For tea, and being glad and proud
One is alive. There is a crowd
Of tall flowers shaken as with fear
Outside a door. And walking by
Three great windows filled with sky,
We came to a Chinese room
Where a Buddha sits in gloom.
He is as still as witchery
But in his eyes weird things I see,
Like the waiting to be wild
In the eyes of a young child.

Past this room are wonders still—
Altar vestures from Brazil,
Blue and silver ones and red;
She loves old rich things. She said,
"Cream or lemon in your tea?"

[131]
POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

In a strange laughing voice. She has
Dusk eyes, I think, or maybe blue,
And a heart for telling secrets to.

A bear-skin out of Russia yawns
On her wide hall. There have been dawns
A-many on her waiting lawns.

The rocky cliffside, glacier-scarred,
And mountain trails are in her yard.
The widest river of the west
Goes past her door. There is a jest
In all she does, and a greatness too.
And little gardens hidden where
Her guests find them unaware.

Gravely in the court beyond
Her gardeners have made a pond
Where waterlilies were, and where
They are gone now, except two rare
And perfect ones, like trembling young
Shy things; and deep and red among
The lily roots the goldfish go
In a discontented row,
Breaking and wheeling. A white wall
Bears bowls of trailing vines. There fall
Out of the air great seagulls. High
Cliffs and rough crags break up the sky,
Across the river; and beyond

[132]
The level lawn, the level pond,
The mountain rises menacing;
And a great waterfall comes down
Like a sullen tiger's spring.
I have watched her calm eyes cling
To the waterfall—while slow
And sweet she spoke, in her still way,
Of books and men that we two know.

Prisoner in her house she dwells,
As do we all. Our rooms are cells.
Loveliness is only bars
To shut out faces from the stars.

THE LAST OF THE COWBOYS

They have gone down like the sunset, who like the sun
Were mighty and high and scornful; their hour is done.
Slowly into the night they ride, each one.

They have gone down like the sunset, sharp on the hill.
A moment against the sky they stood, until
The dark came down and they met it, stoic and still.

Mary Carolyn Davies
YOUR WORDS

God gave you words, so you must give them to me.
Let me lie here on the ground
Breaking brittle pine-needles with my fingers.
You have no right to keep a gift—
God gave you words, so you must give them to me.

Your words are perfect things—
They are birds with full smooth breasts,
That fly in wide clean skies
And sleep in warm brown nests.

Your words are little globes
Of glass, or ruby-flake;
They tinkle in the air
And whisper as they break.

Your words are little ships
With silver shining sails,
That sing against the winds
Like purple nightingales.

Your words are colored fruits
In crystal jars, and tall.
You break them with your lips;
I catch them as they fall.

So give me your words.  Let them slip
Cool fingers through my hair.
There is no world but me, no heaven but you...
Somewhere outside of these there may be birds,
And fruit, and ships, and little crystal globes.

For me there are only your words...

OWL-BLASTED

"Farmer Hunt doubted whether there really were any tongs which he seemed to hold in his hand. ... Ah, these solid houses, real estates, have wings like so many nimble mosquitoes, and do exceedingly hop and avoid me!"—Emerson's Journals.

"You can trap no sweet
   From such nimble things—
They have goblin feet,
   They have goblin wings.

"Chase them everywhere,
   Everywhere they flee:
Emptier than air
   Are the world and we."

Who has heard the madmen
   Shall remember long
All their goblin music
   And their goblin song.

John McClure
High in the cloudy skies,
Along the barren hills,
Where short brown grass grows sparingly and spots of orange earth shine forth,
Where trees of sombre brown uprise,
Fantastic horses roam.

Cropping the scanty grass,
Their full white tails blown outward by the wind,
They move about majestically with slow and tranquil step.

Their necks are strangely thin and beautiful.
Their fiery eyes, fixed steadily on the ground,
Seem to be contemplating inward wonders.
With their unshod hoofs they leave no mark on the bare hard earth.

Slowly they move,
With their heads bent downward
Munching the short spare grass,
While the passing clouds, grey with incipient storm,
Hang low over the hills.

They know no day nor night,
Those pale fantastic horses;
For daylight on the hills is but a cloud-grey shadow,
And night is faintly luminous with livid mist.

[136]
Helen C. Russmann

Slowly they roam,
With their unsleeping eyes fixed inward,
Treading with easy step the inaccessible heights,
Moving in tranquil peace
Along the cloudy hills.

Helen C. Russmann

TWO POEMS

MOONLIGHT

It has covered the earth as this sheet my knee
Where my body lies like a reed in snow.
It has altered my room to a satin tomb.
It has made of my soul a silver flute—
A silver flute in a white case, mute;
A silver flute filled with prisoned song,
Long shrill song for your lips to free.

CONVENT

As into a blue lake
The little drops of days
Fall quietly.
The lake fills but does not stir.

Kathryn White Ryan

[137]
OLD AGE

Drink.
The fountain is bending low.
It is being filled with emptiness.
The day is spilling its light.

Drink,
Bending the unyielding knee.
There's a tremor
In the thought of height—
The snow of the years is fallen.

Drink.
The black shadows are toppling
Over into thin waters.

In the night,
When thou art removed
From the fountain,
Thy thirst will cease to be
A burden.
A vision shall fill the night.

OUR SORROW

Your sorrow died,
And you buried it;

[138]
And then you dried
Your tears
As you went your way
Forgetting it:
While mine lives through the years.

