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MEN OF THE WORLD, MID HUM AND STIR, FRET OF ANVIL AND THROB OF LOOM,
MAKE FOR YOUR SOULS A THOROUGHFARE, KEEP FOR YOUR HEARTS A SILENT ROOM.

THE POETRY REVIEW

Edited by Stephen Phillips

(First published as the Poetical Gazette, May, 1909)

July to December, 1914

VOLUME V

Featherstone Buildings, Holborn,
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[THE INDEX TO THIS VOLUME WILL BE PUBLISHED AT THE END OF THE DECEMBER NUMBER.]

LETCHWORTH: AT THE ARDEN PRESS

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A NEW FEATURE AND SOME CONSIDERATIONS:

HOW READERS MIGHT BRING ABOUT A REVOLUTION

OWING to the difficulty the general reader finds in judging for himself of the value of modern poetry and whether there is any justification for believing in the existence of a present-day poetic revival, we have decided, beginning with our next issue, to devote one page each month to the quotation of a single poem, or portion of a poem, from a recent publication by a living poet of recognized distinction.

Many intelligent readers find reviews, however carefully and ably written, of little practical use in this respect. The impressions left on their minds by articles dealing with half a dozen books are too confused to induce them to seek a closer acquaintance with any one of the works referred to. Consequently the reading of reviews comes to be regarded as an end in itself. Yet even with this limitation reviews serve a very useful purpose. They provide an invaluable means of educating the public. For this reason (and it is a point generally overlooked by dejected reviewers when they lament their apparent uselessness), reviews should be interestingly written,* and the general truths embodied in their praise or condemnation clearly stated. There are many middle-aged men who learnt almost all they know about poetry from Mr Watts-Dunton's delightful and profound criticisms as they appeared in the *Athenæum*.

Now, assuming that the reader's interest has been aroused, how great is his disadvantage as compared with a novel reader! The latter goes to the circulating library and is handed the book he has become interested in at once. Quite true that, as he seldom buys it, this does not sound a particularly profitable transaction for the author. The book is read, however, and the chances are that the author gains an addition to his "public." But what is the position of the poetry reader? Unable to borrow the book, and unwilling to buy it without first seeing it, the impression gained from reading the review fades away into that vague cloud of memories

* The writer would like to instance as an ideal article in this respect: "Some Recent Poetry and Verse," by James A. Mackereth, in the April number of this magazine.

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which represents modern poetry in his mind. Now why should this be? We may say at once that it is not the fault of the libraries. The managers of these concerns are business men. As soon as they become aware of a demand they ascertain whether it will pay them to satisfy it. If a sufficiently large number of subscribers asked for books of poetry, they would take good care that books of poetry should be forthcoming. Unfortunately, lovers of poetry appear to be lacking in pertinacity. Their timid and infrequent requests are treated as negligible, and meet with the fate of all negligible things. But surely although to realize that the "young lady who looks after the books" regards one as a mere worm may be depressing, we should not allow it to discourage us. This is the almost invariable result, however, and we are anxious so to concentrate unconfused attention on the living poets whose work as far as we to-day can judge contains the essentials of real poetry, that the demand for their books at the libraries shall be too insistent to be disregarded.

That readers of poetry should be distinguished by the meekness of the dove is no doubt fitting, but why should they dispense entirely with the subtlety of the serpent? Each of these qualities has its uses for a wise man, especially when it is remembered that poetry isn't necessarily always a gentle-souled and shrinking affair? Statistics, even, may be made to serve their turn—thus:

The publication of such a fact as that during one month, say, 121,603 volumes of fiction and twenty-three of poetry were borrowed from the Birmingham Free Library seems harmless enough. In reality its effect is most pernicious. It sanctifies mental indolence and confirms the Philistine. Who would question the absolute rightness of a view shared by such a vast majority? As to the ridiculous twenty-three—with what a smug satisfaction is the small proportion of fools to sensible men noted!

But what would happen if the Birmingham Free Library's returns for the following month showed that not twenty-three but 61,407 volumes of poetry had been borrowed as against 60,219 of fiction! The papers would be full of it, but there would be no jibes. The small joker would be extinguished. The people who scorn ideas as ideas but bow in silent reverence when an idea comes to them clothed in the majesty of figures which represent a majority, would soon be speaking with awe of poetry as a power to be reckoned with. Hats would be taken off even to minor poets. Featherstone Buildings would be thronged by respectful crowds, and Vigo Street would figure in the itinerary of country cousins.

Consider, further, the effect on the country generally of this amazing revelation at Birmingham. All sorts of reasons would be suggested: one quite possibly, the influence of the Repertory Theatre there. If so, what

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an astounded but instant recognition of the principles for which that adventurous institution stands! Repertory Theatres would spring up everywhere, and incidentally the salvation of the drama of this country would be assured.

But imagine the impetus the reading of poetry would receive if it was realized that this Birmingham phenomenon was due to a public recognition of the claims of poetry—to the realization that the literary taste which finds no place for poetry, and what poetry signifies, is a dangerous and debasing thing. In a very short time Free Libraries all over the kingdom would be publishing similar reports. Then, as soon as it had become undoubtedly " the thing," the cultivated classes would summon up courage to ask for, say, Mr Marmaduke Marmalade's latest book of poems, at Smith's, Mudie's and Boots', and it would be handed them at once.

Of course the foregoing might all be dismissed as merely that sort of whimsical union of farcical conditions with immense possibilities which we associate with Mr H. G. Wells. However that may be, it undoubtedly proves that the readers of THE POETRY REVIEW possess a power which might conscientiously be exercised for the public good. Indeed, one sufficiently enthusiastic lover of poetry alone might revolutionize England and deliver its soul from bondage. He need only form a Society for the Borrowing of Books of Poetry from the Circulating Libraries, every member of which should be sworn to have out at least three books of poetry a week. Whether he read them or not would be no concern of the Libraries. Or even better, the members might concentrate their efforts on the Free Library of one town of known Philistine tastes whose statistics are blatantly published in the press, and it would do more, as has already been demonstrated, towards raising the standard of public literary taste in one year than all the diatribes against inferior literature have effected in twenty.

We hope it will not be thought that we are lacking in high seriousness in dealing thus with poetry. There are, of course, other considerations, but these are so constantly dwelt upon in THE POETRY REVIEW, that they call for no special reference now. The point we wish to bring out clearly is that poetry lovers—a class which should include all healthy lovers of life—are themselves responsible in no small degree for whatever may be the poetical taste of the time. Their very bonelessness in the past; their withholding of effective support and appreciation from good poetry—or rather their indifference to good and bad poetry alike, as if it was not worth the trouble of distinguishing between them—has led too often to a puzzled toleration of the blatantly bad. Something similar would happen with regard to hat-making if people who at present choose their hats because they think them good hats, and discourage bad hats by declining to wear

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them, suddenly developed an idle indifference as to the good or bad qualities of these more or less necessary articles of daily wear. There can be no doubt that this attitude of the reading public with regard to poetry was due to the difficulty it experienced, whenever it felt inclined to embark on such an adventure, in ascertaining what contemporary poetry really should be regarded as representative. Our plan, we hope, will not only help to remove this difficulty, and foster that revival of public interest in poetry which we have noted, by guarding against the disappointment caused by haphazard reading, but also increase in our contemporary poets that sense of responsibility, of which abundant proofs already exist, caused by the conviction that they are like to be taken seriously. We add this because we would not have it assumed that we hold the public entirely to blame. The neglect from which poetry is slowly recovering may not have been due to the fact that like the poor it was with them always. Rather it may have had something to do with the poets of the day having too often overlooked the fact that something besides the poor was with them always: Life, to wit.

We wish to point out, with reference to the principles to be observed in the choice of our proposed examples, that THE POETRY REVIEW supports no particular school of poetry or clique of poets. Neither does it adopt towards any of these a superior or unnecessarily critical attitude. Cliques are the sign of either growth or decay. At the best they are manifestations of a vigorous life which has not yet come to understand itself. But the members of these cliques are, for all practical purposes, children whose games are undisturbed by the roar of life outside their high-walled gardens. Without unfairness they may be described as the play-boys of the literary world. It must be remembered, too, that their particular attitude is not necessarily the result of youth and inexperience. Speaking generally, they are the victims of temperament. They lack the faculty which distinguishes between dilettantism and the things that matter. There are ancient men who have played at games all their lives and have never once heard the terribly earnest and poignant appeal of life to them—who have ever turned their backs on the sun and gloried in the light of a lamp. The lamp, indeed, is not always a small one, and that is why we are sometimes reproached by even clear-sighted persons for not enthusiastically hailing as the sun what for the moment is certainly regarded as the sun by them.

We, however, are sobered by responsibility—by the sense that a large body of opinion looks to us for guidance. Therefore our determination to keep unswervingly before us that what we have to deal with is poetry—and not the particular garb it may elect to wear. Not that the fashions have no interest for us. Such a profession would involve the denial of much of what we have said about the necessary relationship between life and poetry. But the garb

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which fashion may call for is not vital. What is vital is whether the thing clothed is living or not—whether, indeed, what is presented to us is not all clothes. In any case, having assured ourselves that the clothes are clothes performing their proper function, and that the thing inside is living, immortal and independent of all attachments, we say we don't care a brass farthing to what period it seems to belong, or what attire it affects.

By hasty critics who misunderstand our position we are frequently described as "Victorian." This, we understand, represents the "purple limit" achievable by human speech in the way of condemnation and consequent extinguishment. Other adjectives would merely place us: this disposes of us. We choose to regard ourselves as grateful heirs of a splendid literary past; therefore are we damned: hopelessly, irretrievably. Yet strangely we feel anything but resentment at this dreadful imputation. In fact, we may confess at once that we glory in it. We undoubtedly are Victorian—in precisely the same way as we are Elizabethan or Jacobean. Nor will we object to any other label that may be offered so long as it clearly implies recognition of the principles we stand for, and does not commit us to the acceptance of bad poetry as good poetry. Whether, therefore, the example of living poetry by a living poet which our readers will have the opportunity of considering each month will be turned from impatiently with, "Phew! Victorian! Take it out and bury it," or "Futurism! Why doesn't he see a specialist?" will be to us a matter of complete indifference. In honouring the poets whom it will delight to honour, THE POETRY REVIEW will be honouring itself and, we hope, adding greatly to the enjoyment of its readers. We have not yet decided whether, having fixed on the poet, the choice of the poem to be used shall be made by the poet himself, or by us. The former method, as certainly adding to the interest of the scheme, will in all probability be adopted. We need not say that any suggestions made by our readers, although we do not invite them, will receive consideration.

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SOME OF THE EARLIER WORKS OF ANTONIO FOGAZZARO, POET AND NOVELIST

ANTONIO FOGAZZARO was born at Vicenza on March 25, 1842, and, as a six-year-old child, used constantly in his father's house to see and listen to many of the active instigators of the rising against the Austrians in 1848, and can now, says his biographer, remember his father in arms as one of Vicenza's heroic defenders when the enemy made a furious attack on it, and his mother as one of those who made bandages for the wounded. These scenes early inculcated him with intense patriotic feeling. His father, Mariano Fogazzaro, being a man of some means, lived independently of trade or profession. He was possessed of refined and intellectual tastes, and had a great love of classical music which his son did not fail to inherit. The young Antonio, between the ages of eight and eighteen, was an ardent student, and no mean performer of some of the masterpieces of Bach, Beethoven, Haydn and Mozart. His mother was born in Valsolda, which borders on the north side of Lake Lugano, in a house which remained his cherished property. His affection for the locality is manifested by a voluminous portion of his writings in which it forms the centre of the *dénoûments*. She, too, possessed a fine musical ear, and was much given to singing operatic melodies and patriotic songs. Both parents were fond of travel and for this likewise the future novelist quickly conceived an inclination. The love of art, music, and voyage is conspicuous in the bulk of his works and notably so in his novel "Il Mistero del Poeta," which will be referred to later. His family was a religious one, father and mother alike being good Roman Catholics, though, fortunately for their son, not narrowed and fettered by any creed intensities. Antonio Fogazzaro was taught to appreciate Dante, Ugo Foscolo, and the Tuscan poet, Giuseppe Giusti. But his early special predilection was for the poetry of Ariosto. He owed much of his intellectual training to his uncle, Don Giuseppe Fogazzaro, a priest of lofty attainments, who taught his nephew to revere the religious teaching of Antonio Rosmini, the illustrious friend of the author of "I Promessi Sposi," thereby

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enhancing the youth's patriotic aspirations still further. When he went to school, the young Fogazzaro had the Abate Giacomo Zanella as his private tutor. This accomplished cleric, whose poetry is widely known over Italy, gave a similar stimulus to his pupil's earlier poetical efforts to that imparted by the usher at the Pension Decotte to Victor Hugo, and the lad consequently soon began to imitate the styles of Leopardi and Foscolo. Between himself and Zanella perfect harmony and sympathy existed, and, as the latter's poetical interest was widespread, he soon opened the boy's mind to the beauties of ancient Greek and Latin writers, particularly to those of Æschylus and Lucretius. He also inspired him with a love of Heine, whom he first encountered in M. Gérard de Nerval's translation. A French rendering of Byron delighted young Fogazzaro, as did also Victor Hugo's "Contemplations" and Chateaubriand's "Mémoirs d'Outre-Tombe." The fates were certainly propitious to this young aspirant, blessed as he was with parents who fostered and encouraged his literary efforts, and a worthy instructor, himself a poet of no mean order, whose work and teaching stamped themselves indelibly on the mind of a pupil who had such receptive faculties that he could imbibe alike the poetry of Leopardi, the evolutionary theories of Darwin, and the philosophy of Herbert Spencer.

Zanella and Fogazzaro's father, marking the avidity with which he absorbed French and Italian literature, afforded him every facility in their power for learning German and English, whereby, says an Italian biographer, "he was enabled to study the works of prose writers who excel our own so much in imagination and feeling." Meanwhile, however, the classics were not neglected. Antonio Fogazzaro took readily to Virgil, Horace, Lucretius, Tacitus and Juvenal. He made less progress in Greek, but, nevertheless, aided by a Latin rendering, conceived a great love for the Odyssey.

In 1859, when the terms of the treaty of peace concluded at Villafranca abandoned Venice and Mantua to Austria, the father, Mariano Fogazzaro, determined not to remain on territory given over to a foreign power. He sought refuge with his family, accordingly, in Piedmont, and settled for some years in Turin. There Antonio Fogazzaro pursued the study of the law, but with no great liking for it, and it is recorded that after he had taken his doctor's degree he never put the title on his visiting cards. Amongst his earlier published verse efforts, which for the time being attracted but little attention, were in 1863, "Una ricordanza del lago di Como," which was followed in 1865 by "Albo Veneziano," being a series of verses descriptive of the Cathedral of St Mark, the Lido and other Venetian objects and surroundings. His ode, "A mia Sorella," appeared in 1868 and "Naiadi" in 1870. All these were composed on festal occasions. His "In San Marco di

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Venezia," a graceful sonnet which finds a place in the collection of his verse published under the heading of Poesie Scelte in 1898, must not, however, be confounded with his earlier verse, for it was not published till 1884.

Doubts concerning religious beliefs began to trouble him in early manhood. He sought to broaden his field of thought and studied the doctrine of evolution attentively. He did not, however, openly parade his convictions in the face of the views of his father and his teacher, Zanella, but he arrived then at certain conclusions touching the natural laws, which in later life he supported warmly and openly, as is evidenced by his publications in 1891 and 1893 of "Per un recente raffronto delle Teorie di S. Agostino e di Darwin circa la creazione" and "L'origine dell'uomo e il sentimento religioso." The latter appeared in English translation form in the *Contemporary Review* in July, 1895.

The condition of his country after the restoration of Venice to Italy in 1866 had a marked effect upon him. His father became deputy of Marostica, a town which lies some fifteen miles north-east of Vicenza. He does not appear to have shone as a speaker, but was a useful man in council and much respected for his common sense. As one of the commission of inquiry into the condition of the State tobacco industry, he did valuable work. He continued in office till 1874, when the electors, finding fault with his taciturnity, deposed him, a circumstance on which his son's chronicler, Sig. Molmenti, makes this bitter comment: "No empty chatterer, a man with the courage of his convictions, and of upright conscience, it is easy to understand how such a one had not the calibre for an Italian deputy"! Young Fogazzaro, however, during the years of 1866 to 1872 did but little. He was vaguely searching in a troubled spirit for something which he could not find. Whilst in this condition he betook himself to write "Miranda," a poem which proved his stepping-stone to fame and favour. He concealed his purpose from his most intimate friends, even from his fellow-poet, Jacopo Cabianca, a family friend, who shared many of his confidences, and also from his beloved and respected teacher, Zanella. The Italian poet Giusti has said, in reference to this epoch of Antonio Fogazzaro's life, that he was conversing with art with closed doors, as if communing with the lady of his heart, because he was one who, save in solitude and seclusion, could neither make progress in love nor art. The poem has passed through several editions. It was first published in 1874, and the second edition did not appear till five years later. In 1882 it was translated into German by A. Meinhardt (Maria Hirsch), and in this form published at Leipzig. Portions of it have appeared in French at a later date, several being included in a book in 1898, intituled "La Poésie Italienne Contemporaine." By

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1900 it had gone through eleven Italian editions. Many of his brother poets warmly applauded the poem, and amongst his praisers was the historian, Gino Capponi, who accompanied his eulogies with a copy of his " History of Florence." He, nevertheless, came in for considerable criticism from those who condemned what perhaps might be termed his Wordsworthian simplicity, taking him to task for introducing such lines as:

> " In un angol sedeva la signora
> Maria trattando i ferri della calza ";
>
> (In a corner sat the lady Maria
> Plying her knitting needles.)

The author, in defending himself against these critics, has maintained repeatedly, that verse, which, though euphonistic, originates nothing, cannot fail to be ignoble—a departure of thought from the more conservative school of Italian poets so addicted to high-flown expression. Lovers of Matthew Arnold, however, will presumably be on Fogazzaro's side when they recall in " The Forsaken Merman " how

> " the shuttle falls from her hand,
> And the whizzing wheel stands still."

Miranda affords no elaborately devised plot. It is but the story of a girl who, with her widowed mother, leads a secluded country life and has a poet-lover, who abandons her at the solicitations of his uncle. He displays a good deal of selfish egoism under cover of sentimental farewells, which he conveys in a letter wherein he likens their previous intimacy to the meeting and leaving one another of two ships in mid ocean:

> " Dolce Miranda, addio. Talor due navi
> S'incontran nell'Oceano deserto.
> Arresta l'una presso all'altra il fianco
> E palpita sull'onda; lente lente
> Si disgiungono poi, s'affolla a poppa
> Di qua di la tutta la gente: addio
> Addio! cosi mia selvaggi mari affronta
> Che la vogliono sola; altre pacate
> Acque ridenti ed altri dolci lidi
> Attendono la vostra."

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Miranda does not reproach him. She has in her being much of Tennyson's "Lily Maid of Astolat." There is a similarity between the plaint of either. Elaine murmured:

> "Fret not yourself, dear brother, nor be wroth,
> Seeing it is no more Sir Lancelot's fault
> Not to love me, than it is mine to love
> Him of all men who seems to me the highest."

Miranda in her turn makes excuse for her lover, that, much as he loved her, he had so many other things to love, his books, music, the stars, the flowers, the hills, while she had love for him only, "How much greater," she says, "is his heart than mine!"

> "Ei maggior che non sono mi credea
> Quanto mi amavava, quanto cose amava!
> I suoi libri, la musica, le stelle
> I fiori, le montagne; ed io, lui solo
> Quanto è il suo cor più grande!"

The gentle girl goes about the village, ministering to the poor, and works and studies, and does her best to be a cheerful companion to her mother, in such a way that Longfellow's lines on Evangeline are equally applicable to her, viz.:

> "Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others,
> This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had taught her."

But consumption prostrates her beyond hope of recovery. She knows it and resigns herself calmly. In the last chapter she says plaintively:

> "I am little more than hair and eyes."

> "Più non mi restan che capelli ed occhi."

Four years have elapsed since her lover has left her. Now, as she is nearing her end, he returns and seeks her pardon. She accords it, but, when he asks whether she will marry him now, tells him that she is dying. He falls at her feet and pours out a torrent of self-reproach, saying how empty he has found the world's praise and that she alone is all in all to him. But he has come

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back too late. She succumbs to the strain and dies even as he is supplicating her.

> "Ella allor si levò, agitò le bracchia,
> Un grido mise e cadde."
>
> (With that she raised herself, moved her arms,
> Gave one cry and fell.)

Fogazzaro said subsequently that he had delighted in writing "Miranda," and that it had been a solace to him during prostration from serious illness. Its tone is indicative of deliberate composition, and the gradual stages of the phthisis which attacks the heroine are dwelt upon rather than alluded to. In the actions and sentiments of the sufferer there is much that recalls not only the poems already mentioned of Tennyson and Longfellow but Mr Coventry Patmore's "Angel in the House." His Italian biographer, Molmenti, however, is disposed to believe that the poet's Miranda was a creation which he owes to Shakespeare. Fogazzaro, he says, profoundly adored Cordelia and was thereby inspired to depict a girl who would feel much, yet say little, and he succeeded in this by his portrayal of Miranda.

It specially pleased the young author that his father was delighted with the poem and told his son so in rapturous terms. This paternal joy probably gave him the incentive which led to his making the surroundings of his mother's birthplace the subject of his next prolonged effort. A volume of verse, entitled "Valsolda," appeared in 1876. Many of the poems which comprise it (they are mainly descriptive of the natural beauties of the locality), have been translated into English, French, German and Russian; and some into Danish and Swedish also. They evince Fogazzaro's profound reverence for nature. In some of them he has endowed inanimate objects with speech. The subject of one of these is a conversation between a poet and a rock. The latter is asked why it always looks upward, oblivious of the green hills around it, the vine and olive covered slopes at its base, and the blue reflecting water of the Lombard Lakes. To which the rock answers that these are naught to it, its gaze is upward to the sunlit snow-topped heights rising heavenward; and that, when night deprives it of that sight, it thinks on the glories of its ancestors and would wish to rise as high as they. The poet rapturously exclaims: "Oh, rock, I love thee!" and the rock asks for his praise.

> "Quando la notte me disonora,
> Sento la gloria di padri miei,
> A paro ascendere
> Di lor vorrei!

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Il Poeta
O rupe, t'amo
La Rupe
Se sai, esaltami."

Amongst the most popular of the collection is "Mi grandeggia ne l'ombre della sera," which has been translated into many languages (Polish amongst others), and finds a place in "Italian Lyrists of to-day." It is descriptive of a lake at night on which the poet wishes to row alone, thinking by this means to clear his brain of disturbing images, which, he says, would then remain quietly in the bow of the boat while he stayed silent in the stern:

"All'aperto uscirebbero i fantasmi
Che più gelosamente il cor nasconde.
Io sederei a poppa ed essi a prora;
Senza parlar ci guarderemmo allora."

During the next five years Fogazzaro produced various short poems and some critical articles, notably one on Giosuè Carducci's "Ode on the death of Prince Eugéne Napoléon." This critique, which appeared in the *Giornale della Provincia di Vicenza*, Aug. 12, 1897, elicited a vigorous response in self-defence from Carducci, to which Fogazzaro replied in the aforesaid journal in the beginning of the following month. Then came his first novel, "Malombra," published in 1881. According to his biographer, Molmenti, Fogazzaro, up to this time, had but a limited acquaintance with the novels of foreign writers, but those which he knew best were English. He was a great admirer of the genius of Dickens, and could appreciate both his humour and his irony. Indeed, the character of Edith in "Malombra" bears in many respects a marked resemblance to that of Agnes in "David Copperfield." When a French translation of his novel began to appear some seventeen years later in the columns of the *Figaro*, Fogazzaro himself contributed an explanatory preface, portions of which read to the following effect:

"It is seventeen years since 'Malombra' was first published, and then I had left my youth behind me (he was close upon forty when it appeared), but the germ of the story had long been in my heart. The lonely house on the border of the lake, the poesy-inspiring mountains and valleys around it had occupied my thoughts during many hours of hopes deferred, when life's stern necessities impelled one to construct a secret refuge in dreamland. When no word of the romance was as yet on paper, beautiful, proud, wayward Marina di Malombra haunted my innermost being. She was my loved one, and I dreamed of making her love me. I saw her peerless among

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women and strove with all the pride of my nature to gain her. Marina existed for me before Edith, and she is that strange mixture of goodness, singularity, talent and pride, for which I sought in my early youth. She had become the creature of my dreams—an ethereal being, a sort of sylphide à la Chateaubriand, in whose works I revelled between the ages of twelve and sixteen. All that I have read since about love, according to its conception by certain *soi-disant* adorers of beauty, seemed to me as cold and dull, compared with the intoxication of soul that a woman like Marina could have imparted to a lover worthy of her . . . Edith, too, is an ideal creature, but she does not live like the other. She is only a reaction of conscience and religious feeling. She is born of the terror of an abyss . . . Before writing 'Malombra,' I was plunged into the depths of occultism, and had been enthralled by the strange philosophical teaching in which Christian and Indian mysticism were commingled. I was not then, however, wholly won over, my mind still retained some particles of doubt, but I was under its charm and wrote 'Miranda' while subservient to its fascination. Later on, I became conscious of having totally succumbed to it."

A recent critic of Fogazzaro's novels commented that whatever they lacked, it certainly was not incident, and this is plentiful in "Malombra." Marina, the daughter of the Marchese Filippo Crusnelli di Malombra, has been adopted at his death by her uncle, Count Cesare d'Ormengo, and taken by him to reside in a lonely country residence on the border of a lake in the north of Lombardy. Uncle and niece are entirely unsympathetic, the latter is an animated young woman whose training under a Belgian teacher, and an English governess, has made her no meek spirit to suffer injustice. She lights by chance upon a family letter and discovers proof of her uncle's father's harsh treatment of his wife, Cecilia Varegga. This preys upon her mind, and when at length Count Cesare is confined to his chamber by serious illness, she takes revenge by stealing to his bedside at night, where by personating the dead Cecilia, she so frightens him that she accelerates his death. Wrought up incontrollably, she deliberately shoots dead Corrado Silla, a young writer whom she had thought to be her lover, but whose affections had been transferred elsewhere. Then she rushes out and rows away over the lake, in a demented condition, to perish by her own act.

Although "Malombra" has passed through numerous editions in Italy, and has been translated into some half-a-dozen languages, it is recorded that the author had considerable difficulty at first in finding a publisher to undertake it, and his father had to provide funds before it was eventually forthcoming. Its reputation was of gradual growth, but when some four years later, Fogazzaro achieved a signal success with "Daniele

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Cortis"—this for years was by far the best-known of his novels to English readers—the demand for his earlier work rapidly increased, and in 1886 no less than four further editions of "Malombra" were published at Milan. During the four years' interim, prior to the appearance of "Daniele Cortis," Fogazzaro was not idle. In 1882 he published "Dopo la Vendemmia." In this poem the author says that he, too, like the vines, has given his best for public good, all that he thought about, saw, loved, bewailed and wrote upon:

"Dico 'piangenti viti,
Al piacer de la gente
Ho dato il frutto mio,
Quel que pensai, che vissi
Che amai, che piansi e scrissi
Fra il vostro umile duolo
Or seggo freddo e solo.'"

The subject was one which would naturally present familiar pictures to his countrymen with whom this poem of fifty-one lines has always been popular. It was soon reproduced and subsequently appeared in two collections of Fogazzaro's verse, *i.e.*, "Valsolda," "Poesia dispersa," published in 1886, and "Poesie scelte," in 1898. It was at this time, too, that he wrote various short stories, which have subsequently been reproduced in volume form under the title of "Fedele ed altri racconti." These are for the most part highly pathetic. The first was "Un pensiero di Ermes Torranza," which is a sketch just suggestive of the supernatural. Another, "Fedele," is an exceedingly touching story of an impoverished blind musician, who rejects the assistance of his daughter, because, contrary to his wish and aspirations, she, who from childhood had made vows first to God and then to the Virgin, and had been trained to an artistic career, discarded her vows and forsook her art for a wealthy marriage. The daughter explains in touching language to a spectator of a painful scene with her father: "Fedele is my baptismal name, and I cannot be otherwise than (fedele) faithful. . . . You understand that he is my father, do you not? Poor man! he did not wish it to be known. The shame was too great to him. I do not say that there was no fault on my side. I was vowed to the Lord and to the Virgin. Poor papa! perhaps he counted too much on the promise of a little child, more perhaps than God would have. But I do not wish to be his judge, ah, poor papa! Such, however, is the case unfortunately. I do not reproach him. But I could not. . . ."

Fogazzaro's "Daniele Cortis" appeared in 1885 and ran through three

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editions that year. It is the story of a Roman senator who has an unworthy mother and makes every sacrifice to preserve his father's good name. His affections are centred on Elena Carrè di Santa Giulia, the wife of a dissolute gambler, the Baron Senator di Santa Giulia. Still, though the two are drawn closely together, they do not transgress beyond the pale. The mother of Cortis makes allegations, which induce him to pay the Baron's debts and be instrumental in getting him to leave Europe. At one time it seemed doubtful whether Elena would accompany her husband when he decides to go to Yokohama, but she ends by doing so, and, after a painful parting, Daniele Cortis makes preparations to throw himself into a vortex of political strife, and, as the work closes, he is left looking at the portrait of that father whose name he has striven to leave unsullied, and saying: "There!" implying that, terrible as has been his sacrifice, he has struggled against and overcome temptation. The priesthood is severely handled in the story, and this brought a good deal of clerical censure upon Fogazzaro when the work first gained popularity. Signor Molmenti has defended him on this score saying: "In the eyes of Fogazzaro the priest who does not look upon himself in the light of a fellow-citizen is an outrage on the religion that he professes. And in harsh lines he delineates the scheming political cleric, who is devoid of every lofty ideal, lacking all scientific and literary instruction, narrow in thought and feeling. Such a one in 'Daniele Cortis' is this malignant parish priest of Villascura, who, with base insinuations, tries to smirch the good name of a pure woman."

Fogazzaro now felt that he could give vent more unrestrainedly to his impressions as to the influence of music, and, in the same year as "Daniele Cortis," there appeared his "Versioni della musica," Rob. Schumann (op. 68), published at Bologna, and "Versioni della musica," Van Beethoven (op. 27), published at Rome. These were followed by dissertations on Boccherini and Martini. Of his own susceptibility to music, he has written:

"Better-class music excites in many, and in me particularly, a host of feelings—joy, grief without a cause, infinite longings, apprehension, objectless vague pity, commiseration, bold aspirations, which die away with the last note, violent impulses to impossible actions. It is suggestive of a host of phantasmagoria and is dimly significant of a discourse, a dialogue, of a drama which is incomprehensible because it is written in a language differing from all others, which, nevertheless, has human passion in its sound."

Fogazzaro put into verse his interpretation of the notes of Boccherini's "Minuetto in La." He saw a cavalier dancing a minuet with a lady, pleading his love, and telling her that he must go on the morrow. He adds: "Yield, I beseech you, go with me if you love me." To which the lady responds:

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"Say not so, you are desiring my everlasting disgrace." But, as in a flash of lightning, a drama of treachery and jealousy reveals itself in the closing notes. The lady yields, and drawing near to her cavalier, says:

> "I consent, yes, I swear to follow whither thou wilt.
> I consent, yes, oh, my love! Leave me no more."

> "Io rido, sì, ti giuro seguirti ovunque vai,
> Io rido, si, oh mio amore! Non mi lasciar più mai."

Chopin's Mazurka (op. 14, no. 4), conjured up for him the plaint of a woman over a beloved husband's corpse, while Schumann's "In der Nacht" (Phantasie Stücke, op. 12) suggested the appeal of an impassioned lady to her lover, whose mind, however, enables him to resist it. She says: "I kiss thee, mouth to mouth; turn thou to me without a word, I have conquered God." But he answers: "No, thou hast not, I break free from thee, I come to my proper self and so remain, and if my wicked heart be drawn to thee, will shatter it."

> "Figgo la bocca
> Su la tua bocca
> Muto rispondi,
> Ho vinto Iddio.

> "No, non hai vinto . . .
> Da te mi strappo, risorgo e sto
> Se ancora il vile mio cuor t'è avvinto,
> Lo spezzerò."

In January, 1888, the first portion of Fogazzaro's third novel, "Il Mistero del Poeta," appeared in the *Nuova Antologia*. It was favourably received, and three editions of the book were published during the same year. A fourth followed in 1889, to be succeeded by many others.

Fogazzaro introduced several lines of verse into this novel, which, though perhaps less universally popular than either "Daniele Cortis," which preceded it, or his subsequent romance, "Piccolo Mondo Antico," has nevertheless found considerable favour with many men of letters. The book reveals the affections of a poet, who, having loved and lost, has entrusted a friend with a record of his experiences, for publication at his death. He hears a sweet voice in a dream, and is perpetually haunted by recollections of it, until, some months afterwards, when travelling in the north of

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Italy, he meets the heroine of the tale, Violet Yves, who attracts him immediately because hers is the voice of his dream. At first he is perturbed through being misled into believing her to be married. She herself undeceives him. He has presented her with some impassioned verses, and receives a letter in return, informing him that its writer is unmarried, but betrothed, and that she has read and ardently admired his idealistic poem "Luisa." (She had picked up a copy of it by chance, which some one had left lying on the grass near Shelley's grave in the Protestant cemetery at Rome.) It had made her long to meet with its author, but having met, it will be better for both to part for ever. The receipt of this missive only stimulates the poet to urge his suit further, and he follows Violet into Germany. A chance encounter with her fiancé's elder brother—one of the best-drawn characters in the book—Dr Topler, an amiable, though rather excitable German, leads to his making one at a forest picnic near Eichstätt, with Violet and her friends. In this chapter an interesting account is afforded of the ceremony of making and drinking the Maiwein, for which the white "Waldmeister" is infused in Rüdesheimer. Eventually the fiancé is dispossessed in favour of the poet. But a former lover comes upon the scene. He had his *congé* long ago, but the intelligence of Violet's approaching nuptials has stung him into renewing his suit. To avoid his further importunities, the marriage is hastened on, the ceremony being performed after midnight. But the strain caused by his reappearance is too much for the delicate heroine and she dies in the train a few hours afterwards. This "Il Mistero del Poeta" is to an extent marred by its second chapter which is suggestive of intrigue. But no taint of vice mars the subsequent love passages and some of the pathos is exquisite. Violet Yves is a gentlewoman to her finger-tips and enlists sympathy from first to last, and, sad as the story is, its wealth of scenic description and portrayals of human passion, suffering and self-abnegation, can scarcely fail to gain the approbation of the majority of its readers. It is a work, too, which besides being highly artistic has some scholarly pretensions. Signor Molmenti in reference to Fogazzaro's poem "Miranda" and his first three novels makes this apt comment: "'Malombra' is an outcome of fantasy, but in 'Miranda,' 'Il Mistero del Poeta,' and above all in 'Daniele Cortis,' the intention of clothing love sentiments in artistic form is pre-eminent."

ALGERNON WARREN.

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SHAKESPEARE AND AMERICA

THE PERPETUAL AMBASSADOR OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD

BY PROFESSOR CHARLES WILLIAM WALLACE*

WE of America are not infrequently reminded that we are young, very young. And with the frankness of youth we admit the impeachment, although as students of history we know that our evolution from a colonial if not a savage state to the highest civilization is but an easily observed epitome of the evolution of man through æons of time to the present, and that the whole history of Europe, as immediately preparing the way for us through English colonization, is but early American history. Yet we are young. So, too, in the same sense, is Shakespeare young, very young. Both were born together, twinned at a single birth, children of the same ideal. They are of the same age and have grown up together—or may in good time grow up, unless the common ideal shall keep them for ever young.

Ponce de Leon sought for the fountain of youth in Florida to keep the physical being young. But Shakespeare found and partook of that common fountain of youth, called the Ideal, that keeps a youthful nation not only young, but, in its irreverence of age and traditions, shamelessly hopeful that it may, along with him, remain for ever young.

But then, Ponce de Leon was a Spaniard in those days of ancient rivalry, and Shakespeare was an Englishman—or shall we claim him by natural affinity in this as an American?—and there you are. Even if the Spaniard had found the coveted fountain, with its doom of uninspired physical perpetuity, some predecessor of Drake on the high seas would have "swiped" it from him before he got it half way across the Atlantic and tapped from it an enlightening stream of idealism.

By the time Elizabeth came to the throne, England had acquired the habit of always outdoing the Spaniard anyhow. The Queen herself, epitomizing the spirit of her country, had a way about her of getting what she wanted that puzzled not only the great Armada and the explorers returning from the west with laden galleons, but also King Philip himself,

* An address at the Peace Centenary meeting of the Poetry Society, June 10, 1914.

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personally and diplomatically, beyond all solution. And England in the days of good Queen Bess was only young America in the buoyant heedlessness and lawlessness of childhood in chasing over all obstacles after the purse at the end of the rainbow.

It was in these days of dreams and restless roving and fierce sea-realities that England got her bull-dog grip on the world, which she has not loosened since. Not she controlled but she was controlled by subconscious activities which she was not even aware of and which she could not have diverted even if she had wished. That is the way with the subconscious directive force, which we may call the ideal,—once it gets a grip on us, we cannot get away from it. Human progress is explained on no other basis. That is why we are civilized and keep civilized and want to grow more civilized and make the rest of the world similarly civilized, whether it agrees to it or not. We often think we are not idealists, scorn to be called such, and believe we are very practical, even prosaic. But we wake up sometimes and find that we are idealists all the same, poets every one of us—present company especially included—in our inspirations and motive forces.

It was this inspiration of the ideal in subconsciousness that imbued all England in those days of Elizabeth and James that are most accurately bounded by the twenty odd years of Shakespeare's literary activity. Men felt the inspiration. They looked out to the west. There was wide expectation of something beyond that could not be realized at home. Men in the fields dropped the reins, or straightened their backs above the hoe as they looked to the west. Those in the shops let fall the hammer, or stilled the chisel in its stroke, or loosed the apron to the floor, as the inner dream enlightened their faces. Lords and gentlemen laid aside the rapier of fashion; the captain took the wheel. Together they steered to the west. To the west lay infinite possibilities—not merely of wealth, but of that which alone the ideal demanded—the right to lift up the head and say to all the world, even with the kings of the earth, " I am a man."

Into this age and of it were Shakespeare and America born. Could you carve me a statue of England at that moment, surprised into the joy of unrealized infinity, or paint me a picture of it, or embody it in a poem, or shadow it forth in music? The statue would be but one caught moment, the picture but one swift scene, the poem but the vision of an inspiration, and the music but the dream of a dream.

However each might gather up a summary of the past and the anticipations of the future into the significance of the single moment, each would be but an interpretation, too brief and condensed for full realization, almost as inadequate as if the title, " Hamlet, Prince of Denmark," alone were

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spoken from the stage, and there an end, in lieu of the play itself. We want the play, the very life of the times lived out. Instead of these art-interpretations, though each would be a joy to have, we take Shakespeare, therefore, the man and his works, as the brief abstract and epitome of the age. He is a real source. And in him the ideal of the age relives on the stage of the world his light relumes.

Shakespeare not only shared in the general spirit of the widened outlook on life, as reflected in his plays, but took also some personal interest in the new world where ideals romantically reigned unfettered by traditions, customs, and a hindering civilization. The activity of his friend the Earl of Southampton in the colonization of Virginia is well known, as is also his own familiarity with other explorations of the new world. I have been surprised also to find that some of his theatrical friends and associates were personally and financially interested in American colonization and merchandizing.

As the result of one well-known adventure, *The Tempest* was written, reflecting the most romantic visions of the new world, with its possibilities of freedom and unchecked outlook, where even the powers at play are in full conjunction with human possibility, even to the level of supernatural achievement.

One cannot, however, with like certainty lay the finger on other plays and say they have the same definite source of inspiration. But one can sift them all and find that they reflect the general spirit of the time, all celebrating the ideal, either in achievement or in tragic interruption. And when this is done, too, we find the total sum of Shakespeare is noble ideals. Of no other dramatist of his time can that be said. That is what makes him a universal civilizing force, a world-power that needs no armaments to enforce peace nor the panoply of armies to prevent war.

And now, after three hundred years, what influence has Shakespeare had on America? It is difficult to say in a word. He has so entered into our lives, is so much a part of us that we do not think of him as an influence apart from us. He is ours as he is yours, by common inheritance. You are not nearer to him than we are, simply because you have remained in the land of his birth, while we have gone to the land born with him. Perhaps you are not even so near, for that new land still retains the broad outlook consonant with the spirit and the age that begot both.

In final analysis, then, the influence of Shakespeare on America would come to his appeal to the ideal. The manner and the effect of that appeal may not be the same as with you. We have not quite the same means of measuring his influence. In England and in Germany, interest in Shakespeare, if not his influence, is measured in part by the number of per-

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formances or the lack of performances of his plays. We hear much talk of this as a standard gauge here, and are constantly reminded that as Germany performs many of the plays and England few and but rarely, therefore England cares comparatively little for him. Perhaps it may not be a perfect standard of measurement.

What Shakespeare means to America is by no means rightly measured by the number of performances. His influence does not come through societies organized to rouse enthusiasm for him, as here and in Germany. We do not go mad over him, nor even wildly enthusiastic, but take him as a matter of course, and appreciate him none the less. To us generally he is not a god, to whom only special priests may be interpreters, but a man and a poet who might, if now living, be elected an honorary member of this society. Perhaps his influence with us is not less than with you. It may be even more nearly national, touching the whole mass of the people. For the main channels of his influence are the schools and colleges and homes from one end of America to the other. He is an essential part of our school curriculum.

It is this condition primarily that gives Shakespeare his large and steadily increasing audiences in the theatres in an ever-widening area throughout America. But it takes the great actor to make him live to the full, and thus to widen and deepen the channels of influence. We ourselves have produced some illustrious interpreters of Shakespeare on the stage. We have also invited from England and other lands and received with open arms the most illustrious actors of the world. But it is safe to say that even Sir Johnstone Forbes Robertson would not have had the joyous reception he has had, nor the great audiences that have crowded his performances, if it were not for this universal acquaintance with Shakespeare from the elementary schools onward. I hope and have little doubt that he, like others before him, found his most appreciative audiences in the school and college towns.

America takes infinite pride in educating her sons and daughters. If we might judge by the amount of money spent on education and the small percentage of illiteracy, no country in the world cares so much for culture, for no other country spends an amount in any way comparable, and no other country has so small a proportion of illiteracy. She keeps one out of five of her entire population in school. Because these things concern her appreciation of Shakespeare vitally, we note them here.

A glance at the report of the Commissioner of Education is instructive. We turn to the table for High Schools from 1900 to 1910, showing the number of students in each subject of the curriculum. Most of them are on the cultural side. For example, out of some 800,000 students in the High

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Schools, 466,477, or 57·05 per cent, are in English Literature, 405,592 in Latin, 455,200 in History, and so on, while in the sciences, Physics has but 120,910, Chemistry 58,290, Physiology 128,836, and so on.

English Literature has several thousand more students than any other subject, and a course in English Literature includes inevitably something of Shakespeare, from one to several plays. In 1900, the number in this subject was only 250,493, or a little over half as many as in 1910. So that we can say the number of students in English Literature, and hence the probable number of readers of Shakespeare in the High Schools alone, increased during those ten years at the rate of 21,000 a year. And what is true of the High Schools is true in large measure of the whole 2,000,000 students in Secondary Education. Even of the 18 million in the elementary schools, a good many in the Grammar grade or elsewhere get some taste of Shakespeare. Besides, every one of intelligence, as a matter of course, is supposed to know something of Shakespeare, and if a home is provided with the Bible and a dozen other books, one of them is almost certain to be Shakespeare. No wonder publishers find Shakespeare still their best seller.

In an English review of a book on Shakespeare by one of my colleagues a few years ago, it was said with evident surprise, " In America, they seem to teach Shakespeare." We most certainly do. Are we to infer that in England you do not?

In the universities, of course, throughout the world, Shakespeare is taught or lectured upon. Every college and university in America offers one, two or three courses in Shakespeare every year. While the methods of getting at him differ, the aim of intimate acquaintance with him is the same in all. In the university with which I have the honour to be associated, we aim to study him at first hand in the light of life, measuring ideal against ideal, by specific means that cannot here be touched upon. Life is a better criticism of art than art is of life, and we find none that so stands the test as Shakespeare, and consequently none that more completely enters into the lives of our men and women.

As America has received from Shakespeare, so she has returned. If we do not fully justify the recent expression of an English writer to me on this point, uttered with an air of pleasantry, " You have made Shakespeare very famous," we have at least done somewhat. Critical and school editions of the plays, commentaries, appreciations, and other helpful books pour forth from our presses in a constant stream, some of them of a high order. In criticism on the highest judicial level, I need cite no more than Richard Grant White and James Russell Lowell. Among our many, and some illustrious, editions, that of my late friend, Dr H. H. Furness, stands in the

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esteem of scholars throughout the world next after the first folio and quartos. Among school editions, that of the late Dr Rolfe takes high rank. In helps to the study of Shakespeare, we stand easily first. Our libraries and men of large means eagerly collect Shakespeareana, thus greatly enlarging the means and opportunities for study. Two of these collections, one public and one private, are among the most important in the world. Of the many great American interpreters of Shakespeare on the stage, I need only mention the name of Edwin Booth to awaken tribute in the hearts of all. In painting, as highly exemplified in the work of E. A. Abbey, in sculpture, in music, Shakespeare is a perpetual source of inspiration through that everlasting appeal that makes the ideal want to embody itself in tangible form.

All these are creditable, and are pleasant to contemplate. Yet they are but the trappings, the outward signs of the spirit they clothe. The contribution that we have returned to the world back of all these is that intangible somewhat that is a part of our life and being, and urges us on to higher things, in continued companionship with the noble unachieved in Shakespeare that has gone into our making.

Every play of Shakespeare's was written primarily for performance at Court. That fact tells much that cannot here be touched upon. They were originally acted before English audiences in London. And now, how large and cosmopolitan those audiences have grown!

Shakespeare's cosmopolitanism and universality of appeal are seen in America as in no other country, because of our heterogeneous population in process of amalgamation. In that great theatre that spreads from shore to shore, Shakespeare's vast audience is composed of Americans, English, