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Editor: HARRIET SHAW WEAVER.

Assistant Editor: RICHARD ALDINGTON.

Contributing Editor:

DORA MARSDEN, B.A.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
"TRUTH AND REALITY," III. By Dora Marsden	65	POEMS. By Richard Aldington, H. D., John Gould Fletcher, F. S. Flint, D. H. Lawrence, Amy Lowell, Marianne Moore, and May Sinclair.	74
VIEWS AND COMMENTS. By Dora Marsden	69	THE IMAGISTS DISCUSSED. By Harold Monro	77
<i>SPECIAL IMAGIST NUMBER</i>			
THE HISTORY OF IMAGISM. By F. S. Flint	70	THE POETRY OF F. S. FLINT. By Richard Aldington	80
THE POETRY OF EZRA POUND. By Richard Aldington	71	THE POETRY OF D. H. LAWRENCE. By O. Shakespear	81
THE POETRY OF H. D. By F. S. Flint	72	THE POETRY OF AMY LOWELL. By John Gould Fletcher	81
THE POETRY OF JOHN GOULD FLETCHER. By Ferris Greenslet	73	CORRESPONDENCE	82

"TRUTH AND REALITY"

By DORA MARSDEN

III

WHEN therefore all which pertains to the Perceiving Ego is taken cognizance of by language the conundrums about the Nature of the respective Worlds—of Sentient Mind, of Appearance, and of reality—all disappear. Sentient Mind is relieved of its imputed "logical" necessity to play the rôle of victim to the Shows of Appearance—those deluding phantoms of "Reality" which are forced upon Mind by the limitations of Sense. And the Infinite Eternally-elusive "Reality" of metaphysics which finite Sense is doomed ever to seek and never to find, and which under aspects distorted by its own deceptive mirror of finiteness and limitation sense offers to the Perceiving Mind equates into something quite other: a convenient label for a mass of confusion: a compound of lost trails of observation, of subtle dialectical points abandoned, and of those fixed opinions whose interests are best served by allowing confusion to persist and become established unmenaced by a too stringent inquiry.

It is not however only the Ineffectuals who would follow the trail but can't, and the Voluptuaries—philosophical and religious—who perhaps could but won't, who allow this trifold conception of Mind plus Matter with Perception as the Bridge in between, to fix their attitude towards the panorama of Life and the World. No matter under what kind of metaphor it disguises itself—whether it is that of Sense as a Bridge, Mind as a Mirror, Appearance as Correspondence, in religion, philosophy, poetry, and ordinary every-day practice, an identical attitude reveals itself. Here at least "Common sense" and "Culture" are at one. It is, as a matter of fact, almost impossible to use language without unconsciously adopting it, probably because before language itself was ever moulded this attitude was already and instinctively held. A correspondent writing in the current issue of *THE EGOIST* voices the objections which naturally would suggest themselves to such as maintain this attitude against the assertions made

in this series of articles as to the relationship of a Mind to its World. This correspondent writes:

I should be interested to have a clearer explanation of Miss Marsden's use of the word "create" in its relation to the Ego and its Images. Thus she says "the 'I' creates its own World. The World is of it. As the 'I' is, so the World is. The 'I' gives to itself such images as it can strike out from itself" (January 1, p. 3). I should have said the "I" perceives to the extent of its powers such images or the images of such things as it comes in contact with. Again: "The progress of science is but the expanding of the 'I': of that world of images which we call the scientist's soul. And all that which we call the Objective World are but so many chords—auras—thrown out by the 'I' itself" (January 1, p. 4).

Again: "There is no Reality outside the realm of Sense, lying 'there' ready-made until such time as sense can gnaw its way towards 'it.' There is only the actual sensing life which throws out new appearances from itself as its powers grow, and which creates all things which are and will create all that ever will be in the future, no matter how great and wonderful and radiant." It is not clear to me how this process works. There would seem to be rather an interaction. Allowing that the "I" changes, so its world changes, it appears to me that as its world changes so the "I" and its images change; and that instead of being the original creator of all the phenomena which its organs sense, the "I" at the beginning of its life gradually becomes aware of Things by their action on itself, which action sets up the process perfected by practice, *i.e.* of its sensing them. And the better the sensing, and remembering and comparing of sensings, the fuller its particular world becomes. I am probably more capable of perceiving wonderful and more radiant worlds than is a worm, and possibly an archangel would find these worlds more radiant and wonderful than I do. But it does not at present help my understanding to say that the worm, the archangel and myself each created that which we respectively perceive.

Putting on one side for a moment the question raised as to the sense in which we use the word "create," and a further and unquoted question from the same correspondent as the responsibility as regards a drunkard (which really is a modest but quite pertinent request for a detailed sketch of the architecture of the universe), let us give further attention to this matter of a "World" (*i.e.* a "Reality") lying "there" outside the realms of

sense," waiting, "ready-made until such time as sense can gnaw its way towards it." The line which the explication of the matter will have to take has already been partially indicated in the article from which our correspondent quotes, and it will perhaps be in the interests of clearness if we quote them from still more. In pressing home how intellectually urgent it is to consider in their actual relation to the Ego those of its aspects which verbally and quite arbitrarily have been torn from it in order to furnish a content for an "External World," we wrote: "The term 'I' . . . is the sign of the living unit—the organism—affirming the presence of its own life. It stands comprehensively for 'I am conscious'; for 'I feel,' 'I live,' and 'I am.' The 'I' includes the full connotation of 'I am.' 'I am' is an assertion made twice, as is the phrase 'I exist,' and its further equivalents 'I feel' and 'I sense' (and we might here insert 'I perceive'). Anything which we allow 'am' 'feel' 'exist' 'sense' ('perceive') to connote, the 'I' has already asserted of itself. They have no meaning which the 'I' has not: in fact they have no meaning at all apart from the purport of the 'I.' 'To be,' 'to feel,' 'to sense,' 'to exist' are properly speaking devoid of connotation, but they take on a *loosely suggested meaning on account of their association with 'am' 'feel,' &c.** Abstracted from the 'I' as the infinite form of the verb *is*,* it is divorced from the only source capable of investing it with meaning. The infinite pure and simple has no tally (outside itself). Nor accurately speaking have any forms of the verb other than the first person singular linked fast to its subject. Always it is 'I' which feels. You, they, she, he, it, merely appear to me to feel."

In order to support the above assertions several propositions require working out. It is perhaps of the first importance that the verb "Perceive" should be put in its correct Time-relation (if we may so call it) to the verb "Be" and its forms, and that "Things Perceived" should be put in their correct Space-relation to the "I" which perceives them.

Then the verb "Be," which plays the rôle of Deceiving Spirit in the metaphysical hoax, requires a complete psychological analysis—a difficult grammatical task. Whoever accomplishes it will have bled Metaphysics white of the *Meta*.

And there is need to reassert the exclusive claim to the "I" to the subjective rôle in all philosophical language. The allowing—for brevity's sake—of the images perceived by the subjective perceiving "I" to assume the subjective form in the endeavour to amplify the picture of the "I" and to translate it into words, can be ventured in safety only when the fact of the ever-present subjective (*i.e.* governing and creative) relation of the "I" to all the images it can sense, and the objective (*i.e.* governed and created) relationship of these are recognised and allowed for. The recognition of this permitted ellipsis cannot be too much insisted upon because the very persuasiveness of the "I" leads to its activity being taken for granted in such a degree of absoluteness that it is tantamount to overlooking and ignoring its existence. The results of which are the existing unhappy condition of philosophy. Between these points set for the encouragement of error, there exists no strict dividing line: each one merges into the other and each lends each support in the production of their common effect—confusion.

The verb "Perceive" has—on grounds which superficially seem adequate—been arbitrarily limited to express the "awareness of feeling" in its maturer stage only. First a thing "is," and *thereafter*—so it is implied—we "perceive it." Whereas, actually it is only after we *have* perceived it that it can be affirmed of a thing that it "is." When we perceive . . . A, B, or C, then A, B, or C . . . "is." The two forms of speech "is" and "is perceived" psychologically imply the same thing. The post-dating of the perception of a thing in relation to its "Is-ness"—its "Existence"—though it has secured a firm foothold in speech has no place in the actual psychological process. Perhaps the reason

* Words in italic to indicate slight alteration of the original phrasing.

why this duplicating of terms for a single activity has become so firmly established is because of the fact that the one verbal form "Is" has been made the stock form of a passive condition, while "Perceive" is constantly in use to denote the active and successively repeated processes. When once a thing "is" (*i.e.* is perceived), it has established its claim to a cognizable existence; but the power to perceive it again and again remains, and it is as a matter of fact this constant creative action of the perceptive power which furnishes the "existence" anew each time "it" is recognized. The stationary power of the "I" comes thus to be regarded invertedly as constituting an independent existence for the "thing," while the perceiving power of the "I" itself—though permanent—because not exercised constantly in perceiving this particular thing (*i.e.* exhibiting its creative power in this particular fashion) is regarded as merely "taking views of the thing." The argument here grows frail and thin almost to vanishing point: only it stops short of vanishing, and because it does so it spells out the end of traditional metaphysics which is based upon an acceptance of the erroneous view that "Be" and "Perceive" represent two different sets of mental facts. This argument must be insisted upon. It cannot be affirmed that a thing "is" until a Sentient Mind has felt it. The affirmation itself means nothing more than just this, "I feel . . . the feeling or group of feelings" and the feeling so constitutes "It" (*i.e.* the "thing"). Even when "Is-ness" (*i.e.* Existence) is claimed for "things" apart from the mind which perceives them, the former cannot be asserted to "be" until some Perceiving Mind is aware of them, and then they "are" only to such minds as have perceived them. Of things which "are" to us by hearsay we can only say that as far as we are concerned the *statements* as to their verbally imputed existence "are" Before we can emphatically declare that a thing "is," we ourselves must have perceived it: all certainty of assertion as to its existence depending upon it being thus felt. "I feel" and "I perceive" are one, and that which I feel can be said to have being only inasmuch as I feel "It." The moment of feeling a thing (*i.e.* of perception of it) is therefore the moment of its coming into existence: of its creation. The notion that a thing of itself "is," and is thereafter perceived by a Sensing Mind, while the perceptive activity itself constitutes the connecting link between the Mind which is enriched by it and the World of Existent Things of which it supplies the Mind with aspects in the main finds its footing only because of the confusion of the psychological condition indicated by the word "is," and is a natural sequence of the ignoring of the identity existing between Being and Appearance (otherwise Perception).

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To summarize: the only construction which the statement that "a thing exists" can carry is that one feels specifically so-and-so. And because by a thing we mean the specific group of features of a feeling there can be no "things" conceivable which are not part of the Sentient Ego which feels. A thing has Being when it is felt, and it "is" only to those who feel it. "Being" begins and ends in the feeling experience of the Ego of which it forms some specific mode. When we affirm of a thing that it "is," it is its Perceivedness which we are affirming. When we confidently declare that a thing "is" we mean that our feeling retina is distinctly effected so-and-so: the particularized state of feeling indicated by the verbal sign "so-and-so" constituting the "thing." By the phrase "a thing 'is,'" we mean "I feel . . . thus," "I exist . . . thus." To say that "the thing exists" encourages a form of speech which is least fitted to make clear the fact that "It is" equals "It is to me," which in turn equals "I feel it." The phrase "It exists" is in the full possession of power to confuse philosophy owing to its apparent investiture of the "I" with an independent existence. "It" or anything which the mind can perceive is nothing but a bundle of feelings: passing modes of the existence of the "I" which perceives (*i.e.* creates) them. This ball for instance represents the conglomeration of those of my feelings which I have been accustomed to dominate

as small, hard, round, grey, solid, and heavy. These specific conditions of my feeling retina when evidencing themselves simultaneously and in immediate proximity with each other I am in the habit of calling a ball. The fact that a vast number of other perceiving Egos will appear to be sensing the "same" thing is given rise to on account of an apparent similarity in purposes and in sensory power, among those to whom it seems so to appear. This fact does not argue or establish an identity for the "things" variously sensed, nor does it establish for them—or it—an independent existence.

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A thing is born of and takes its features from two factors, both of which are individual to the Ego in whose vista or appearances it has a place. These features are (1) the desire to beget the "thing": which Desire itself is the impulse setting towards its own fulfilment. This fulfilment is the Purpose, the New Thing: the New Feeling. (2) The individual degree of living power which is to bring the new thing forth: create it, in fact. It is the interplay of these two factors: Desire-borne Purpose and Power of Execution which are the architects and builders of the World, makers and creators of all things. Want of parity between the two leads to those shades of differentiation which we know as the Nature of Things, and since it is oftenest Power which lags behind Desire, a feeling ordinarily takes its character (*i.e.* its acceptability or otherwise to the governing Ego) by virtue of the satisfaction it gives to the desiring and purposive part of the "I." Thus things are features on the line of achievement of any particular purpose. They are intermediate feelings in the sequence of feelings which lead up to a specially desired feeling—a so-called end. Feelings group themselves into this thing or that according as they relate themselves to one or other of a number of outstanding purposes. For instance, what to human beings (who are Egos which go shod) is a boot, to a puppy is a piece of stuff suitable for sharpening teeth. What in a furniture shop is a carefully carved and constructed piece of workmanship, to a drowning man is a substance that floats. What to one human being in another represents all the potentialities and extended purposes of a man, to a wild animal on the prowl is what a well-cooked joint might be to us. The air to a fish must be a very different "thing" from what it is to man, as the water to men is very different to what it is to a fish. Even those things of which the nominal desire for sole possession provides the struggles of sentient being with motives are not the same things. The Ego already possesses in the only sense in which actual possession has meaning, everything which its eye, ear, tongue, or any of its senses can call up impressions of. Each man's struggle is not for possession but to remove a feeling which makes it difficult for him to create a sequence of feelings which he has set himself to create: to achieve some end he has in view. To one opponent, the thing for which he fights is a definite end which is already configured to him in outline in his own mind. His opponent also configures an end but one quite other. A landless man fighting for land against a landlord is not fighting for the same thing as the landlord who opposes him. He is fighting in order to bring about a picture he has figured to himself of himself toiling strenuously to attain in a way he knows how a secure if hard-won livelihood. The landlord is fighting for a picture which exists not only in sketchy outline in his mind, but complete to the smallest detail save for the suppression of this aggressive image which seems to threaten its continuance: a picture which he has already enjoyed—that of a life immune from strenuous toil: secure from ever having to labour as the peasant blissfully pictures himself as labouring. And so on endlessly. We choose to call quite different things the same to spare ourselves the trouble of differentiating.

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All things then are purely individual. The "nature" which things are supposed to have are the inverted appearances of our own potentialities in regard to them: how far we are able to mould them to our heart's desire: create them in uniformity with our purposes, that is.

The way in which we use the expression "No-thing" may illustrate what is the main consideration in our minds when we speak of "things." When we find our purposes moving unimpeded towards realization: when they are unobstructed: we say there is "nothing" in the way. There appears to be "nothing," though even as we utter the expression the mind could crowd itself with "things" (*i.e.* feelings) which "are" there if it chose to allow them to expand in importance, but because of their irrelevance to what happens to be the existing paramount purposes they sink into the faintness of apprehension—unfeltness—which we call "nothing." For instance, the London motor-bus driver who, when detected racing his machine madly through the streets in the early hours of the morning for the sheer pleasure of experiencing free movement, offered as his excuse the plea that there was "nothing" in them, would not need to be furnished with the information that the streets were full of what *would* be things to people whose purposes were such as to instigate sense to perceive them (*i.e.* call them into Being). The bluntest common sense is aware that it is only that which at the moment appears as the Paramount Purpose which matters, and which accordingly is the "thing" in Excelsis, while former things unrelated to it inevitably sink into the temporary oblivion of "no-thing-ness."

* * * *

And next in degree to Purpose, the things which at once assume an aspect of determined and obstinately actual existence are those which resist the free (*i.e.* easy sufficiently-empowered) movement towards the Purpose's completion. To the driver whose desire it was to experience unhampered movement, the air in the streets offering little resistance would be "nothing," but to men buried in a mine, air would be the one supreme thing by comparison with which the rest of their worlds would become "nothingness." The character of a thing is a variable upon its relation to Purpose. That body of feeling which we call "solids" have ordinarily been regarded as the things most resistant to the exercise of effort. That this is only a temporary habit is made plain by the fact that the birth of a desire to move through the air has turned this other medium, air—the one-time type of non-resistance—into quite the most resisting kind of resistance—for that particular purpose (*i.e.* flying). The human desire to fly is age-long: its satisfaction but just now: so resistant to purpose—the only meaning of resistance which matters—has the air proved, and now that it is being brought into submission, air itself, like solids, the former type of most resistant human medium, will begin to reveal that its resistant appearance is temporary also—an aspect which the limitation of individual power in a certain way has enabled it to take on. As for solids: when we have the power to walk unhindered through a solid as now the eye assisted by a new element has the power to pass unobstructed through it, it will not be a solid; quite probably it will even appear as the "nothing," which ordinarily the atmosphere appears. There is nothing to suggest that "solidity" is a permanent characteristic of any particular thing: nothing to suggest that there will not be living beings who will laugh at solids (*i.e.* make "nothing" of them) inasmuch as they will be able to effect their purposes through them with little apparent resistance.

* * * *

All things then are feelings related to our purposes and achievements. We work upon the feelings we already perceive in order to create different ones nearer to the satisfaction we desire. When a feeling—an imaged thing—appears in the "I," it satisfies or does not satisfy the desire which was the impulse responsible for its creation, and thereupon the feeling activity is bent fresh upon it in order to cull out of it other feelings likelier to answer to Desire. So constantly, new Feelings (*i.e.* things) are in process of creation: being constantly remoulded and bettered on a basis of a previous judgment as to effects until the satisfying image is achieved. This progressive achievement of ends is our most impressive Egoistic activity. The power to achieve other more "elemental" desired ends is so perfected

that we need only desire, and the End desired is forthwith effected. This is the case with all our established (*i.e.* completely embowered) faculties of sense. They represent the powers to call images into Being without conscious effort: they are apparently ready-made. Thus we can see a thing or a multitude of things if we want to, and will open our eyes; and can cease to see them, if we choose, by closing them. We can smell or not smell, hear or not hear, even taste or not taste, according as we desire and open and close the passages through which the particular sense operates. This creative faculty is none the less effectual because, in these cases, ample possession of power has made the end almost answerable to the call of desire. Desire and power act in equal degrees and creation is spontaneous as is the case in the creation of a new life itself. It is this effortless creative activity which is so much taken for granted as to be ignored. Consequently it is only where egoistic power is only partially equal to desire and where the long process of arduous trial and effort which we know as fabrication and manufacture are displayed that we readily allow "Creation" to have taken place.

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Long usage has taught us to regard the elements resistant to existing sensory powers as the very Stuff and Matter of life, because they seem ready to dominate us if we do not dominate them. They appear far too ominous, awesome, sinister, and far too well established easily to foster the belief that *we* are responsible for their creation. Accordingly it is only to that part of our faculty (*i.e.* power to do) which we recognize as being patently creative in the "pioneering" sense (*i.e.* producing for the first time), because we "take it in the act": engaged in producing those obvious evidences of creative power which we call "manufactured" things. Manufacture is the last (latest rather) gasp of egoistic creation: it is the play of power just where power fringes off into impotence: just therefore where it is inextricably confounded with the apparent resistance of "things": this resistance being precisely the inverted appearance which egoistic impotence takes on. Manufacture takes place in the arena where power begins to find its limitations, and just as on the seashore where sea meets land there is most surge and foam and sound, so the creative egoistic activities which we call manufacture—the adding of little to little, the winning of point by point, the slight slow change of this thing into that—appears more "creative" than the great silent constantly active, constantly creative agents which are presented by our established faculties. Upon manufacture, upon fabrication, therefore, where "I can" plays about "I can't": where our potentialities niggle away at our limitations, human attention is most fixed because in these are bound up the purposes of the moment. While that which has been done now securely "is" and is established, the New Worlds are still lying unborn, their very nature dependent upon, stored up in the desires which to-day we breathe out or inhibit. For desire is the scaffolding upon which power will realize all the worlds which ever may be, and the supporting column on which the World rests is not the "Nature of Things": not "Matter" or "Solids" but the Power of the "I."

* * * *

A thing being the particularized configuration of feelings which have become welded together on account of their repeated co-assemblages in the course of realizing the desires of the "I," there can be no "thing" which is not an individual creation. The World supposedly common to us all is no more common than a nose or a pair of eyes are common.

Things are feelings, and feelings are inconceivable except as part of the Feeling Unit. Things as "independent Existences," possessing an identity and offering a common appearance to different sensing-subjects, each of whom may scoop from them an Aspect—an Appearance—corresponding in some mysterious way to the things' actual "Being" are the effects of an illusion, for the creation of which the similarity of sense-experience to which the likeness of different individual's sensing-power gives rise is partially account-

able. In the main, however, it is on account of a quite arbitrary limiting of the expanse of the "Realm of the 'I'" that both our language and our manner of observing and relating phenomena have become infected with so strong a bias towards the allowance and acceptance of contradiction. The "I" is regarded as being limited to that area within which the points are situated wherefrom the "I" is best capable of acting upon the World it has created: limited, that is, to the "Body." The so-called "Externality" of the World represents actually an emphasis upon that central governing egoistic core which is the "Body" but which is no more the *whole* body of the "I" than the trunk minus its limbs is the whole of the body proper. The "body" is the nucleus of the Ego: the External World are its limbs and antennæ.

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The word "External" would present less difficulty if we were more accustomed to regard "Space" in its psychological import. "Space" like the rest of the supposed "fixities" of the World—Matter. Time and the rest—is a personal, individual, and therefore variable, Sense-image. Space is a thing: a complex of emotions. The "utmost bounds of Space" are the utmost limits to which the sensory power of the individual who speaks of them can stretch. "Impersonal" space is inconceivable because the act of conception is of itself sensory and so personalized. No two conceptions of space are common: they are merely similar, just as objects are similar to those alike in egoistic power and purposes. The feeling of Space is that of calculation as to the amount of expenditure in effort which is likely to be necessary in order to bring our sensing-organs at their most effective point (*i.e.* the surface of the body) into immediate touch with the image called "External." Space is thus composed of the emotional apprehension of the direction of effort, together with the length of sustentation (its Time-aspect) of such effort which will be necessary in order to bring images so-called "External" into immediate touch with the sensory agencies of the "I" at their highest point of efficiency: "Time" itself being the name given to the emotional sustentation of effort: where there is no sense of sustaining an effort, there is no sense of Time. The gauging of this amount of expenditure in effort necessarily implicates the character of the power which gauges it, and it follows that Space-images must be definitely individual also. After the egoistic Power and the spatial calculations must necessarily be altered.

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Things which "lie in space" are those which are situated as regards the strongest instrument of egoistic domination (humanly speaking—the hand, and with other species whatever is the main instrument of offence and defence), so that a preliminary exercise of effort is necessary before it can effectively assert itself upon them. Things in space are of course in immediate connexion with the sensing eye, ear, or nose. These are the reconnoitring rather than the dominating instruments, and it is largely on the evidence furnished by these that the preliminary spatial valuations are made. The instinct to affix spatial values to things is the outcome of a previous acquaintance with such anticipatory calculations which have been tested and ratified by actual "bodily" touch. Preliminary calculation and ratification are feelings, both, and just as there can be no such thing as "Impersonal" Space, there can be no such thing as "Infinite" Space. So-called "Infinite Space"—extension of the *n*th degree—is not an extension to "Infinity," but to just as far as any one can, and cares to, go. If any one is moved to try and test where and what "Spatial Infinity" is, they are as likely as not to find it in a violent attack of nausea brought about by prolonging the exercise of effort to exhaustion. The written sign "*n*th" appears sufficiently placid as a mathematical sign, but in its psychological equivalents it represents a long series of efforts at spatial calculation, which as we can affirm from experience and have already pointed out, finds a term and limit in complete egoistic

exhaustion and consequent revolt. The Objective World of things is accordingly as "psychic" as the Mind itself. What distinguishes the "things" (*i.e.* the feel) of the former is that, being set in space, they are removed to a distance—greater or less—from the points where the fabricating and dominating powers of the Ego are most effective: from its core which is constituted by the body. The Ego includes both Body and the World. It consequently includes Space itself which is but one feeling—one thing—among other things which constitute the World. Space is not therefore to be regarded as the containing vessel in which lies the World. The "containing vessel" if such a phrase is to be used at all is the "I" itself which contains Space, Time, Matter, Motion,—all that is within the World and all that is said to be "outside" it. Perception itself is the "I's" own awareness of what it creates: it is the term which we give to the fact that the Ego knows what it is about, *i.e.* that it knows its own purposes.

* * * *

It would be a regrettable omission not to include in an analysis of tricky metaphysical terms such as "It," "Thing," "Is," "Perceive," "World," and "Space" the ubiquitous metaphysical term "There" which in conjunction with "Is" has introduced every metaphysical poser language has been capable of producing. "Is there . . . an independently existing World?" "Is there . . . an a-sensable existence?" "Is there . . . anything 'beyond' the world of sense?" "If all sentient life were removed would the World still be . . . There?" "There" is manifestly the great standby of this species of conundrum. Generally the word is used and accepted as a vague covering term for "Space," but in the illustration of its usage which the instances cited furnish, it will be seen that it is not made synonymous with Space but with the all inclusive expanse, including Mind and World, which comprises the "Realm of the 'I.'" It is thus made to cover that which is created and that which creates, while implying that it bears only the connotation of Space. A little close attention shows that these metaphysical problems compounded with "There are" do not present genuine difficulties: they merely disguise absurdities. A question such as "Is there a World independent of the Life which is aware of it?" means "Could life sense a thing (*i.e.* that which is sensed) without sensing it?" Such

absurdities could never be perpetrated were it not for the disguising veil which "Is there" draws over the living sensing activities actually involved. The World "is" that which is sensed: by being sensed it is created. The World corresponds to nothing save what it is felt to be, since what it is felt to be is the stuff which makes it. The notion that the "Shows of Sense" are not "absolute" in themselves but must be regarded as the distorted correspondence of a "Reality" which is unsensed and unsensible has only been encouraged to persist in order to provide philosophers with the semblance of a means of escape from the dilemma in which their phraseology has involved them. The fact that it is allowed to be assumed that "There" is used as connoting a "Scoop of Space" containing the "External World," whereas actually it is used with the full meaning of the "I" gives the ruse the appearance of plausibility. In "Is there" the "there" holds an intermediate position between that inversion of relationship which grammatically permits "objects" to become subjective, and the (grammatical) recovery of the position of subject by the "I," since actually "there" is used with an equivalence of meaning. It is because it is so used that the absurdities of the propositions appended to it are not self-evident. "Is there" psychologically means "Am I," "Do I . . . feel." How can it be asked "Do I feel a World (of feelings) apart from feeling?" It is absurd. The metaphysical problem is born of a jugglement with the meaning of the various parts of the verb "Be" in conjunction with an ellipsis-born, grammatical inversion of objects into subjects which psychologically only the "I" can ever be. Metaphysics is a verbal disease arising out of grammatical form, and since grammar—very bad grammar—rules the human world in its cultural parts, Gods, Externality, Reality, the Absolutes, Categorical Imperatives, all the fruit which blossoms on the Illusion-yielding branches springing from "There is" have become its inevitable portion. It is to this mistranslation of psychic phenomena into evil grammar that all the "mysteries"—the Grand Perhapses—of Philosophy, Religion, the Absolute Part of Ethics and its Principles of conduct are in need of being led back.

NOTE.—This series of articles, "Truth and Reality," will be continued in subsequent issues of THE EGOIST, but will appear under the heading of their sub-titles only.—ED.

VIEWS AND COMMENTS

THE democratic demand for publicity is not to be confounded with any desire to be made acquainted with the real motives and intentions of the cliques which govern the "people": all that it implies is a permission to test such manoeuvres as are made openly by the democratic measure: by democratic "Principles," and the "people" would consider themselves more put about than served if the means by which actually they are governed were laid bare for them. They have no wish to be told that because they set so high a value upon their "Better's" opinion of them they can be kept in a highly moralized, hard-working, and civil condition by means of it: that the love of these Better's "Well done" and verdict of "Good fellows" is sufficient to induce them to fight to the extreme limit for the "state"—the established order of society—which is based upon their own continued position of subservience: that though as far as their lack of localized interests can make them they should be cosmopolitan in feeling, flattery turns them into patriots to the death: and that fear of a sound scolding scares such as have not made the supreme sacrifice out of making their best terms at their best time, now when their services are indispensable. Nor would they like their complaints that established organs of opinion are not "fair" to their point of view to be met with the explanation that these are not in any way intended to express their point of view, but only to express their governors' opinions as to how they may best be managed; governed, that is. They would say that such would

be, not frankness but cynicism. Cynicism, of course, is the sort of frankness which only people who are actually meaning to grapple with a situation permit themselves. Frankness of the non-cynical variety is the comforting tale told to season well with the flattery of "As you like it" to which they are accustomed. Of frankness of the cynical sort there is little enough. The intelligence necessary for it is lacking. Among governors, Macchiavelli has made out pretty clearly how it works—as an Autocracy democratized as far as the use of the velvet glove proves expedient and serviceable; when not, then Autocracy pure and simple, with the thumb-rule added for dubious cases that "It is better to be feared than loved." Also Germany just now is giving Macchiavelli's "better" the opportunity of being tested. She has put the veil of polite verbal conventions aside—a thing which men and States can do only when they consciously possess the strength to enter upon and wage war *à outrance*. Such a one makes a foe to be feared indeed: one who is prepared to raze down existing seats of judgment and build them up again upon a new beginning: to whom all means are right because the old rights are repudiated along with their grounds of sanction and the new ones are not yet born. Of trace among the "Workers" there is visible none. The much-talked-of Class-consciousness (which is nothing more than a comprehension of the reason why the "lower" classes fall into the positions of "lower") is practically non-existent, though talking of it makes a pleasant preoccupation for a few of the

disgruntled. And until "Workers" are Class-conscious in this sense, Industrial Revolutions will continue to be little more than Industrial Somersaults.

* * * *

However, let the attitude of "Workers" towards "Governors" be what it may, and arrange itself as it can, there is a side to this attempt to reduce all opinion to the level where it can be found justified by the "crowd" in which we are more nearly interested. One recognizes that a reluctance to scandalize even the "least of these our little ones" might well be fostered on the grounds that to agitate "Fixed Ideas" and break up "crowd characteristics" is, at worst, to make unstable the ideal basis of many contented and amenable spirits, and, at best, to set them on individual and responsible enterprises for which perhaps they lack the power and consequently the taste to carry through. And, moreover ordinarily, those who happen to be in the crowd but who are not of it swiftly make that fact evident. The one unassailable ground, therefore, from which a certain kind of mind will continue to follow the trail of the curious, unchronicled, unmoralized aspects of life's affairs is that of Pleasure, and particularly the Pleasure which can be mutually shared among exclusive groups of "similars." Exclusiveness, therefore, springs as a corollary to the democratic aspiration of "All" to sit in judgment upon every opinion, since the publishing of all opinions broadcast in order to satisfy it is to expose the subtlest and most delicate powers of observation to the unbridled rage and hostility of the crowd: a foolish thing to attempt. Subtle things are not for crowds whom variation angers because they know contentment only in habitualized ways of feelings. To offer subtle things to the stupid is folly. It means either deliberate provocation or a misapprehension—stupid in itself—of the relationship of the normal-minded to the curious. To the crude, crude things are fitting, and what these are the staple opinion current at any moment readily reveals. It argues *gaucherie*—ranness—to become embroiled with popular opinion unless this latter interferes very seriously with one's purposes. The nicer points of any opinion are not to be argued with the mass: they are reserved for the more elect. The attempt to "universalize" and make a gospel of them brings the gospel and the gospeller into disrepute, not entirely deserved because the situation is not readily understood. Christian dogma, for instance, makes a good enough gospel when it is limited to a few non-debatable points of etiquette, a suitably reverent aspect, to restriction from offending against a few of its forms, and the enjoying of whatever emotional pleasure comes from one's own acceptance of it. Taken as a universal "Principle" for the government of conduct, however, it is folly. To attempt to model or to remodel in accordance with its principles actions upon which men are already determined is an indiscretion and a disservice to the "cause" it would further. For instance, to scandalize current opinion as the headmaster of Eton recently did by expressing in a sermon, publicly delivered, his more intimate views as to what the Christian principles of loving one's enemies would imply in practice, is quite an improper thing to do, and more particularly is it so if you are the headmaster of Eton. Browning's "Bishop Blougram" knew far better what was suitable Time and Place for such opinions when, *after the sermon*

"Over his wine, he smiled and talked his hour
With Gigadibs, the literary man, who played with spoons . . .
While the great bishop rolled him out a mind
Long crumpled, till creased consciousness lay smooth."

And even so, one could take exception to the "literary man": a brother bishop would have been better. As for Dr. Lyttelton, it is not possible to improve upon the *Times's* rebuke conveyed under form of a quotation: "Not to be talked about for good or evil among men." Just so: a most safe and admirable attitude: one should always be reluctant to quarrel with the crowd—for reasons which are obvious. Unless one is prepared to carry an offending martyr's mark for every intellectual pleasure beyond the easy comprehension of the mass, one must be discreet. Save where there is a fighting chance of overwhelming whatever opposition is roused and when the probability of such a fight is taken account of before the event and arranged for, if "sincerity" overrides discretion it argues unintelligence. Hence the stupid appearance of the women who have gone to confer about peace: too obviously stupid indeed even to anger the crowd, it succeeds merely in amusing them.

D. M.

THE HISTORY OF IMAGISM

. . . itaque, quæ priores, nondum comperta, eloquentia percoluere, rerum fide tradentur.—TACITUS.

"Chi compra Manfredi?"

SOMEWHERE in the gloom of the year 1908, Mr. T. E. Hulme, now in the trenches of Ypres, but excited then by the propinquity, at a half-a-crown dance, of the other sex (if, as Remy de Gourmont avers, the passage from the æsthetic to the sexual emotion, *n'est qu'un pas*, the reverse is surely also true), proposed to a companion that they should found a Poets' Club. The thing was done, there and then. The Club began to dine; and its members to read their verses. At the end of the year they published a small plaquette of them, called "For Christmas MDCCCXVIII." In this plaquette was printed one of the first "Imagist" poems, by T. E. Hulme:

AUTUMN

A touch of cold in the autumn night
I walked abroad,
And saw the ruddy moon lean over a hedge,
Like a red-faced farmer.
I did not stop to talk, but nodded;
And round about were the wistful stars
With white faces like town children.

In November of the same year, Edward Storer, author already of "Inclinations," much of which is in the "Imagist" manner, published his "Mirrors of Illusion," the first book of "Imagist" poems, with an essay at the end attacking poetic conventions. The first poem in the book was called "Image," here it is:

Forsaken lovers,
Burning to a chaste white moon,
Upon strange pyres of loneliness and drought.

Mr. Storer, who has recanted much since, was in favour then of a poetry which I described, in reference to his book, as "a form of expression, like the Japanese, in which an image is the resonant heart of an exquisite moment." A fair example of his practice is this from "Clarice-Henley":

"Clarice! Clarice! The oasis of lunch,
We laid Arabian-Night-wise in the green
And pleasant desert of the field
For our most welcome selves,
And that rememberable canopy of white
And holy linen, that denied your face
Unto a hundred daisies' peeping glance,
We placed to bear the bread, the wine—the flowers
Of your dear hand."

I have always wished that Storer, in his after work, had brought more art to the exploitation of the temperament he displayed in the "Mirrors," which, for me, is a book of poetry. But he changed his manner completely.

At that time, I had been advocating in the course of a series of articles on recent books of verse a poetry in *vers libre*, akin in spirit to the Japanese. An attack on the Poets' Club brought me into correspondence and acquaintance with T. E. Hulme; and, later on, after Hulme had violently disagreed with the Poets' Club and had left it, he proposed that he should get together a few congenial spirits, and that we should have weekly meetings in a Soho restaurant. The first of these meetings, which were really the successors of certain Wednesday evening meetings, took place on Thursday, March 25, 1909. There were present, so far as I recall, T. E. Hulme, Edward Storer, F. W. Tancred, Joseph Campbell, Miss Florence Farr, one or two other men,

mere vaguements in my memory, and myself. I think that what brought the real nucleus of this group together was a dissatisfaction with English poetry as it was then (and is still, alas!) being written. We proposed at various times to replace it by pure *vers libre*; by the Japanese *tanka* and *haikai*; we all wrote dozens of the latter as an amusement; by poems in a sacred Hebrew form, of which "This is the House that Jack Built" is a perfect model; Joseph Campbell produced two good specimens of this, one of which, "The Dark," is printed in "The Mountainy Singer"; by rhymeless poems like Hulme's "Autumn," and so on. In all this Hulme was ringleader. He insisted too on absolutely accurate presentation and no verbiage; and he and F. W. Tancred, a poet too little known, perhaps because his production is precious and small, used to spend hours each day in the search for the right phrase. Tancred does it still; while Hulme reads German philosophy in the trenches, waiting for the general advance. There was also a lot of talk and practice among us, Storer leading it chiefly, of what we called the Image. We were very much influenced by modern French symbolist poetry.

On April 22, 1909, Ezra Pound, whose book, "Personæ," had been published on the previous Friday, joined the group, introduced, I believe, by Miss Farr and my friend T. D. FitzGerald. Ezra Pound used to boast in those days that he was

Nil præter "Villon" et doctus cantare Catullum,

and he could not be made to believe that there was any French poetry after Ronsard. He was very full of his *troubadours*; but I do not remember that he did more than attempt to illustrate (or refute) our theories occasionally with their example. The group died a lingering death at the end of its second winter. But its discussions had a sequel. In 1912 Mr. Pound published, at the end of his book "Ripostes," the complete poetical works of T. E. Hulme, five poems, thirty-three lines, with a preface in which these words occur: "As for the future, *Les Imagistes*, the descendants of the forgotten school of 1909 (previously referred to as the 'School of Images') have that in their keeping." In that year, Pound had become interested in modern French poetry; he had broken away from his old manner; and he invented the term "Imagisme" to designate the æsthetic of "Les Imagistes." In March 1913, an "interview," over my signature, of an "imagiste" appeared in the American review *Poetry*, followed by "A Few Dont's by an Imagiste" by Ezra Pound. The four cardinal principles of "Imagisme" were set forth as:

- (1) Direct treatment of the "thing," whether subjective or objective.
- (2) To use absolutely no word that did not contribute to the presentation.
- (3) As regarding rhythm: to compose in sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome.
- (4) The "doctrine of the Image"—not for publication.

Towards the end of the year Pound collected together a number of poems different writers, Richard Aldington, H. D., F. S. Flint, Skipwith Cannell, Amy Lowell, William Carlos Williams, James Joyce, John Cournos, Ezra Pound, Ford Madox Heuffer and Allan Upward, and in February-March 1914 they were published in America and England as "Des Imagistes: an Anthology," which, though it did not set the Thames, seems to have set America, on fire. Since then Mr. Ezra Pound has become a "Vorticist," with a contradiction, for, when addressing the readers of *The New Age* he has made Imagism to mean pictures as Wyndham Lewis understands them; writing later for *T. P.'s Weekly*, he made it pictures as William Morris understood them. There is no difference, except that which springs from difference of temperament and talent, between an imagist poem of to-day and those written by Edward Storer and T. E. Hulme.

F. S. FLINT.

THE POETRY OF EZRA POUND

MR. POUND is the poet of impulse, of temperament. When he attempts a self-conscious method of composition the result is frequently a failure. He dispenses with many ordinary literary virtues in order to cultivate a few exceptional ones; he can write a lyric, seldom a coherent article. He will sincerely work over a few lines of *vers libre*; he rarely takes the trouble to read carefully the author he is criticizing. In his books you will find nine poems out of every ten crude, trivial, perhaps pretentious, and then you will come across the "Prayer for his Lady's Life," of "The Return," or "La Fraisine" or "The Seafarer," or even "The Ballad of the Goodly Fere," and you will feel inclined to pardon anything to a man so delicately inspired.

"First books of poetry are usually promissory notes that are never met." A Lume Spento was printed by "A. Antonini, Connaregio 923" in the "City of Aldus, MCMVIII." The first page is entirely covered by a dedication in four languages and five different kinds of print. The second poem in the book is that beautiful piece of mingled quatrains and rhymed *vers libre*, called "La Fraisine." In those first few pages you have the man's whole character. It is entirely a matter of the reader's temperament whether he permits his attention to rest upon the colophon and the dedication, or upon:

"And now men call me mad because I have thrown
All folly from me, putting it aside
To leave the old barren ways of men,
Because my bride
Is a pool of the wood, and
Though all men say that I am mad
It is only that I am glad,
Very glad, for my bride hath toward me a great love
That is sweeter than the love of women
That plague and burn and drive one away."

It is regrettable, but it must be admitted, that in proportion as Mr. Pound tried to cultivate a sense of style, a feeling for words, his impulse seemed to desert him. Mr. Pound was the last of the Romantics; when he tried to turn himself into the first of the Realists he unwittingly injured a very delicate poetic sensibility. You cannot be a Realist writing of London, of common people and actual occurrences, like Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer, at the same time that you are a refined Romantic of the type of Mr. Yeats. The two methods of writing are incompatible. There may be moments when Mr. Yeats approaches the "Impressionism" so dear to Mr. Hueffer; there are moments, as in "Heaven," when Mr. Hueffer is as romantically beautiful as Mr. Yeats at his best: but the endeavour to unite the two methods has been disastrous to Mr. Pound. The moment he began to try to make poetry out of the realities of existence, instead of from vague impulses and romantic emotions and bookish enthusiasms, his poetry became arid, sometimes sustained by an energetic expression, a virtuosity of language, but more often trivial and lacking the beauties of both sound and sense.

Mr. Pound is a "bookish" poet, and it is only the particular cant of our time which counts this as a crime. It is a feature of the regular Romantic programme, and it is inevitable that the "improved" and selected world which the Romantic poet creates should be composed, at least in part, of ideas, of decoration, of emotions derived from extensive reading. But here again Mr. Pound is not the solid Romantic of the Victor Hugo, Swinburne type; he is too little interested in anything but the transient stimulus of a new author, to care to master completely any branch of learning or to study a period accurately. In his many translations, among which is some of his best work, it is the sudden, impulsive, emotional piece of translating which is

successful; and the failure is in the attempt to produce a piece of sustained hard work, like the translations of Guido Cavalcanti and of Arnaut Daniel.

On the other hand the emotional rendering of "The Seafarer" is unsurpassed, and I venture to say, unsurpassable. There is a magnificent *frisson* in these lines:

"And his laud beyond them [shall] remain 'mid the English,

Aye, for ever, a lasting life's-blast,
Delight 'mid the doughty.

Days little durable,
And all arrogance of earthly riches,
There come now no kings nor Cæsars
Nor gold-giving lords like those gone,
However in mirth most magnified,
Whoe'er lived in life most lordliest,
Drear all this excellence, delights undurable!
Waneth the watch, but the world holdeth.
Tomb hideth trouble. The blade is laid low.
Earthly glory ageth and seareth," &c.

But of all his translations, not even excepting his recent very beautiful adaptations of the Chinese,* this "Prayer for his Lady's Life" seems to me the most exquisitely rendered, with a grace and energy finer even than the original.

"Here let thy clemency, Persephone, hold firm,
Do thou, Pluto, bring here no greater harshness.
So many thousand beauties are gone down to Avernus
Ye might let one remain above with us.

"With you is Iope, with you the white-gleaming Tyro,
With you is Europa and the shameless Pasiphæ,
And all the fair from Troy and all from Achaia,
From the sundered realms, of Thebes and of aged
Priamus;
And all the maidens of Rome, as many as they were,
They died and the greed of your flame consumes them.

"Here let thy clemency, Persephone, hold firm," &c.

If the prizes of this world, literary as well as commercial, were given to merit instead of to sycophancy, to quality instead of to quantity, then that poem deserves the prize usually reserved for some not too revolutionary "honest" craftsman, who has deserved well of his elders.

One rather regrets some of the work recently produced by Mr. Pound; I refer to the pieces printed in "Blast" and to those which were snapped off in "Poetry" like toy pistols presented at the head of an unperturbed American public. Still more recently Mr. Pound has been publishing Chinese plays, translated from the notes of the late Professor Fenollosa, and Chinese lyrics, rendered into rhythmical *vers libre*. His last contributions to "Poetry" were better from the point of view of craftsmanship than anything he has published in the last couple of years; but they were rather in the nature of "Pastiches."

Mr. Pound has a gift for writing occasional, romantic, intense lyrics; he wants so hard to do more good work that he probably will do so. The numerous and obvious sources of nine-tenths of his work will be less of an obsession to us in a few years than they are now. Mr. Pound has made one disastrous "Columbiad" in an attempt to discover himself—his real gift being the power of becoming absorbed in another personality long enough to produce from this stimulus one or several lyrics—perhaps he will fit out another expedition and discover Mexico and Peru.

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

* See "Cathay," by Ezra Pound. Elkin Matthews, 1915.

THE POETRY OF H. D.

THE poetry of H. D. has been described as a kind of "accurate mystery." I could not find a better phrase, for in detail it has the precision of goldsmith's work, in ultimate effect it is mysterious and only to be comprehended by the imagination. You take a poem like this, for instance:

"SITALKAS

"Thou art come at length
More beautiful than any cool god
In a chamber under Lycia's far coast,
Than any high god who touches us not
Here in the seeded grass.
Aye, than Argestes
Scattering the broken leaves."

And you cannot argue it out by syllogisms. It might have come out of some Greek anthology; but that does not bring you any nearer to it. In fact, the more you attempt to reason about it the less will you get out of it. It must work on you as an evocation. You may see a woman in white muslin who has waited, not long, but long enough, in the long grass of June, under the shade of a large elm by a river's bank, the Thames; and, if you are a male, you will lean over her and listen to the sound of her voice, without troubling much about the purport of her words, knowing that they are not a reproach but rather a responsive music; or the strange names may affect you so that the time becomes a time that you do not know as June; and the dress of the woman is vague and lovely to you; and the scene is one that you can place in no country. The thing then will seem to have happened in eternity, which is only time divested of its temporalities. Or take this often-quoted poem:

"HERMES OF THE WAYS

"The hard sand breaks,
And the grains of it are clear as wine.

"Far off over the leagues of it
The wind,
Playing on the wide shore,
Piles little ridges
And the great waves break over it.

"But more than the many-foamed ways
Of the sea,
I know him
Of the triple pathways,
Hermes,
Who awaiteth.

"Dubious,
Facing three ways,
Welcoming wayfarers,
He whom the sea-orchard shelters from the west,
From the east
Weathers sea-wind,
Fronts the great dunes.

"Wind rushes
Over the dunes,
And the coarse, salt-crusted grass
Answers.

"Heu,
It whips round my ankles."

The detail there is clear; it fits the experience of all of us so well that there is no need for me to insist on its truth by appealing to my memory for corroboration. But the introduction of Hermes into the poem takes it out of our experience; the sand-dune is one that we shall never visit; we are permitted to catch a wistful

glimpse of it through the words of the poet; the sea that breaks over it surges in some far country of her imagination; and the wind rushes upon her from the four caves that are in no charted range of mountains. She is lonely.

If you dwell on the poetry of H. D. you will feel this loneliness more and more. She has lived in the same world as you and I; but the things she has seen and the emotions she has felt have been transmuted in her mind into an unreality that reveals itself in images of an unsuspected virtue and in phrases that seem to owe nothing to common speech. It is the loneliness of a poet who will accept nothing that has not come to her direct, that has not sprung immediately out of her own contemplation; and in this determination, coupled with her ceaseless scrutiny of word and phrase, lurks her greatest danger. For in the creation of beauty and the constant simultaneous criticism of what is created, you can cut too far and produce angularity, or too curiously and produce enigma, which was the fate of Mallarmé. In all art, it seems to me, there must be generosity and some pity for the spectator; and you may fall short of generosity by withholding in order that the gift may be finer. The riddle the artist has always to answer is, How much shall he give; and the quality of his pity for the spectator will decide this. An artist cannot be inhuman and be understood. I say this because I think I have detected in one or two of H. D.'s later poems a tendency to pare and cut too far, with a consequent slight feeling, in the result, of bareness and jejuneness. But it is only slight; and there is more danger of her becoming inhuman, in the sense I have indicated.

I have said nothing of the form of these poems (which, by the way, have only, so far, appeared in anthologies and periodicals). I have nothing to say, least of all in this place. The form of her poems seems to me to be so inevitable that those who cannot accept it had better pass on. Perhaps I may, instead, quote one more short poem:

" PINES

" Whirl up, sea—
Whirl your pointed pines,
Spash your great pines
On our rocks,
Hurl your green over us,
Cover us with your pools of fir."

Is it not evident that here is a woman who is creating a body of poetry that is original in form, spirit, and imagery? It is a poetry whose beauty can be pondered on, nor can it be made trite by frequentation. Need more be said?

F. S. FLINT.

THE POETRY OF JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

THERE is for me a quaint charm in the idea that in this tragic year of 1915 a poet of the name of Fletcher—a name already borne by no fewer than five English poets, one of them author of the dullest poem in the language—should be turning out work in the highest degree vivid, original, and provocative. I do not recall in a pretty extensive reading of slim books of modern verse any other work of more tingling freshness than Fletcher's in his "Irradiations" or in his fine representation in "Some Imagiste Poets."

In his joyously swash-buckler preface Mr. Fletcher affirms his poetic faith. Any stanzaic form which clips emotion to measure is bad, as he says: "The good poem fixes a free emotion or range of emotion into an inevitable artistic whole. . . . Each era of man has its unique and self-sufficing range of expression and expe-

rience, and therefore every poet must seek anew for himself, out of the language medium at his disposal, rhythms which are adequate and forms which are expressive of his own unique personality." And again: "What will teach us most is our language and life. Never was life lived more fully, with more terrible blind intensity than it is being lived at this moment. Never was the noble language which is ours surpassed in either richness or concision. We have the material with which to work and the tools to do the work with."

In poetic good works Mr. Fletcher realizes a fair measure of his faith. The life that is being lived "with terrible blind intensity" does not figure very largely in his pages. Sensation, subtle subjective mood, æsthetic panorama, these furnish the substance of his work rather than the strenuous action, involved passion, and anxious thought that make up the complex of modern life. But there will be time, too much time, perhaps, for that.

Of Mr. Fletcher's success in the management—or rather writing—of *vers libre* there can be no question. At his freest his verse is musical with a music that can hardly fail to reach even ears hitherto attuned to rhyme. Nor is he too dissident to use rhyme itself, if it serves his turn. Indeed, as an imagist he is not, as I see him, of the strictest sect. His fancy is too wide ranging, in a sense too playful, for that.

" It is evening, and the earth
Wraps her shoulders in an old blue shawl,"

is a charming conceit. But is it not after all a conceit the product of the fancy rather than the imagination, the faculty that gives us the true image burning bright? But if fancy is exuberant in the details of these pieces, it never chokes out the warm poetic inspiration that determines the form and kindles the atmosphere of the whole.

A longish paragraph could be devoted to an analysis of Mr. Fletcher's rather striking range of effect. I think he is seen at his best in "The Blue Symphony," where fancy, imagination, musical ingenuity, verbal magic, and a curious feeling for the landscape of Chinese painting are fused in an intriguing but quite beautiful lyric sequence. I am not at all clear whether the five poems that make the five movements of the symphony symbolize the stages of a poet's life or the hours in the day of a world-weary mandarin. As a matter of fact I don't in the least care, and I doubt if the author does. I only know that "The Blue Symphony" disturbs and moves me as some music disturbs and moves me, and that when towards the end I read,

" And now the lowest pine branch
Is drawn across the disk of the sun,"

and monosyllables paint in my brain an image as clearly limned as a print by Hiroshige, and equally freighted with an incommunicable sadness.

There are things that one would like to tell Mr. Fletcher "for his own good," as the connubial phrase is, but since no one ever profited by good advice, THE EGOIST hardly seems the place in which to speak them. The thing that counts is that if any jaded, possibly jaundiced "Poetry Lover" wants to be stirred with the sense of a living, sincere poetic art Mr. Fletcher is his man.

FERRIS GREENSLET.

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"THE NEW FREEWOMAN" can be obtained
from the publishing office: Oakley House, Blooms-
bury Street, London, W.C. Price 6d. each. By
post, 6½d.

POEMS

IN THE TUBE

THE electric car jerks ;
I stumble on the slats of the floor,
Fall into a leather seat
And look up.

A row of advertisements,
A row of windows,
Set in brown woodwork pitted with brass nails,
A row of hard faces,
Immobile,
In the swaying train,
Rush across the flickering background of fluted dingy
tunnel ;
A row of eyes,
Eyes of greed, of pitiful blankness, of plethoric com-
placency,
Immobile,
Gaze, stare at one point,
At my eyes.

Antagonism,
Disgust,
Immediate antipathy,
Cut my brain, as a sharp dry reed
Cuts a finger.

I surprise the same thought
In the brasslike eyes :

" *What right have you to live ?* "

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

MID-DAY

I

THE light beats upon me.
I am startled—
A split leaf rustles on the paved floor.

I am anguished—defeated.

A slight wind shakes the seed-pods.
My thoughts are spent as the black seeds.

My thoughts tear me.
I dread their fever.
I am scattered in its whirl.
I am scattered like the hot shrivelled seeds.

The shrivelled seeds are spilt on the path.
The grass bends with dust.
The grape slips under its crackled leaf.

II

Yet far beyond the spent fruit-pods
And the blackened stalks of mint,

The poplar is bright on the hill.
The poplar spreads out, deep rooted among trees.

O poplar, you are great among the hill stones,
While I perish on the path
Among the crevices of the rocks.

H. D.

CHICAGO

To HARRIET MONROE the Editor who discovered Imagism

OUT of the land of limitless snows the north wind
arose and gathered up his thin black arrows.
The red wind, the tuneless wind, started his
long easy lope down the unsloping plains of the Land
of Little Sticks. From the swamp, from the lake, he

blew aloft in the sky clouds of flapping black geese.
Shrieking and whimpering, like rabbits caught by the
lynx, the plains reeled away beneath him, frayed
ribbons of tape. He danced and shot and swirled
and dived amid pale waters flashing far away to the
horizon. He curled and twisted and hissed like a
running snake amid the clamour of geese and the low,
mournful howling of wolves that ran over the snow after
his foot tracks.

Muttering and shaking his heavy head, matted and
shaggy with sleep of the dead, the west wind began
to creep out of the rust-stained crags that fell shattered
to the base of the canyon. He yawned and growled
horribly, and from his hot breath the rocks dissolved
as if a giant fist had smitten them. In the twisted
crannies the sound reverberated with the low dull echo
of muddy torrents. Mournfully and heavily it rumbled
off, pushing the clouds before it, shuffling and scrambling
eastward with sullen explosions of pent ire and spitted
fire of forked lightning. Gloomily it lowered over the
rolling breadth of the prairie, smashing the flowers, and
uprooting the grasses with its long claws of rain.

The south wind whimpered as she sidled up the great
swaying bend of the river. Interwoven greenery
entangled her feet. Her eyes were sorrowful and she
scattered dull white flowers. She loved the full brown
body of the fat river rolling its mud through the forest.
He would not heed her, as he ate away at his banks every
day, or swirled in oily bubbles away to hide in some low
bayou, playing soft pipes with reeds that rustle amid
down-swaying mosses from motionless cypress trees.
The south wind sought the river at his source, and
when his course grew more rapid through the rolling
green bluffs she fell pensive and silent. She crept, she
straggled, lisping, whispering, " Is he there ? "

The east wind snorted and chuckled in rude strangling
gasps as he came down from the mountains. He was
as blue as a fish, for he had seen the sea, and at his coming
the gnarled black oak trees crackled and rattled with
gusts of sardonic laughter, spilling brown torrents of
leaves. They bent, they broke, and he jeered at them.
Now and then he paused to splash with snow some sullen
council of smoky blue pines, or to shatter the rocks
with axes of ice. He flickered, he relapsed, he re-
whirled the silent snow drift that the north wind had
fashioned and then trailed over it his streaming robes,
making it run away in oily trickles of rosy ooze to the
river. He laughed, he advanced, and at each turning
of the hills he changed his mind.

Now the winds unite together, and they dance and
change the weather on a low, sandy barren of the plains.
To the north, frozen waters ; to the east, rainy forests ;
to the south, lowland valleys ; to the west, gusty plains.
They change hands and weave their figures, and not a
single one lingers, as they veer through the queer varied
year. Sometimes it is the north wind that carries the
sad crying south wind to his lakes and tundras to
swelter awhile under a soft blue sky half shrouded in a
haze canopy. Then, like black arrows, swarms of flies
and gnats arise from the shallows and sting her to death.
Sometimes the east and west wind fight all day with
delight. They are red marks on the blue body of the
east wind, and drops glare on the grey shaggy cloak of
that old bear, the west. Sometimes north and south, and
east and west chase each other like sister and brother.
But they never rest or tire in the least, but with many
a kiss or blow on the mouth they scatter forthright nor
slacken their race.

Behold, what the winds have created ; a whole
world's meeting place ! Black towers, like bastions of
iron, break the wrinkles of the lake, stop the roll of the
silent green prairie, turn back the crackling dense
grown forests, arrest the meandering river. Men of
the north, huge, blond and drunken, come to roll and
stroll and sleep and sit brooding long in melancholy
defeat. Men of the east shiftily sidle amid them, polite
and smiling, uneasily twisting, or vague and impassive,
lost in some inhuman dream of peace. Men of the south,
felinely graceful, saunter with sombreros stuck on the
backs of their heads, a flower or a dagger in their fingers,
a flower or a cigarette at their lips. Men of the west,

hulking, flamboyant, generous, cruel, reckless, ride whizzing up the streets, their faces hacked by the wind to the resemblance of an Indian's. Through blood, through mire, through dust, through heat, through lust, through fire, through defeat, through treachery, they strive, and tear, and struggle, like loosed wild beasts, and their pantings are the white hissing bursts of steam from the freight locomotives that crash through the city bringing more weight of life to aid them. But the gloomy arched bastions stand forever, gazing out at the sad wastes of plain and water, bearing the affront of the winds that hoot and shoot and howl past them; the north wind trolling his skoal to his dead vikings; the east wind nasally yelping and whining for his fallen; the south wind mouthing and blubbering over her lovers; the west wind roaring like a giant bear that is brought to bay in its lair, and turns at last on its hunters, preparing for its death onset after the fire has attacked its cavern and the high trees have fallen on the trail.

December 30, 1914.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

EASTER

FRIEND

we will take the path that leads
down from the flagstaff by the pond
through the gorse thickets;
see, the golden spikes have thrust their points through,
and last year's bracken lies yellow-brown and trampled.
The sapling birch-groves have shown no leaf,
and the wistarias on the desolate pergola
are shorn and ashen.
We lurch on, and, stumbling,
touch each other.
You do not shrink, friend.
There you, and I here,
side by side, we go, jesting.
We do not seek, we do not avoid, contact.

Here is the road,
with the budding elm-trees lining it,
and there the low gate in the wall;
on the other side, the people.
Are they not aliens?
You and I for a moment see them
shabby of limb and soul,
patched up to make shift.
We laugh and strengthen each other;
but the evil is done.

Is not the whole park made for them,
and the bushes and plants and trees and grasses,
have they not grown to their standard?
The paths are worn to the grave, with their feet;
the green moss will not carpet them.
The flags of the stone steps are hollowed;
and you and I must strive to remain two
and not to merge in the multitude.
It impinges on us; it separates us;
we shrink from it; we brave through it;
we laugh; we jest; we jeer;
and we save the fragments of our souls.

Between two clipped privet hedges now;
we will close our eyes for life's sake
to life's patches.
Here, maybe, there is quiet;
pass first under the bare branches,
beyond is a pool flanked with sedge,
and a swan among water-lilies.
But here too is a group
of men and women and children;
and the swan has forgotten its pride;
it thrusts its white neck among them,
and gobbles at nothing;
then tires of the cheat and sails off;
but its breast urges before it
a sheet of sodden newspaper

that, drifting away,
reveals beneath the immaculate white splendour
of its neck and wings
a breast black with scum.

Friend, we are beaten.

F. S. FLINT.

ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?

How I hate myself, this body which is me;
How it dogs me, what a galling shadow!
How I would like to cut off my hands,
And take out my intestines to torture them!

But I can't, for it is written against me I must not,
I must preserve my life from hurt.

But then, that shadow's shadow of me,
The enemy!

God, how glad I am to hear the shells
Droning over, threatening me!
It is their threat, their loud, jeering threat,
Like screaming birds of Fate
Wheeling to lacerate and rip up this my body,
It is the loud cries of these birds of pain
That gives me peace.

For I hate this body, which is so dear to me:
My legs, my breast, my belly;
My God, what agony they are to me;
For I dote on them with tenderness, and I hate them,
I hate them bitterly.

My God, that they should always be with me!
Nay, now at last thank God for the jeopardy,
For the shells, that the question is now no more before
me.

I do not die, I am not even hurt,
But I kill my shadow's shadow of me!
And God is good, yes, God is very good!
I shot my man, I saw him crumble and hang
A moment as he fell—and grovel, and die.
And God is good, for I wanted him to die,
To twist, and grovel, and become a heap of dirt
In death. This death, his death, my death—
It is the same, this death.

So when I run at length thither across
To the trenches, I see again a face with blue eyes,
A blanched face, fixed and agonized,
Waiting. And I knew he wanted it.
Like a bride he took my bayonet, wanting it,
Like a virgin the blade of my bayonet, wanting it,
And it sank to rest from me in him,
And I, the lover, am consummate,
And he is the bride, I have sown him with the seed
And planted and fertilized him.

But what are you, woman, peering through the rents
In the purple veil?
Would you peep in the empty house like a pilferer?
You are mistaken, the veil of the flesh is rent
For the Lord to come forth at large, on the scent of
blood,
Not for the thieves to enter, the pilferers.

Is there no reconciliation?
Is marriage only with death?
In death the consummation?
What I beget, must I beget of blood?
Are the guns and the steel the bridegroom,
Our flesh the bride?

I had dreamed of love, oh love, I had dreamed of love,
And the veil of the temple rent at the kiss on kiss,
And God revealed through the sweat and the heat of
love,

And God abroad and alight on us everywhere,
 Everywhere men and women alight with God,
 My body glad as the bell of a flower
 And hers a flowerbell swinging
 In a breeze of knowledge.

Why should we hate, then, with this hate incarnate ?
 Why am I bridegroom of War, war's paramour ?
 What is the crime, that my seed is turned to blood,
 My kiss to wounds ?
 Who is it will have it so, who did the crime ?
 And why do the women follow us satisfied,
 Feed on our wounds like bread, receive our blood
 Like glittering seed upon them for fulfilment ?

Lord, what we have done we hereby expiate,
 We expiate in our bodies' rents and rags
 In our sheaf of self-gathered wounds : we go to meet
 Our bride among the rustling chorus of shells,
 Whose birds they are,
 We give up, O Lord, our bodies to deadly hate,
 We take the bride, O God, and our seed of life
 Runs richly from us.
 We expiate it thus, the unknowable crime,
 We give hate her dues, O God, we yield her up
 Our bodies to the expiation, Lord.

But shall I touch hands with death in killing that
 other,
 The enemy, my brother ?
 Shall I offer to him my brotherly body to kill,
 Be bridegroom or best man, as the case turns out ?

The odds are even, and he will have it so.
 It may be I shall give the bride
 And the marriage shall be my brother's—it may be
 so—
 I walk the earth intact hereafterwards ;
 The crime full-expiate, the Erinnyes sunk
 Like blood in the earth again ; we walk the earth
 Unchallenged, intact, unabridged, henceforth a host
 Cleansed and in concord from the bed of death.

D. H. LAWRENCE.

SPRING DAY BATH

THE day is fresh-washed and fair, and there is a
 smell of tulips and narcissus in the air.

The sunshine pours in at the bath-room
 window and bores through the water in the bath-tub
 in lathes and planes of greenish-white. It cleaves the
 water into flaws like a jewel, and cracks it to bright
 light.

Little spots of sunshine lie on the surface of the
 water and dance, dance, and their reflections wobble
 deliciously over the ceiling ; a stir of my finger sets
 them whirring, reeling. I move a foot and the planes
 of light in the water jar. I lie back and laugh, and let
 the green-white water, the sun-flawed beryl water, flow
 over me. The day is almost too bright to bear, the
 green water covers me from the too bright day. I will
 lie here awhile and play with the water and the sun
 spots.

The sky is blue and high. A crow flaps by the
 window, and there is a whiff of tulips and narcissus in
 the air.

BREAKFAST TABLE

In the fresh-washed sunlight the breakfast table is
 decked and white. It offers itself in flat surrender,
 tendering tastes, and smells, and colours, and metals,
 and grains, and the white cloth falls over its side,
 draped and wide. Wheels of white glitter in the silver
 coffee-pot, hot and spinning like Catherine-wheels,
 they whirl, and twirl—and my eyes beign to smart, the
 little white, dazzling wheels prick them like darts.
 Placid and peaceful the rolls of bread spread themselves
 in the sun to bask. A stack of butter-pats, pyramidal,

shout orange through the white, scream, flutter, call :
 "Yellow ! Yellow ! Yellow !" Coffee steam rises in
 a stream, clouds the silver tea-service with mist, and
 twists up into the sunlight, revolved, involuted, sus-
 piring higher and higher, fluting in a thin spiral up the
 high blue sky. A crow flies by and croaks at the coffee
 steam. The day is new and fair with good smells in
 the air.

WALK

Over the street the white clouds meet, and sheer
 away without touching.

On the sidewalk boys are playing marbles. Glass
 marbles, with amber and blue hearts, roll together and
 part with a sweet clashing noise. The boys strike
 them with black and red-striped agates. The glass
 marbles spit crimson when they are hit, and slip into
 the gutters under rushing brown water. I smell tulips
 and narcissus in the air, but there are no flowers any-
 where, only white dust whipping up the street, and a
 girl with a gay spring hat and blowing skirts. The
 dust and the wind flirt at her ankles and her neat, high-
 heeled patent-leather shoes. Tap, tap, the little heels
 pat the pavement, and the wind rustles among the
 flowers on her hat.

A water-cart crawls slowly on the other side of the
 way. It is green and gay with new paint, and rumbles
 contentedly sprinkling clear water over the white dust.
 Clear zigzagging water which smells of tulips and
 narcissus.

The thickening branches make a pink "grisaille"
 against the blue sky.

Whoop ! The clouds go dashing at each other and
 sheer away just in time. Whoop ! And a man's hat
 careers down the street in front of the white dust, leaps
 into the branches of a tree, veers away and tumbles
 ahead of the wind, jarring the sunlight into spokes of
 rose-colour and green.

A motor-car cuts a swath through the bright air,
 sharp-beaked, irresistible, shouting to the wind to
 make way. A glare of dust and sunshine tosses together
 behind it, and settles down. The sky is quiet and
 high, and the morning is fair with fresh-washed air.

MIDDAY AND AFTERNOON

Swirl of crowded streets. Shock and recoil of traffic.
 The stock-still brick facade of an old church, against
 which the waves of people lurch and withdraw. Flare
 of sunshine down side streets. Eddies of light in the
 windows of chemist's shops, with their blue, gold,
 purple jars, darting colours far into the crowd. Loud
 bangs and tremors, murmurings out of high windows,
 whirring of machine-belts, blurring of horses and
 motors. A quick spin and shudder of brakes on an
 electric car, and the jar of a church bell knocking
 against the metal blue of the sky. I am a piece of the
 town, a bit of blown dust, thrust along with the crowd.
 Proud to feel the pavement under me, reeling with
 feet. Feet tripping, skipping, lagging, dragging,
 plodding doggedly, or springing up and advancing on
 firm elastic insteps. A boy is selling papers, I smell
 them clean and new from the press. They are fresh
 like the air, and pungent as tulips and narcissus.

The blue sky pales to lemon, and great tongues of
 gold blind the shop windows putting out their contents
 in a flood of flame.

NIGHT AND SLEEP

The day takes her ease in slippared yellow. Electric
 signs gleam out along the shop-fronts, following each
 other. They grow, and grow, and blow into patterns
 of fire-flowers, as the sky fades. Trades scream in
 spots of light at the unruffled night. Twinkle, jab,
 snap, that means a new play ; and over the way : plop,
 drop, quiver is the sidelong sliver of a watchmaker's
 sign with its length on another street. A gigantic
 mug of beer effervesces to the atmosphere over a tall
 building, but the sky is high and has her own stars, why
 should she heed ours ?

I leave the city with speed. Wheels whirl to take me back to my trees and my quietness. The breeze which blows with me is fresh-washed and clean, it has come but recently from the high sky. There are no flowers in bloom yet, but the earth of my garden smells of tulips and narcissus.

My room is tranquil and friendly. Out of the window I can see the distant city, a band of twinkling gems, little flower-heads with no stems. I cannot see the beer glass, nor the letters of the restaurants and shops I passed; now the signs blur and all together make the city, glowing on a night of fine weather, like a garden stirring and blowing for the Spring.

The night is fresh-washed and fair and there is a whiff of flowers in the air.

Wrap me close, sheets of lavender. Pour your blue and purple dreams into my ears. The breeze whispers at the shutters and mutters queer tales of old days, and cobbled streets, and youths leaping their horses down marble stairways. Pale blue lavender, you are the colour of the sky when it is fresh-washed and fair . . . I smell the stars . . . they are like tulips and narcissus . . . I smell them in the air.

AMY LOWELL.

TO WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS ON TAGORE

It is made clear by the phrase,
Even the mood—by virtue of which he says

The thing he thinks—that it pays,
To cut gems even in these conscience-less days;

But the jewel that always
Outshines ordinary jewels, is your praise.

MARIANNE MOORE.

AFTER THE RETREAT

If I could only see again
The house we passed on the long Flemish road
That day
When the Army went from Antwerp, through Bruges,
to the sea;
The house with the slender door,
And the one thin row of shutters, grey as dust on the
white wall.
It stood low and alone in the flat Flemish land,
And behind it the high slender trees were small under
the sky.

It looked
Through windows blurred like women's eyes that have
cried too long.

There is not anyone there whom I know,
I have never sat by its hearth, I have never crossed its
threshold, I have never opened its door,
I have never stood by its windows looking in;
Yet its eyes said: "You have seen four cities of
Flanders:
Ostend, and Bruges, and Antwerp under her doom,
And the dear city of Ghent;
And there is none of them that you shall remember
As you remember me."

I remember so well,
That at night, at night I cannot sleep in England here;
But I get up, and I go;
Not to the cities of Flanders,
Not to Ostend and the sea,
Not to the city of Bruges, or the city of Antwerp, or the
city of Ghent,
But somewhere
In the fields
Where the high slender trees are small under the sky—

If I could only see again
The house we passed that day.

MAY SINCLAIR.

THE IMAGISTS DISCUSSED

By HAROLD MONRO

I

THE "Imagistes" have apparently become reduced in number since the publication of their first Anthology* in March 1914. The Preface to this new volume explains: "Differences of taste and judgment, however, have arisen among the contributors to that book; growing tendencies are forcing them along different paths." Most conspicuous among absentees are Ezra Pound and Ford Madox Hueffer. The anonymous preface-writer repudiates leadership for the present group of six. "Instead of an arbitrary selection by an editor, each poet has been allowed to represent himself by the work he considers his best." Further, "The poets in this volume do not represent a clique . . . they are united by certain common principles, arrived at independently." We are not told who formulated these principles, here set down to the number of six. Some of the poets of the other anthology must certainly have contributed towards them, or at least have taken part in the discussions which, as has already been more than once publicly admitted, led to their original formulation. These newly stated principles differ, however, to some extent from the first Imagiste "Dont's," which were published in the Chicago magazine *Poetry*, and from other records of the nature and aims of the original Imagiste school. In justice it should be noted that no particular novelty is claimed for them. They "are not new. . . . They are the essentials of all great poetry," we are told, and with this, when I read No. 5 ("To produce poetry that is hard and clear, never blurred nor indefinite") and No. 6 ("Finally, most of us believe that concentration is of the very essence of all poetry"), I am certainly in agreement. The four remaining principles may be summarized as follows: To avoid *cliché*; to abandon absolutely all forms of the rhetorical and grandiose; to insist on precision of language; to create new rhythms.

The Imagistes, or *Imagists*, as, dropping the affectation of the "e," they now, I am glad to find, prefer to be called, show themselves in agreement with most of the more important English theorists of the past. Thus (to quote very sparsely) Ben Jonson already in the seventeenth century: "The true artificer . . . hath avoided faint, obscure, obscene, sordid, humble, improper, or effeminate phrase." Dryden: "Propriety of words is the clothing of those thoughts with such expressions as are naturally proper to them." Addison: "The great masters in composition, know very well that many an elegant phrase becomes improper for a poet or an orator, when it has been debased by common use," and again: "He must not swell into a false sublime." Burke: "Still it will be difficult to conceive how words can move the passions which belong to real objects without representing those objects clearly." Samuel Johnson: "Words too familiar or too remote defeat the purpose of the poet." Coleridge, too, several times mentions the points emphasized in the Imagist principles. Wordsworth (if Christ was a Socialist) might almost be called an Imagist in theory. Even Matthew Arnold was no enemy of free verse, and must frequently have recommended accuracy of vision, precision of language, and concentration—though I cannot check this at the moment.

There have been some misconceptions about the Imagists, partly on account of their fixed principle of not admitting their obligations. This is only compatible with their drastic self-detachment, and with their insistence on the necessity of an absolutely fresh start in poetry. I think, however, they would gain a larger measure of public confidence if they more freely admitted themselves not among the first to discover poetry as an Art, and would probably benefit in their own production by recognizing themselves more clearly as

* "Des Imagistes: an Anthology" (Poetry Bookshop, 2/6 net).

one of the latest groups in the forward movement of English poetry—not the only one.

They have not at any time taken much trouble to make themselves clear. Mr. Pound has offered us several illuminating, though not entirely lucid, re-statements of theory; interspersed among the writings of Mr. Hueffer are many allusions, direct or indirect, to the Imagist position, with more particular reference to impressionism: but it has never become very clear in what particular respects they may be considered innovators, and the very term *Imagist* is sufficiently mystifying to alienate the sympathies of the general public, though its exotic sound may attract small, inquisitive, detached groups of the wrong people.

An advance copy of the present anthology has reached me only a day before this article must go to press. Fortunately, however, I have already followed the Imagist movement, and am acquainted with a majority of the poems it has so far produced.

II

If I were to attempt an account of the Imagist movement to some stranger to English literature I should do it somewhat on these lines:

Certain younger American and English poets made the discovery that a greater proportion of the English-speaking public remained still under an impression that poetry had ceased with the reign of Queen Victoria. (Most other people, who had thought about it at all, knew this also, but did not bother much.) They found, too, that a large number of very feeble poets were fostering that false public impression by continuing to write, in the obsolete Victorian manner, poetry so feeble that not even the most ignorant or sentimental public in the world could possibly have been duped by it. The Imagists were indignant. "This," they cried, "is not poetry: you are being misled." Unlike the Italian Futurists, they remained uncertain how much of the past had to be condemned; indeed I don't think they ever came to an agreement on this point. Most of them soon, however, rejected the sonnet, and the conventional stanza forms which appeared to have been imported or manufactured to serve the requirements of a certain limited epoch or period, and had now, also, become tainted beyond all further use by those feeble poetasters having made of them veritable moulds for their *clichés*. A large number of the French younger poets, they discovered, had long ago abandoned the traditional verse-forms; a powerful Italian school also existed which was waging one of the most violent revolutions in the annals of literature. They hastened to study first these new French, later these new Italian, poets. "Eureka," they cried. They imitated them; many of their first poems were, or, at any rate, read like, translations. One of them had studied Provençal; others knew Greek; they examined Japanese and Chinese poetry; they threw away most of their early compositions and experimented in every new style they could find. They took every possible opportunity of preparing themselves a public. The Americans, they found, were too interested in magazine verse, and were also developing a dangerous tendency to admire a new kind of literary fungus that had recently sprung up—the Cosmic Poet, that is, roughly, the fellow who had read something somewhere that some one had written about Darwin or about the Nebular Hypothesis, and had developed a diseased habit of writing in an inflated manner about these cosmic matters usually without having taken the trouble, or perhaps without possessing the intelligence, to understand them. The American, they knew, will discuss Cosmic Consciousness at his dinner table with no less glibness than terrestrial meteorology. The American public-head had been rather swelled by Whitman. The Imagists did not bother much about Whitman: there was more to be learned, it seemed, from French poetry. Whitman was too artless; he made the whole thing seem too easy, and, most important, one could not imitate him without being discovered. Some of these poets of the New World were so overcome by the dis-

covery that the forms they had been practising and the language they had been using were wrong, that they devoted their energies solely to the cultivation of new forms and the adoption of a renovated language, oblivious of the fact that Idea must primarily dictate both. This English movement was from the first, I think, not broad enough. Several of the Imagists seem to have been struck partially blind at the first sight of their new world; and they are still blinking. Some simply made the discovery, and then started preparing their public before they had written their poetry. Others were so terrified at Cosmicism that they ran away into a kind of exaggerated Microcosmicism, and found their greatest emotional excitement in everything that seemed intensely small. But, above all, Skepticism, having once attacked them, played havoc in their ranks. They found themselves obliged to reduce their production by 90 per cent., and they recommended everyone else to do the same. The forms they still felt they might use, the vocabulary that remained at their disposal, were so extremely limited; so much good material had to be thrown into the large waste-paper basket of *Cliché*, that they remained now almost unprovided with a language or a style. Moreover, the ideas of the New World scarcely ran to meet them. In practice they ascertained that the many things that always have been worth writing about still remained the most obvious and most insidious subjects they could find. At this point they divided into two clearly defined groups. Some decided to tolerate the old subjects, but to discover a new manner of presenting, or representing, them; others, not so satisfied, probed nervously the psychological recesses of the New World and dragged out all the strangest rags of fancy they could find, exhibiting them solely on account of their whimsical colours and shapes.

Poets of the Imagist and other kindred modern schools are no longer "visited by the Muses": they are not at home to them. It will be no use to say that their poetry "does not sing." It is not meant to. They themselves no longer profess to sing. The word Song is abandoned, *cliché*, swept out with Ode, Sonnet, Quatrain, and other similar verbal lumber. The test of Intellect is more important to them than the tests of prosody or tradition. Their minds are obsessed by the Town. They are more concerned effectively to describe their rapid impressions than faithfully to record their abiding sentiments. The passing event and its effect on their minds is everything to them. They suspect the "beauties of poetry." They prefer a single word that may accurately register an impression to a line that will be quoted for its loveliness of verbal construction. Thus they think in terms of the poem, not of the single line. They scorn the great public figure; they despise occasional poetry, or the long poem with its gradually developed beauty. The method of the Imagists is to model little detached patterns of words; one such pattern may be left single and called a poem, or several of them may be grouped together. In Principle 2 a sentence occurs which might almost be taken for a printer's error. "In poetry, a new cadence means a new idea." Is one to believe that if one first design a poem, then the idea will be present by reason of the design? In their correct order these words should read: In poetry, a new idea means (better *makes*) a new cadence.

III

"Some Imagist Poets,"* as an anthology, records a transitionary point in the Imagist movement. All the poets here represented figure as people who have fully recognized the difficulties of their art and are now eventually ready for a decision how to deal with them. The writer of the preface declares: "This school" (of Imagists) "has already become a household word"—bad English; vain exaggeration. The fact is that it is on the point of deciding whether it intends to be taken

* "Some Imagist Poets" (London: Constable & Co. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1915).

seriously. The fruit of this decision will depend on whether its poets reconcile themselves to bringing imagination to the support of intellect. The only reference in the Principles to the name of the school is in No. 4: "To present an image (hence the term 'Imagiste')"—which, even with the qualifying sentences which follow, means nothing. The references to free-verse are, however, much more explicit; and it may be hoped, I think assumed, that, as innovators, they will busy themselves with the formation of new rhythmic word-groups, while the idea of presenting an image will take a place of secondary importance. Symptoms of this development are conspicuous in the present anthology, and for this reason I call it transitional.

All these poets are primarily impressionists. I will take them singly. Richard Aldington in his "Childhood," the longest poem in the book (some 120 lines), records the effects on a sensitive child of the civilization of a modern small town:

"I hate that town;
I hate the town I lived in when I was little;
I hate to think of it.
There were always clouds, smoke, rain
In that dingy little valley.
It rained; it always rained.
I think I never saw the sun until I was nine—
And then it was too late;
Everything's too late after the first seven years."

and the consequence:

"I don't believe in God.
I do believe in avenging gods
Who plague us for sins we never sinned
But who avenge us."

He contributes several shorter poems. I quote the opening lines of "The Poplar":

"Why do you always stand there shivering
Between the white stream and the road?"

"The people pass through the dust
On bicycles, in carts, in motor-cars;
The waggoners go by at dawn;
The lovers walk on the grass path at night.

"Stir from your roots, walk, poplar!
You are more beautiful than they are."

Such lines would seem to belie some of my remarks in the last paragraph of Section II. For this very reason they may be considered the most auspicious ones in the anthology. "The Faun sees Snow for the first Time" is a delightful conceit. Richard Aldington and the lady who writes under the initials H. D. both are content to derive most of their subjects from Greek origins. Mr. Aldington's rhythms, though arbitrary, are smooth. He does not use rhyme.

H. D. writes short poems which may be considered representative substitutes for the Sonnet. Here she presents *one* image:

OREAD

"Whirl up, sea—
Whirl your pointed pines,
Splash your great pines
On our rocks,
Hurl your green over us,
Cover us with your pools of fir."

That is all. It can be said in the one minute before lunch. There is no mould to be filled, no risk of padding, no fear of words being exploited to complete a rhyme. Yet I remember the sentence of Lowell: "Imagination, as it is too often misunderstood, is mere fantasy, the image-making power, common to all who have the gift of dreams." It is petty poetry; it is minutely small: it seems intended to be. Such images should appear by the dozen in poetry. Such reticence denotes either poverty of imagination or needlessly excessive restraint.

She can exert a vigorous cadence, as in these lines from "The Garden":

"O wind,
rend open the heat,
cut apart the heat,
rend it sideways.

H. D. is the truest "Imagist" of the group. But its future work will scarcely develop along the lines of her example. Her poems have a slight flavour of brine; they are as fragile as sea-shells. If I came too near them I should be afraid of crushing them into the sand with my clumsy feet.

Mr. John Gould Fletcher is typically the modern poet discussed above. His "Blue Symphony" consists appropriately of a series of word-patterns grouped together with the object of producing one whole impression on the reader, creating one definite sensation. There was an "Orange Symphony" in a number of THE EGOIST last year which I liked so much that I cannot reconcile myself to this poem. Nevertheless it is an interesting piece of work on a larger scale than most of the others hereabouts; and its effects are obtained without much strain.

But the nine short poems entitled "London Excursion" illustrate the whole series of Imagist difficulties in their most pronounced form. He beats the awful bounds of their new freedom. Is it surprising that the tortures of those difficulties appear in every word he writes?

Mr. Fletcher makes an excursion to London, let us suppose with the object of writing a poem. There would have been several old-fashioned ways of treating the subject. Possibly he reviewed them in his mind; more probably he has now long trained himself not even to consider them. He finds things distinctly unlike their representation in old-fashioned poetry, yet, at the same time, tantalizingly like. However like they be, he *must* write something different. He is resolved, too, on accuracy of observation, of rhythm, and of expression. But each hampers the others. His observations land him in a series of crude statements. These should be modified by their rhythm. Rhythm is found to embarrass their accuracy. His expression, again, must precisely reproduce his observation. It cannot, however, because what he has observed cannot be reproduced in poetry. His nearest approach to poetry is in lines of reflective anticipation such as these:

"Lost amid greenness
We will sleep all night;
And in the morning
Coming forth, we will shake wet wings
Over the settled dust of to-day."

Hardly any of his statements of fact are anything like poetry:

"A clock with quivering hands
Leaps to the trajectory-angle of our departure."

is not. The more indefinite

"Bulging outcrush into old tumult;
Attainment, as of a narrow harbour,
Of some shop forgotten by traffic
With cool-corridorred walls."

may be more like it.

"An arch under which we slide
Divides our lives for us:
After we have passed it
We know we have left something behind
We shall not see again."

is imaginative, but here rhythm and poetic expression have both failed him. The reader is so held by the contortions of Mr. Fletcher battling with his difficult art that the emotional values of the poem almost escape him. "London Excursion" remains more interesting as experiment than effective as poetry. The old poetry was *cliché*-ridden: this new will be even more forbidding to the general public. Yet if the design of art be to represent accurately, this poem, in being as ugly as what it represents, is true to that design.

As not much space remains at my disposal, and it is not easy to write with brevity on this stimulating

subject, I shall dismiss D. H. Lawrence in a few words. Strictly speaking he is not an Imagist. For one thing he is a rhymist, even to the extent of "whither" and "dither": in none of his seven poems is the ornament of rhyme absent. "The Mowers" is at the same time the most conventional and the most interesting. The other poets in this volume lift one clear from the region of the customary into a place where one's standards of judgment and taste must be thrown out. Mr. Lawrence poses questions that require a lot of answering. His eccentricities are irritating, being only half ones. I cannot think him a natural growth of the movement, and I consider that I may be pardoned for dismissing him on the present occasion with these few remarks.

IV

The two poets who still remain for discussion are F. S. Flint and Amy Lowell. The one seems to have yoked the difficulties of the Imagist position on to his shoulders; the other to have succeeded in shirking them. Mr. Flint turns the eccentricities of the school to his own advantage. He writes like a man who almost hates poetry, but can't help loving it. I find in him free-verse with a rhythm so definite that it seems fully to warrant the typographical device of the division into lines. For instance:

"Have I performed
the dozen acts or so
that make me the man
men see?

"The door opens,
and on the landing—
quiet!

I can see nothing: the pain, the weariness!"

His "Fragment" is delightful. "Accident" is a startlingly impressive little chip of experience. "Eau-Forte" is a carefully designed piece of realism—with an unfortunately weak ending. He performs contortions with more happiness than Mr. Fletcher. His instinct for accuracy does not ask too much of the object. One feels him inquiring, "What does this mean?" and answering in as plain terms as an Imagist can.

"The hoot of the steamers on the Thames is plain."

he remarks, and no one can suspect him, for the moment, of thinking in terms of poetry. Yet he is willing to use his imagination.

Miss Lowell, when she exerts her imagination, resigns the attitude of the poet, and passes helplessly into prose. It is a noteworthy peculiarity of this anthology that its sincerest, most imaginative, and most successful poem is in prose. Surely no subtleties of argument can be applied to the subject. "The Bombardment" is a very fine piece of careful and concentrated prose. The point is indifferent—except that verse only, or prose written down like verse, might have been expected in the book. Miss Lowell, never presumably having experienced a bombardment, was obliged to imagine it, and there is no doubt she has done so remarkably well. Yet the piece is a confession of failure, since she appears in the volume as a poet. Her contributions in verse beginning

"Why do the lilies goggle their tongues at me"

and

"My thoughts
Chink against my ribs,"

and

"Little cramped words scrawling all over the paper
Like dragged fly's legs,"

bring me reflectively back to Wordsworth's declaration: "I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity."

"Some poets," wrote Thomas Ryner, "labour to appear skilful with that wretched affectation." The words "Labour to appear skilful" represent the most conspicuous defect of Imagism.

THE POETRY OF F. S. FLINT

MR. FLINT is the poet of the stars and the poet of London. Latterly he has abandoned the stars and concentrated his efforts upon London, though even in his most stellar period the heavens were most often a sort of embroidered drop-curtain for his scenes of squalor, emotion or revolt, an apt and vast antithesis to this dingy ants'-nest whose inhabitants boast its colossal size and vaunt it as the centre of the globe. London, its streets, its squat irregular houses huddled into alleys or stretching out into noisy thoroughfares, its parks and innumerable little gardens and squares, its open-air markets, its shops, its lights, its multitudinous hurrying vehicles, its silent, orderly, preoccupied crowds, its squalor and depression, its stimulations and conflicts, its glimpses of beauty, of delicate nuances of colour and form, its gloom and rain, its red dawns and watery sunsets—all these and more have determined the character of Mr. Flint's art, have profoundly modified his sensitive temperament.

"For the modern artist," says Georges Duhamel in one of his essays, "there can be only two methods: s'accepter ou s'évader." Heaven knows that the temptation is strong to evade one's life and surroundings when one is confined beneath these sulphurous skies and condemned to gaze unremittently upon smoky walls, to walk muddy pavements and muddier streets; Heaven knows it is a temptation to loose one's yearning, to picture the high purple hills of Attica, to re-create in fancy the abrupt cliffs and orange-groves of Sorrento, to people one's pages with heroes and gods, with impossibly happy and beautiful people. "S'accepter ou s'évader"; that has been Mr. Flint's problem also, and though his resolution has evidently been to accept his life, his century, his surroundings, the temptation "to evade" has sometimes overcome him. He is strongest and finest when he accepts, for then the very sordidness and greyness which his soul loathes become objects of deep interest, if not of beauty.

In "Sunday in London" he writes:

"My heart is bitter with this barren desolation—
Dead trees, grey skies, gaunt streets, smoke, grime
and squalor of London;—
And hark! a twittering—God! a smudgy little
sparrow,
Gay in a wild savannah of things ill-done and undone.
If there a hope to find, a way to lead us heart-sore
From the mephitic hell of dullness and stagnation?
None, save a glimmering dawn, a lily among cacti,
Scrub and dense poisonous growth of world-wide
desolation."

That, though bitter and angry, is a kind of acceptance, has, I firmly believe, a greater artistic pleasure for the reader than Mr. Flint's reminiscences of trips into the country; for, after all, London life is his life, and to "strip the veil of familiarity" from that existence, to show at least that it is not blindly ignored but emotionally felt, even if it be only to exasperation, is far better than an unconvincing idealization of the accepted æsthetics of ruralism. Theocritus, remembering the valleys of Sicily in the sweltering streets of Alexandria, laid the foundation of that *poésie nostalgique* which is still one of the maladies of our time. The escape is not to be found in chanting of abstract chimneys and racing automobiles, in ecstatic sentimentalizing over super-aeroplanes and turbines, and such-like romantic balderdash; there is an escape from artificiality and sentimentality in poetry, and that is by rendering the moods, the emotions, the impressions of a single, sensitized personality confronted by the phenomena of modern life, and by expressing these moods accurately, in concrete, precise, racy language. The aeroplane is less romantic, and, after the first glance, less interesting than an olive-tree; aeroplanes and olive-trees are, to a Londoner, about equally exotic. The real poet's material lies in between these extremes. He will show us the beauty of the planes and elms and

scarce beeches in our parks, of the Thames with its great barges and tugs, of our suburbs transformed by misty twilight or streaming rain. He will have an eye for the common people, even if it be only to pity or to hate them :

“ Tired faces,
eyes that have never seen the world,
bodies that have never lived in air,
lips that have never minted speech,
they are the clipped and garbled,
blocking the highway.
They swirl and eddy
between the banks of glowing shops
towards the red meat,
the potherbs,
the cheapjacks,
or surge in
before the swift rush
of the clanging trams—
pitiful, ugly, mean,
encumbering.”

I think Mr. Flint is the poet of modern London at whose definitions I have been hinting. He stumbles, he produces poems of atrociously bad taste, he is seduced by the jade Prettiness (in 1908 Mr. Flint wrote with excessive admiration of the two poets whose literary influence has completed the ruin of what little poetic taste was left in England: Oscar Wilde and Francis Thompson). But on the whole his work is improving steadily and appreciably. “The Swan” is his high-water mark in the rendering of the more obviously picturesque moods of London; “Easter,” published here for the first time, is in a far more difficult genre, an accurate presentation of the mood of an exceptional man (all poets ought to be, must be, exceptional men) in the midst of that banal and tame monster, an Easter holiday crowd.

Mr. Flint is doing in poetry what Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer did so magnificently in prose in “The Soul of London.” I salute in Mr. Flint a poet—the poet?—who has not sold his faith, whose constant experiments in rhythm and expression will be of vast assistance and encouragement to his confrères of the future: if he succeeds in reconciling us with a forced existence in this gloomy market-prison-metropolis he will have accomplished a very difficult and admirable task.

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

THE POETRY OF D. H. LAWRENCE

MR. LAWRENCE'S work is full of contradictions. He is both crude and subtle, rough and tender; but these opposing elements are welded into a whole by a vitality so great as to be always arresting; a burning aliveness which has something of the qualities of fire—wildness, remorselessness, and beauty. In the “Love Poems” he writes of love which is primitive, yet not wholly unsubtle: the man is the eternal pursuer, ardent, slightly brutal, yet sometimes overcome by a sudden diffidence, by a fleeting shock of tenderness; the woman is the snared animal, shrinking but not untamable. She is not the only victim, for the man suffers the pains of baulked and unappeased desires, because she is elusive, cold, and unable to give herself with generosity. Many of the poems are on this note: “Lilies in the Fire,” “Coldness in Love,” “Reminder,” “Return,” and “The Appeal”—these last two, exquisite little poems—and “Repulsed,” of which I give the last two verses:

“The night is immense and awful, Helen, and I an
insect small
In the fur of this hill, cling on to the fur of shaggy
black heather,
A palpitant speck in the fur of the night and afraid
of all,
Seeing the world and sky like creatures hostile together.

“And I in the fur of the world, and you a pale fleck
from the sky,
How we hate each other to-night, hate, you and I,
As the world of activity hates the dream that goes on
on high,
As a man hates the dreaming woman he loves, but
who will not reply.”

There are three little poems which I do not think I am wrong in calling “imagist,” for they each contain two “images,” one superimposed upon the other. I have only space to quote “Aware,” which is perfect from beginning to end. “Reminiscence” and “A White Blossom” both lapse into a banalité in the last line:

“A tear which I had hoped even hell held not in store”;
and

“She shines, the one white love of my youth, which
all sin cannot stain.”

“AWARE”

“Slowly the moon is rising out of the ruddy haze,
Divesting herself of her golden shift, and so
Emerging white and exquisite; and I in amaze
See in the sky before me a woman I did not know
I loved; but there she goes and her beauty hurts
my heart;
I follow her down the night, begging her not to
depart.”

The influences which have formed Mr. Lawrence are not obvious; here and there a line reminds me of Browning—the last two lines, for example, of “Fooled,” a fine poem which has appeared in THE EGOIST:

“She clung to the door in her haste to enter, opened,
and quickly cast
It shut behind her, leaving the street aghast.”

He is simpler, less concerned with technical experiments than most of his contemporaries; his manner and his matter are inevitably one, especially in the poems in dialect, which are the finest in the book. “The Drained Cup” is a masterpiece of passion and understanding; it is written with straight naked simplicity, and is realistic in a true sense—that is to say, it does not deal with external realities only. I cannot quote from “The Drained Cup,” “Whether or Not,” or “A Collier’s Wife” without spoiling them as a whole, for each is a little drama in itself, tragic and full of irony.

I end by suggesting—I hope without obscuring my appreciation of Mr. Lawrence’s work—that if he could add two qualities to it he would be a great writer indeed; I mean the quality of “strangeness,” which some one has declared to be a necessary part of beauty, and that of “distinction”—so difficult to analyse, which is perhaps the indirect expression of a philosophy of life which rejects everything but essentials.

O. SHAKESPEAR.

THE POETRY OF AMY LOWELL

THE phenomenon known as late maturity is not common among artists, but whenever it occurs it is always a happy augury. Youthful prodigies only too frequently make a brilliant start, and soon find that they have exhausted their vein. A great many years of study, experience, and experimentation are necessary before even the foundations of work of permanent value can be laid down. Shakespeare and Gauguin are diverse examples of this late maturity which enables its fortunate possessor to gauge fully his capacities at the outset, and to develop them with each succeeding year of activity.

The subject of this notice may well be admitted one of the foremost Imagists for the reason that she allowed more years of study and silence to elapse before she made her bow to the public, than any one of us. Also it may be said of her that the scope of her technique

is less limited. How wide that scope is, may be judged when I say that it embraces sonnets, narratives in rhymed stanzas, rhymed *vers libre*, rhymeless *vers libre* of the cadenced type, and at least one altogether new form which I have called elsewhere Polyphonic Prose.* To a person less grounded in technique than Miss Lowell, such virtuosity would have been impossible. Even in her case it has been found impracticable to employ so many forms simultaneously. The sonnet, for example, no longer claims her allegiance, and possibly she may discard others. But along with this process of elimination goes another of experimental development in new fields, which makes her work extremely fascinating for lovers of poetry to follow.

The special qualities which Miss Lowell possesses are these. She has a sense of the irony of existence, particularly of the artists' or students' existence amid uncongenial surroundings and in face of the loud-mouthed insolence of the mob. This was expressed in her first book, in the poem on Huysmans. She has developed it further, until she is able to expose pitilessly the gangrenes of our civilization. "The Precinct, Rochester," "The Cyclists," "Ely Cathedral," "The Bombardment" all show examples of her power in this respect. There are many others scattered about her books.

Next, she visualizes. She sees her image before she sets it down. She has a horror of vagueness, of the cliché, of the abstract. Here she shows her Imagist tendencies. She is not ashamed to make pictures of anything that impresses her imagination, because she knows she can make good pictures. This power has in it one element of danger. She sometimes seems inclined to split the complete image into too many subsidiary uncorrelated cameos. One loses the wood, for the tropic exuberance of the trees. But this is no more than to say that she is as English as the Elizabethans. "Le gout pour la mesure," that most difficult of all French disciplines, is sometimes rebelled against.

Finally, she has a sense of narrative. This she has so far confined wholly to poetry, though I have no doubt that she could do excellent short stories if she chose. But she has wisely realized that prose demands a technique and range of ideas which poetry does not possess, and that very few can hope for perfection in both. Besides, her narratives fit better into poetry, for the reason that this gift of hers is allied with another, her predilection for the macabre and the gruesome elements in psychology. Of course, she has been assailed as morbid because she has chosen in several narratives to treat a fantastically horrible theme in such a way as to accent its fantasticality and horror. But she is no more morbid than a modern physician who studies some terrible disease, or the Gothic stonemasons when they put gargoyles on their cathedrals.

Perhaps I have over-accented the masculine traits of my subject. It is a pardonable error. It should be remembered that Miss Lowell is a New Englander, with her share of the aggressive, enterprising spirit, not of the Pilgrims, who were mostly stagnating agriculturists, but of the merchants who gave to America, before the Civil War, the greatest mercantile marine then in the world. Be it also remembered that she has had to fight all her life against the intellectual paralysis of the "cultured" Bostonians, who still privately believe that the last word of English literature was written by Emerson or Longfellow, and that no other language has literature worthy of the name.

Let anyone read her "Bombardment," perhaps one of the best poems that this war has called forth, with its frantic jig of drunken incendiaries keeping time to the uproar of guns, battering with sublime impersonality, failing, decaying aristocracy, and fine poetic visioning, and patient experimental research, into the dust. One would almost say that "Amy Lowell" was a pseudonym, and that such an arraignment of warfare could only have been written by a man. But then turn to such

a poem as this, with its delicacy, its freshness, its completely feminine sense of intimacy:

See! I give myself to you, Beloved!
My words are little jars
For you to take and put upon a shelf.
Their shapes are quaint and beautiful,
And they have many pleasant colours and lustres
To recommend them.
Also the scent from them fills the room
With sweetness of flowers and crushed grasses.
When I shall have given you the last one,
You will have the whole of me,
But I shall be dead.

Amy Lowell's range is something almost unique in modern English and American literature. Long may she keep that inner youth that is hers, and which she has preserved unaltered, and out of which she draws so many treasures! A little more breadth, a more assured mastery of detail, some pruning of occasional exuberance, all this should inevitably come, and we shall soon have to concede her a permanent place in English literature.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

CORRESPONDENCE

NOTE TO CORRESPONDENTS.—While quite willing to publish letters under *noms de plume*, we make it a condition of publication that the name and address of each correspondent should be supplied to the Editor.—ED.

* * *

THE MEANING OF THE TERM "ARCHISTIC"

To the Editor, THE EGOIST.

MADAM,—Since Miss Marsden recognizes that "something more need be said before we can expect adoption of our term 'archistic' to be wholly vindicated" I am content to wait until the lack be remedied. Thus far Miss Marsden has shown us that by our common purposes we are all grouped under one caption. Nevertheless clarity demands that we be also afforded terms denoting divisions and subdivisions. I submitted a concrete example in which the distinction between voluntary and compulsory associations was emphasized. The inference—a fair one, I submit—of Miss Marsden's reply, is that only those who are committed to compulsive association are "archistic," which term, she assured us, "can be applied broadly to everything which possesses life in so far as one requires to keep in view the essentially aggressive nature of life." Those of us who are convinced that whatever the desire, its gratification can be better secured by voluntary than by compulsive association are relegated to the realm of the lifeless, the inanimate. "S'Death!" I keep alive my hope that Miss Marsden will hasten her further vindication so that the process of resuscitation may not be kept too long in abeyance.

Minneapolis, U.S.A.

HERMAN KUEHN.

THE EGO AND THE DRUNKARD

To the Editor, THE EGOIST.

MADAM,—I should be interested to have a clearer explanation of Miss Marsden's use of the word create in its relation to the ego and its world. In particular I do not understand how what I would call a perception is transformed into a creation.

"The 'I' creates its own world. The world is of it. As the 'I' is, so the world is." (*Egoist*, Jan. 1, page 3.) "The 'I' gives to itself, to the extent of its powers, such images as it can strike out from itself." (Jan. 1, page 3.) I should write this sentence: The "I" perceives to the extent of its powers such images or the images of such things as it comes in contact with.

"The progress of science is but the expanding of the 'I,' of the world of images which we call the scientist's soul. And all that which we call the objective world are but so many patterns and chords—auras—thrown out by the 'I' itself . . . Our worlds? We each grow our own!" (Jan. 1, page 4.) And the ego is called the creator of all the phenomena which its organs sense (April 1, page 51). Again, "there is no 'reality' outside the realm of sense, lying 'there' ready-made until such time as sense-apprehension can gnaw its way towards it. There is only the actual sensing life which throws out new appearances from itself as its powers grow, and which creates all the things which are and will create all those that ever will be in the future, no matter how great and wonderful and radiant" (April 1, page 52).

It is not clear to me how this process works. There seems to me to be an interaction. Allowing that as the "I" changes, so its world changes, it appears to me that as its world changes, so the "I" and its images change; and that instead of being the original creator of all the phenomena which its organs sense, the "I" at the beginning of its life gradually becomes aware of things by their action on itself, which action sets up the process, perfected by practice, of its sensing of them. And the better the sensing and the re-

* Mr. Fletcher forgets that this wide study of technique, this discipline in all the forms has been a part of the training of all the Imagists.—R. A.

membering and comparing of different "sensings," the fuller the particular world becomes. I am probably more capable of perceiving wonderful and radiant worlds than is a worm, and possibly an archangel would find the same worlds more wonderful and radiant than I do, but it does not at present help my understanding to say that the worm, the archangel and myself each created that which we respectively perceive.

To illustrate further. Say that I, an intensely respectable person, present myself before Miss Marsden to-day, and a month hence turn up again, but this time as a tattered drunkard. Will Miss Marsden maintain that she *created* the changed image she has of me; that it denotes an expansion of her soul, a development of her own egoistic power? Or will she allow that she *perceives*, passively, the degeneration of mine? JOSEPHINE WRIGHT.

[The above letter is referred to in the current issue in the article "Truth and Reality." Miss Marsden writes that the question as to the meaning of the word "create" will be dealt with more fully in an early article.—Ed.]

NOTICE

Future numbers of *The Egoist* will contain contributions from all the authors represented in this number.

June and July numbers will contain poems by Richard Aldington, J. G. Fletcher, Frances Gregg, Helen Hoyt, Amy Lowell, Harold Monro, A. W. G. Randall and several others.

Mr. James Joyce's novel and Madame Ciolkowska's French chronicle "Passing Paris" will be continued.

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