Men understood your sorrow
Because it died,
And pitied your tears,
Which you have dried;
But they leer at my sorrow
And sneer,
Because it lives through the years.

MARGARETTE

She's a clever little witch,
And knows it;
But it has not spoiled her heart.

The beauty of her tressed head
Is enhanced by the cunning of her fingers.
Her piquant and mobile face
Reflects
The sunshine of her soul,
And betrays the clouds of it.
I like to study her face.
Her sky-blue eyes
Vie with the softness
Of the summer heavens,
When the nimbus has fled
And cumulus dreams on the sky-line.

The naif beauty of her white teeth
Remains intact,
And laughs
At the dedal ruse of the dentist.

Last Sunday, at the spring
Which pours its potable silver
For the mendicant town of Spring Garden,
She said with a smile,
Before Lillian and the others,
That she believed
She'd made a great hit with me.
I mocked the smile of her,
And confessed that she had.

She's twenty and I'm forty—
But that's no difference to her;
For she's a clever little witch,
And knows it.

Alva N. Turner
SUGGESTIONS

BIT OF CURLS

Furious little bit of curls
Struggling against the gale!
Mad at God because the wind
Is stronger than her tiny body.

But little girl,
You do not have to!
Turn about,
And let it take you,
Fluttering, laughing,
Over the prairie,
Butterflying through the air.

FAT MAN

Shall we worship you
As god of Laughter
And Good-nature—
Or shall we crisp your flesh
As sacrificial offering
To Bacchus!

Meredith Beyers

[141]
A SAILOR’S NOTE-BOOK

TYPHOON

I have heard many men in many tongues
Hollering for something they want it.
Un I have heard the typhoon
Quarrelling with his brother the sea
On the lee beaches.
“‘This is mine island,’” says Typhoon.
“‘Is mine,’” says the sea.
“‘I bring birds what makes trees.’”
“‘I pile sand for to make beaches.’”
“‘Is mine what for I love it.’”
“‘Is mine what for I marry it.’”

Typhoon take it island by trees.
Sea grab at the beaches.
Un when they is through—
Palms piled like jack-straws,
Beaches pulled to pieces.

SEA

I

Sea is dumb fellow,
Which don’t know what he wants
Un is not happy.

[142]
II

Sea is wie bucket full with gold-dust,
Un ship is little piece of dirt
What Somebody would snap out pretty soon
With His finger.

III

Sea is still
Wie God was asleep.
Sometimes he breathes very slow.

WIND

I

Wind hunches his shoulders,
Un shivers behind deck-house.
He would like to be im tropics now.

II

Wind jumps at the luff of sails,
Slides down on his belly
With legs all spread-eagled,
Tumbles off boom,
Un goes round un round companionway—
Like crazy cat shasing his tail.

[143]
POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

III

Wind is lazy stevedore
Which comes along
Un dumps sacks of spices,
Un shuffles away singing,
"Yankee ship came down the river."

MOON

When moon comes up on dark sea
It is wie woman's hair
In mine face.

CAUTIOUS

Im foggy night
Ship goes along
Wie nice girl which is got by mistake
Im sailors' boarding-house
Un sneaks out after dark.

Her dress makesit small slippery noise,
Un boards squeak in rotten floor
From hall-way.

APPARITION

Deck was dark wie inside of cow

[144]
Un she came like Holy Mary
In a light dress.

I wantit then to pray
But could not,
Whatfor I have been sailor too long.

SAILOR

Sometimes I would rather be sailor
Wie king.
Whatfor when all hands sets the courses,
I am not one man
But eight.

BARNEY

Barney is bad watch-mate,
Whatfor I do many times his work
Un hate him for it.

But when I go out on jib-boom
Im squally night
To makeit fast the headsails,
Un sea takes me in his mouth
Up to mine waist
Un spits me out again,
Barney is like angel
Sweating in cold blow.
INSIGHT

Im Wellington port I quarrel with Alec
If ship is French or Swede full-rigger.
I get mighty hot,
Un Alec get pretty mad.
Un all of sudden I hear us
Like somebody was cracking straws in mine ear.
Un I let Alec say I am wrong.

JOCK

They ask me why I get drunk,
Un I tell them:
Whatfor when I come im port
I carry all the sea across mine shoulders
Un wouldn’t nobody help me;
Only Jock, the bar-man,
Smiles un takes load
Un puts im corner.

When mine money is all gone
Jock gives me back the sea.

STARS

I lie on mine back
Un look at stars—

[146]
So bright, so thick,  
Sailing like Portugee men-o’-wars;  
Un I ask myself how many stars can be  
Un how far.

But I am only one little man  
On one little ship  
Sailing ninety days to one port,  
Un I think I am mighty big business.

Stars ain’t Portugee men-o’-wars.

MEINSELF

Sometimes I say to meinself,  
“'I am Michaelis Kerek.'”  
But it don’t sound true.

You believe me when I say it—  
Whatfor you got to believe it, Bob.  
But there is many millions men  
What never see me.

What is Michaelis Kerek for them?  

Robert J. Roe
A RECENT discussion of prosody in *The Freeman* brought so many disputants to the fore, each with a different point of view, as to remind at least one of them of the welter of chaos and confusion in which that so-called science finds itself foundering today. Since poets and scholiasts are so at loggerheads about the fundamental technique of the verse-art practiced by the one group and analyzed by the other, it may be well to remind ourselves of the basic origins of rhythm, and of the history, not of poetry itself, but of the system of laws formulated and developed by grammarians from the study of poetry.

Rhythm is of course a universal principle, the very pulse-beat of life and of all the arts. From the amoeba to man, from the atom to the star, rhythm, or power moving regularly in time-beats, is a recognizable law which all creation must obey. The more closely modern science studies the universe—through microscope, telescope, or the naked eye and brain of man—the more astonishing and magnificent becomes this infinite harmony: an intricate weaving of small patterns within great ones, a march of ordered melody, outreaching human eyes and ears, outracing even that “only reality” the human imagination. The arts are an effort to join in, to weave little imitation patterns, sound little imita-
Prosody

tions. Even the static arts must respond with balanced form and color in painting, sculpture, architecture—else their manifestations are temporary and incongruous, part of the perishable scum and waste.

Music and poetry seem to have been among the earliest and most direct human manifestations of the universal rhythmic impulse. At first they were united—lyric rapture instinctively fitted words to melody, as it does still in certain forms of spontaneous folk-song like keening over the dead or other primitive rhapsodies of prayer and praise. But as life became more complex, the two arts separated, developed each its own imaginative and technical expression of the rhythmic instinct. Literature began in the creation of poems too beautiful to be left to chance memories and tongues, and therefore committed to writing. After the passing centuries had heaped up an accumulation of these masterpieces, the analysts took hold of them; and out of the practice of dead poets grammarians began to make rules for poets yet to come.

Thus prosody was born. And thus gradually it developed into a rigid science of verse-structure, a science about as scientific, from the modern point of view, as the astronomy or chemistry of the classic and mediaeval periods. For a brief review of its history one need go no further than Edmund Gosse's article on Verse in the Britannica. It was Aristoxenus of Tarentum, a grammarian contemporary with Alexander the Great and therefore much later than the golden age of Greek poetry,
who "first laid down definite laws for prosody as a department of musical art." From his time

The theories of verse tended to release themselves from the theories of music. Rules, often of a highly arbitrary nature, were drawn up by grammarians, who founded their laws on a scholiastic study of the ancient poets.

One Hephaestion wrote a manual of Greek metres in the second century A. D., which became an authority in both the Byzantine and the Alexandrian schools, and, printed at last in 1526, carried on his influence into modern languages. Of the elaborate system of classic verse-structure set forth by these and other analysts Mr. Gosse reminds us:

It must not be forgotten that the prosodical terminology of the Greeks, which is often treated by non-poetical writers as something scientific and even sacrosanct, dates from a time when ancient literature had lost all its freshness and impulse, and was exclusively the study of analysts and grammarians.

However, the classic nomenclature—the dactyls, anapaests, spondees, iambs, etc., of Greek and Latin, languages whose syllabic quantities were fairly rigid—was carried over into modern tongues of much more changeable quantities and emphatic stresses. Naturally it has proved a misfit; especially in English it is inaccurate and misleading—a mediaeval remainder strangely anachronistic in this age of scientific research. It has been a hampering influence, and would have been perhaps a destructive one if the poets, most of them, had not preserved either an invincible ignorance or a cold-hearted indifference against

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all the wiles of prosodic theory. I know two or three of high distinction who don’t know an iamb from a cellar-door, and couldn’t scan their poems according to formula to save their necks from the Lord High Executioner.

But this virginal innocence, however desirable in the face of a false prosody, might learn much to its advantage from a prosody as accurate and scientifically complete as the system of musical notation which has so enormously stimulated musical production. As I said in the Freeman:

In any inquiry into poetic rhythms, one is seriously handicapped by the inexactness of the old terms. Prosody, regarded as the science of verse-notation, is today about as scientific as pre-Galilean astronomy. Its inherited ancient terms—iambic, trochaic, anapaestic, dactylic, etc.—deserve no better fate than the scrap-heap, after which a modern science of prosody might be built upon sound foundations. Indeed, a beginning has been made. There is quite a bibliography of scientific articles by philologists, chiefly German, on the subject of speech-rhythms and verse-rhythms; and Dr. William Morrison Patterson, formerly of Columbia University, has made a most valuable contribution in his volume, *The Rhythm of Prose*, and in the phonographic researches which led up to it. In reviewing this book in April, 1918, I said:

“I am quite out of sympathy with those sensitive poetic souls who resent this intrusion of science. The truth can do no harm, and in this case it must do incalculable good in the enrichment of our sense of rhythmic values. The poet of the future, discarding the wilful empiricism of the past and proceeding upon exact knowledge, will greatly develop and enrich our language-rhythms just as music-rhythms are being developed and enriched by composers fully educated in their art, who add knowledge and training to that primal impulse of heart and mind which we call genius. The poet hitherto has worked in the dark, or at least in a shadow-land illumined only by his own intuition. Henceforth science will lend her lamp; she will hand him the laws of rhythm just as she hands to the painter the laws of light and color, or to the architect the laws of proportion and stress.”

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OF course modern investigators, including Mr. Bridges, recognize that even common human speech falls necessarily into what Sievers calls Sprechtakte, or speech-bars, rhythm being a universal law which prose must obey as well as poetry. So Mr. Bridges is in accord with the scientists in declaring that “in English accentual measures the natural speech-groupings must be supreme.”

Prof. Patterson’s researches were interrupted a few years ago, unfortunately, by his resignation from the faculty of Columbia University. At present he is living in old Charleston, where, according to a recent letter, he hopes soon to resume his study of this subject. The work of a progressive scientific mind in this much-befogged specialty cannot fail to be illuminating. H. M.

REVIEWS

CHARLOTTE MEW


A slim book of verse laden with so much observation, knowledge, passion, sentiment, that it is like an apple-tree burdened by the excess of its own beauty. Almost each poem has the material in it for innumerable poems, and almost each poem is weighed down with words. Yet though Miss Mew lacks simplicity, she never lacks interest. I think, in fact, that this book would appeal to a larger audience than any book of verse published in the past two years, with the possible exception of Edna St. Vincent Millay’s Second April; because the poems tell stories,
and tell them with genuine dramatic feeling. For instance, The Farmer's Bride:

Three summers since I chose a maid,
Too young maybe—but more's to do
At harvest-time than bide and woo.
When us was wed she turned afraid
Of love and me and all things human;
Like the shut of a winter's day.
Her smile went out, and 'twasn't a woman—
More like a little frightened fay.
One night, in the fall, she runned away.

"Out 'mong the sheep her be," they said—
Should properly have been abed.
But sure enough she wasn't there,
Lying awake with her wide brown stare.
So over seven-acre field and up-along across the down
We chased her flying like a hare
Before our lanterns. To Church-town
All in a shiver and a scare
We caught her, fetched her home at last,
And turned the key upon her fast.

She does the work about the house
As well as most, but like a mouse;
Happy enough to chat and play
With birds and rabbits and such as they,
So long as men-folk keep away.
"Not here, not here!" her eyes beseech
When one of us comes within reach.
The women say that beasts in stall
Look round like children at her call.
I've hardly heard her speak at all.

Shy as a leveret, swift as he,
Straight and slight as a young larch tree,
Sweet as the first wild violets, she,
To her wild self. But what to me?
The short days shorten and the oaks are brown,
The blue smoke rises to the low grey sky,
One leaf in the still air falls slowly down,
A magpie's spotted feathers lie
On the black earth spread white with rime,
The berries redden up to Christmas time.
What's Christmas time without there be
Some other in the house than we!
She sleeps up in the attic there
Alone, poor maid. 'Tis but a stair
Betwixt us. O my God! the down,
The soft young down of her, the brown,
The brown of her—her eyes, her hair, her hair!

The above, I think, shows Miss Mew at her best. She
has taken one idea and has handled it with restraint. In
the longer poems, such as Madeleine in Church and The
Quiet House, she is in danger of becoming melodramatic
and verbose. And frequently she loses all sense of word-
sound, as in the cacophonous ending of this stanza:

Red is the strangest pain to bear:
In spring the leaves on the budding trees;
In summer the roses are worse than these,
More terrible than they are sweet—
A rose can stab you across the street
Deeper than any knife.
And the crimson haunts you everywhere—
Thin shafts of sunlight, like the ghosts of reddened swords, have
struck our stair,
As if, coming down, you had split your life.

The final lines are as unpleasant to the ear as a finger-
nail drawn across a blackboard; particularly as they follow lines of accurate beauty.

Almost all of the poems are objective, which, in itself, is refreshing in this age when so many poets emphasize the diminutive flutterings of their colossal ego. And the fact that Miss Mew successfully subordinates her own personality to that of the characters in her poems proves her a mature artist. There is nothing slap-dash about her, nothing young—her sophistication has mellowed to wisdom. And when she does not try to impart too much of her knowledge, we are exalted by it:

Tide be runnin' the great world over:
T'was only last June month I mind than we
Was thinkin' the toss and the call in the breast of the lover
So everlastin' as the sea.
Here's the same little fishes that sputter and swim,
Wi' the moon's old glim on the grey wet sand;
An' him no more to me nor me to him
Than the wind goin' over my hand.

Marion Strobel

A SPIRIT OF QUEST


If poetry is an easily understood, self-fulfilling bead-string of so-called beautiful images that he who runs may read; if it implies not a continual rebellion to standardized beauty; if it should be simple and naive; then this bitter burning caustic stuff, the broken rhythm of it, the labyrinthine sophistication of it, have nothing to do with
Pegasus. The old venerable horse would lose his head in it and get his hoofs scorched. McAlmon seeks—it is hard to say just what he seeks; there is a spirit of quest in this book. We might call it the struggle of the poet versus his own sophistication. For that he is a poet some lines tell even to the skeptical:

Between sunrise and sunrise any life is left pendulating.
What if a few stars are stitched
To the hem of the garment one cannot throw off—
The sky one cannot look far into?

and

I have been a vermilion geyser breaking into petals of hot mist that freeze to crack, clinking on the too thin-ringing glass of silence.

The very spirit of quest and struggle is in this book and it is that which makes McAlmon say:

Wind, wear yourself to stillness, to death—do not listen to the careful ones. Do not subside. You inevitably shall be made to, but never degrade yourself with ingratiation.

These are essentials to that spirit which prompted Prometheus' theft—the poetic spirit.

The tedium and the nausea of sophistication, with the struggle thereof, are emphasized in this slim book. Yet McAlmon is sometimes simple and direct. Witness his book of short stories and "momentary" essays—thus he calls them—*A Hasty Bunch*: stories which are plotless, unfinished and sketchy, but always honest, always interesting and often very free; with a dark sullen trend of fatalism running through them. What is best in *Explora-
A Spirit of Quest

tions, The Via Dolorosa of Art (a beautiful title!), is a rather simple song of the mood that precedes artistic conception; indeed it is rather adolescent, taking the word not to mean derogation but a rather charming insecurity and transparency. The same could be said of Mood Decisions and Prose Sketches, which are, like the face of the artist of Via Dolorosa, "sullen with youth," often boisterous and sometimes bombastic. In striking contrast these are with some other poems which sound like—did you ever hear a vaudeville actor string a lot of high-sounding nonsense words? In the Via Dolorosa there is perhaps too much nomenclature, and nomenclature means a vain effort at conception. McAlmon makes an impression. It may be unpleasant—it all depends: a youth, agile and attractive, passing by without taking his hat off to anybody.

Emanuel Carnevali

A PROMISE


The ghost of tradition no longer walks, insinuating repetition; conventionalities of form have been cast aside as snares and delusions. Yet anarchy also is being ruled out—it has begun to be remembered that discipline is one of the duties of the artist, for of what virtue the title "artist" if selection and organization are to be left to

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the public? The new generation of poets, studying the French symbolists, going to school in technique to William Butler Yeats, H. D., and Wallace Stevens; infusing a new flexibility into old forms with Edna Millay—the new generation has done with the inchoate. Perfection has again become the grail: subtlety is demanded of rhythm and rhyme, and profundity of observation. One says what one has to say and ends. Above all, no digression or elaboration for the sake of the mechanics.

Oscar Williams, however, is no disciplinarian. His is a gift-horse into whose mouth he has not looked. He has taken it, been duly grateful, cherished it, and spared it heavy burdens.

Nature, naively as in primitive religions, is his protagonist. She is his lady, and he is her troubadour. In a rhythm subtle only by instinct, in facile rhyme, in image and execution varying from the painfully beautiful to the painfully mediocre, he sings without affectation and in a single strain like a bird. The beauties of dawn, of stars, of the palpable dusk of twilight, and the palpable darkness of night, prick him like needles, urging him to his single-noted song, and his gyrations, as of a dancing dervish, ever and ever around in the same spot. One is aware, however, above all, of an authentic urge, aware that Oscar Williams is a poet and no mistake. In spite of an endless repetition of grandiloquent abstractions—mystery, darkness, vastness, strangeness, grandeur, glamour—in spite of banal rhythm and rhyme, one realizes that when
Oscar Williams arrives at the maturity promised by the isolated lines quoted below, he will be a far better poet than he is now.

One does not demand great depth of thought of one's lyricists. We shall be satisfied if Oscar Williams but plucks consistently:

And far away the poised gray mountains,
Like billows caught in a trance.

The tears within the twilight's eyes.

Fantasy is lithe like a hound.

And he compares the emergence of the earth at dawn to "a clenched fist, knuckled with crags."

*The Golden Darkness* (*In Gossamer Gray* is in effect supplementary) is a promise and not a fulfilment. The young poet has just awakened; he stands before life rubbing the mist from his eyes. He has experienced little. He has not yet begun to sing of love, that primal theme of lyricists. Life hides behind a fog, secretive, illusory. When he has done rubbing his eyes, he may come into that clarity of vision one demands of good creative work, no matter how subjective or how mystical. At present he is a novitiate who has taken his first vows.

*Ruminations* is perhaps the poem that offers most in quotation:

"So," I said, "I am feeling
What I shall always feel—
The sharp toe of a stone,
And a shadow's heel."

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“So,” I said, “I am seeing
    What I shall always see—
The snow blossoms of moonlight
    Blowing on a tree.”
“So,” I said, “I am hearing
    What I shall always hear—
The winds with hair of starlight
    Crying wild and clear.”
“So,” I said, “I glory in
    What shall always be mine—
The flowers flushing red
    In the sky’s blue wine.”
“So,” I said, “I am living
    What I may not be—
A dusty masterpiece,
    A mouldy biography.”

Pearl Andelson

SLIGHT SONGS


Unfortunately for Mr. Barrett, one feels an almost irresistible impulse to review the publisher’s blurb upon the slip-cover of this volume rather then the relatively unimaginative poems which the volume contains. The advertising agent who could speak of these frail and somewhat crudely made vessels for an evident sincerity and almost painful earnestness as the “strange songs vibrant with passion” of a poet “humanly great, yet clear of eye for the little things” (why “yet,” we wonder?) deserves individual attention. It is a pity that the

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Slight Songs

blurb is so conspicuously placed as to demand a reading, since it gives a distorted idea of the poems within.

These are the work of a poet, seemingly young or inexperienced, who sings without much originality of how youth intoxicates itself with the sights and sounds of the city at dusk or refreshes itself under the country pines. Mr. Barrett pauses to pay appropriate tribute to Francis Thompson, to A. E. Housman, to Stephen Phillips; and his work gives back now and then a faint echo of the two last-named poets, and even of Alfred Noyes. His verse lacks the smoothness that one expects from an admirer of Housman, however. One observes a gift for inept metaphor: "a bouquet of young clouds," "the scarf of evening sea flows far adown the grassy beach," "Trees with fretted stars In their lacy hair"; and a disregard for the assonances of English speech, which leads him into such phrases as "the love-loveliness of leaves." Nor has he any great respect for the mot juste: here are adjectives of almost inconceivable clumsiness—"unbefrenzied laughter"; adjectives long since threadbare—"impenetrable, obliterating years"; and adjectives that set one's teeth on edge—"his cozy spouse."

Yet in spite of these defects, most of which are due to immaturity and are therefore excusable in a first book; the poems have the charm of sincerity and of a sympathetic vision. We feel this particularly in The Valley of the Shadow, That Night I Danced, The House, and A
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*Dead Man.* Some of his pictures are skilfully constructed, even if unmagical; there is vividness in *Miriam*—a white birch in a pine forest—and in his portrayal of tanagers in a city square,

Where toiling Adam stops to watch,  
Tired Eve forgets her apple.

Mr. Barrett says somewhere "I am looking for stars"; and in that voicing of his determined search he has revealed his worst trespasses against poetry—self-consciousness and straining after effect. Are not stars most exquisitely and most beautifully reflected from pools of waiting water?  

*Muna Lee*

**A JAPANESE COSMOPOLITE**

*Seen and Unseen: or Monologues of a Homeless Snail,*  
by Yone Noguchi. (New ed.) Orientalia, New York.  
*Selected Poems of Yone Noguchi,* selected by himself.  
The Four Seas Co.

With the publication of *Seen and Unseen* in 1898, in San Francisco, Yone Noguchi came into being, and with him came a new tide of oriental influence into our literature. Ethical teachings, philosophy of life manufactured by human intellect, and long narrative stories were entirely absent from his poems. He wrote as he felt—this is the essence of oriental poetry. While the West was busy preaching to the people through its poetry, the East discarded intellectual discussions and
devoted itself to creating mood; if philosophy entered at all, it was the result of the poet's feeling and not of his intellect. Although the poems in *Seen and Unseen* were a little nebulous and undefined, they were the first poetry of an oriental expressed in English.

Reading through selections from *Voice of the Valley* we find this passage, in *Song of Day in Yosemite Valley*:

> The shout of hell wedded to the silence of heaven completes the valley concert.

To feel that strange silence of the mountains and the sky in the roar of the fall is typically Japanese. To feel and create this poetic silence, and through it to suggest the roar, the power, and the majesty of the fall without describing it, is the mission of Japanese poets. And if such a poem is successfully written it has infinitely stronger expression, at least to a Japanese, than hundreds of adjectives piled upon each other by western poets. Yone felt this silence, and had he been completely a Japanese poet, he would have centered his effort in the creation of the silence, instead of in describing the sublimity of the fall as he did in the opening of this poem: "O thunderous opening of the unseen gate!"

But this is not a Japanese poem. Yone felt the mood of Japanese poetry, and expressed it to a certain degree through the western medium. Should western readers discover that strange silence in his poetry, his mission will be fulfilled. Whether they do or not, time alone will tell. The so-called oriental influence in western
literature today, I am afraid, is taking the form it has assumed in the other arts, which, to a great extent, have adopted the carcass of Japanese pictures and missed the essence. In this respect Yone's *Japanese Hokkus*, published in 1920, is misleading. For example:

Speak not again, Voice;
The silence washes off sins.
Come not again, Light.

This is written in a hokku form, seventeen syllables in three lines. But the form does not make a hokku. Some of the best hokkus are written without this form. Where is that fine and illusive mood, big enough to illuminate the infinity of the universe, which is essential to the hokku? I cannot find it. This verse may be poetic, but perhaps it should have more words, more lines, and stronger expression. The hokku is not condensed milk; condensed milk never becomes cream. Most of Yone's hokkus sound almost like those of Amy Lowell, which miss the essential quality of the type. Miss Lowell is of course ignorant of Japanese, but Yone has no such excuse.

The free verse of today has moved far away from the example which Yone set during the nineties; but it owes something to him; it acknowledges frankly enough the oriental influence.

*Jun Fujita*
DANTE IN ENGLISH RHYME


No translation of The Divine Comedy can be altogether acceptable unless in rhyme. Prose, however faithful, is wholly inadequate; blank verse, however skilful, is not much better. And the rhyme ought to be (titanic achievement!) the terza rima of the original—that endless chain which imposes poetry upon those pedestrian passages that occur even in Dante.

Furthermore, no version of the Comedy, not even the original, is fully intelligible and effective without notes. These need not be detailed, nor need they busy themselves over minor points; but they must be present for the sake of a broad and general guidance through the intricacies of Dante’s great conception and the labyrinth of an erudition which drew upon all the learning of the time. And if these notes be marginal, rather than at the bottom of the page or at the end of the volume, their usefulness is increased threefold.

These requirements are met in the newest translation of the Comedy—that of Dr. Melville B. Anderson, now presented after twenty years of labor. This translation is in the triple rhyme of the original, and is practically line for line. Dr. Anderson has favored the strong, simple, direct words of our English speech, with scant dependence upon Latinized “limbs and outward flour-
ishes.” Though the employment of terza rima was discouraged by such a Dante scholar as Charles Eliot Norton, its use here may be pronounced highly successful. The rhyme-scheme is maintained with considerable taste and skill throughout, and many lines equal the concision and impressiveness of the original ones, with no loss of poetic quality.

The nub of the Comedy is the thirtieth canto of the Purgatorio, with the appearance of Beatrice in the car; and the climax of the work is the Beatific Vision, in the last canto of the Paradiso. Brief excerpts will show Dr. Anderson’s treatment of these crucial passages.

“Blessed be thou that comest!” cried that band,
Filling the air with flowers along the way;
“Oh give ye lilies all with liberal hand!”—

is assuredly a satisfactory equivalent for—

Tutti dicean: “Benedictus qui venis,”
e for gittando di sopra e dintorno:
“Manibus o date lilia plenis!”—

and is none the worse for being in one language.

With Hallelujah on requickened tongue

is a noble equivalent for—

la rivestita voce alleluiaando;

and

Angels and ministers of life eterne

stands effectively for—

ministri e messaggier di vita eterna,
unless a stress, perhaps undue, be laid on the fact that “ministers,” scripturally, form but one of the general order of “angels.”

In the Beatific Vision of the Trinity, the translator employs hendacasyllables—speaking roughly, our so-called “weak ending.” This is of course in high conformity with the scheme of the original—I believe there are but six ten-syllable lines in the entire Comedy:

To me within the luminous deep being
Of Lofty Light appeared three circles, showing
Three colors, and in magnitude agreeing;
And from the First appeared the Second flowing
Like Iris out of Iris, and the Third
Seemed fire that equally from both is glowing.

Truly, in English, the eleven-syllable line leans heavily on the present participle.

Immediately afterward comes a passage in which the line-for-line principle is set aside.

O luce eterna, che sola in te sidi,
   sola t’intendi, e da te intelletta
   ed intendente te ami e arridi!

becomes:

O Light Eterne, who dost thyself include,
   Who lovest, smiling at thy own intents,
   Self-understanding and self-understood!—

a departure which is more than justified by the splendid success of the concluding line.

The notes, as I have indicated, are placed where they do the most service; and they often have a touch of un-
conventionality and informality which makes them not only serviceable but enjoyable. For minor detailed points the translator refers us, properly enough, to well-known and easily accessible handbooks.

In make-up the volume is handsome and intelligent. Cover, jacket, and the few illustrations are highly apropos. However, the number of the canto might have shown in the running heads; and it would have done no harm if the lines themselves had been numbered by the usual threes or fives.

On the whole, a great achievement. Possessing Scartazzini in Italian and Anderson in English, one is well equipped; indeed, other editions and versions might even be dispensed with.

Henry B. Fuller

CORRESPONDENCE

A WORD FROM MR. UNTERMeyer

To the Editor: The few of us who have been worried about the sometimes monotonous heresies of POETRY's younger critics are grateful for the catholicity exhibited in your May number. The magazine threatens to become what it used to be: an adventure in excitement. Where else in one journal, I wonder, could one hope to find so scornful an attack on feminist poetry as Yvor Winters' querulous review of Anna Wickham's book, and so
incongruous a defense of the jingle of chronic optimism as Gamaliel Bradford’s laudation of “Eddie” Guest?

Because of a personal thrust in the first review, I am appending an expostulation to these congratulatory sentences. Thus Mr. Winters, beginning his review of The Contemplative Quarry:

“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 purpose may have to do with art.

The spectacle of an author championing his publishers is so rare that I take a double pleasure in asking Mr. Winters, as courteously as possible, what secret agents led him to believe that Harcourt, Brace and Co. “chose” me to introduce Mrs. Wickham to the American public? The truth is exactly the opposite; for better or for worse, I “chose” them. For many years an enthusiastic reader of Mrs. Wickham’s work as it appeared in England, I suggested and prepared a condensed edition of two of her books, offering, brashly and with malice prepense, to supply an appreciative foreword which I had written for The New Republic. Mr. Winters, in all fairness, should attribute to the “gentlemen” who publish no more “shrewdness” than they actually possess.

But my chief quarrel with your reviewer is based on his second sentence. Mr. Winters is a poet, and he is sensitive enough to know that art, like beauty, is not a
thing but a relation. And yet he writes about it as dogmatically as though he were using a sacrosanct capital A, as if art were a static property or a fixed form which one could violate as easily as breaking a vase or dropping the fourteenth line of the sonnet. The term itself tends increasingly to such confused thought and cloudy writing that I would like to see an insurgent movement which had for one of its objects the elimination from the language of certain words. I refer particularly to the tag-ends of literary jargon which have become as full of contradictions and as empty of meaning as: Art, Beauty, Magic, Rhetoric, Design, Lyric, etc. Mr. Winters should remember, what he undoubtedly knows, that the desire to write definitely of definite things (if Mr. Cabell will pardon the realistic paraphrase) is as much a province of "art" as the most subtle interweaving of nuance and overtone. And for such creation, "candor" and "purpose" are not wholly negligible.

Louis Untermeyer

Note by the Editor: It is hardly necessary to remind Mr. Untermeyer that the editors are not responsible for opinions printed in our correspondence section. That is partly a protest department, and even Mr. Guest may find a defender there.

Reviews are a different matter. If the editor were to permit only her own exact opinions to be expressed in reviews, she would needs write them all herself. In a general way she endeavors to print reviews which agree, on the whole, with the feeling and attitude toward the art which the magazine seeks to encourage. The reviewer's ardor may sometimes carry him too far, but to insist on meticulous modifications might destroy all ardor.
ROBERT BURNS WILSON

To the Editor: Many of my friends and myself were interested in the editorial in your southern number entitled Poetry South. The treatment of southern literature seemed to center chiefly about the southeastern states, but as passing mention was made of certain Kentuckians, we wish to call your attention to the omission of the name of the poet-painter, Robert Burns Wilson.

To any Kentuckian, it is almost anathema that our greatly beloved and distinguished poet should be missed from any discussion of southern letters; and I venture to say that in the coming revival of interest in southern literature, his name will be prominent. The contemporary and friend of Madison Cawein, James Lane Allen, Henry Watterson, James Whitcomb Reilly, Richard Watson Gilder and a host of other American men of letters, there is hardly an event in the literary history of his time with which he was not connected. Few Americans who went through the Spanish-American War can forget his Remember the Maine, and To a Kentucky Cardinal the children of the South learn in their readers. In 1909 he received the Memorial Medal for his commemorative poem at the Poe Centenary held at the University of Virginia (his home state—he migrated to Kentucky); and his tribute to Robert E. Lee is immortal. In the cemetery at Frankfort his monument stands side by side with Daniel Boone's, overlooking the Elkhorne River, and his bust is in the State House.

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Wilson's name was familiar in the magazines and he left three books of verse: *Life and Love*, *The Shadows of the Trees* and *The Chant of a Woodland Spirit*. Another book is to be published shortly. His daughter has once contributed to your magazine, I believe; her name is Anne Elizabeth Wilson.

_A Kentuckian_

NOTES

Certain problems of editorial policy may perhaps be confided to our contributors and readers. Of late we have been informed of cases of disappointment and irritation due to our holding accepted poems too long before publication.

This impatience is hardly to be wondered at, but these poets might be still more disappointed if we should refuse their poems merely because we have no immediate room for them. The greatest editorial difficulty we encounter is the temptation to accept more poems than we are able to publish promptly. It seems an injustice to send back a good poem, but delay is the only possible alternative. We cannot enlarge the magazine, as each copy printed, being partly paid for by endowment, already costs more than its retail price; moreover, a monthly sheaf of verse should be discreetly small.

Apparently there is but one thing to do—we must be less hospitable. The editors will be compelled hereafter to draw a more stringent line in the acceptance of poems. We have too much advance material on hand, but the conquest of soft moods may enable us to begin our next volume in October with a cleaner slate. Hereafter we must try to keep the edge of resolution sharp, even at the risk of errors of exclusion.

We deeply regret to announce the recent death, in Portland, Oregon, of Joseph Andrew Galahad, whose poem, *A Mood*, appears in this number.

For years this poet has fought gallantly his deadly enemy—tuberculosis. In his last letter to the editor, written February 17th, he said:

"I'm much better, and the old dragon has run away for a whole year,"
the doctors tell me. I’m going to believe them this trip, and work as
no one ever dreamed of working for that year.”

His was a heroic spirit, and his death means the loss of a friend whose
letters were as warm and personal as a hand-clasp. His poems reflected
the spirit of the man; one of the best of them, Argosy, which was first
printed in the North American Review, presented allegorically his own
struggle for life and beauty.

Of the poets represented this month, eight have appeared before in
Poetry. These are, besides Mr. Galahad, Mr. Isidor Schneider and
Mr. Raymond Holden, of New York; Miss Elizabeth Coatsworth, of
Pasadena and many other places from China to Buffalo; Kathryn
White Ryan (Mrs. Edward R.), of New York; Miss Mary Carolyn
Davies, author of Youth Riding and other books (Macmillan Co.),
whose present New York address will be gratefully received; Mr. David
Morton, author of Ships in Harbor (G. P. Putnam’s Sons); and Mr. John
McClure, author of Airs and Ballads (Alfred A. Knopf).

The others are new to our readers:
Mr. Osbert Sitwell, author of Argonaut and juggernaut, is a well
known young English poet, one of “the three Sitwells”—sister and two
brothers—who were first published by B. H. Blackwell, of Oxford, a few
years ago.

Mr. Alva N. Turner, who first appeared in Dr. Williams’ mimeo-
graphed magazine Contact, is now living in Mendota, Wis. Mr. Mered-
ith Beyers lives mostly in Chicago; and Helen Russmann (Mrs. Felix
R.) in one of its suburbs, Palos Park. Miss Athena McFadden, of
Granville, N. Y., is finishing her course at Smith College.

Mr. Robert J. Roe, now living in Hohokus, N. J., “worked as line-
man, factory hand, sailor and newspaper hack” before he was twenty,
went to the Mexican border with New Jersey militia in 1916, and the
next year took up a claim in Arizona. Mr. Roe writes:
“A Sailor’s Note-book is an attempt to interpret the sailor in terms of
his own choosing.

“Michaelis Kerek was my shipmate on a four-masted schooner for a
nine-months’ trip in the South Pacific. He is Lettish by birth, but by
profession he is an alien, a wandering man, at home everywhere and
nowhere at ease; in short, a sailor.
"He is unlettered but not uncultured. His poems were spoken to me without his understanding what they were, and without my realization at the time. They were pitched in a key that the sea knows, whispered to me at night in the lantern-lighted forecastle; confided to me on the forecastle head when I came to relieve him and he lingered a moment, loath to quit the comfort of a seat on the anchor windlass, the mysterious peace of the hushed water under the forefoot, and the aching lunge of the jib-boom at the stars. I set down what he told me in my journal, and months after my return, on rereading his phrases, I said to myself, 'This is the stuff of which poetry is made.' And I set myself to interpret it.

"I may not have done justice to Michaelis. Surely, if you do not get the impression of a wistful soul longing beyond the possibilities of his intelligence (which is what we all are doing) I shall have failed; but at least I shall have the satisfaction of knowing that I have done my utmost."

BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:

Melodies and Mountains, by Isabella McLennan McMeekin. Stratford Co.
Down-adown Derry, by Walter de la Mare. Henry Holt & Co.
Songs at Anchor, by B. L. Shurtleff. Plimpton Press.
Songs of a Dream, by Alfred James Fritchy. Privately printed, Los Angeles.
Introducing Irony, by Maxwell Bodenheim, Boni & Liveright.
Dreams and a Sword, by Medora C. Addison. Yale Univ. Press.

ANTHOLOGIES:
Home-work and Hobbyhorses (Perce Playbook VI), ed. by H. Caldwell Cook. E. P. Dutton & Co.

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—Whitman

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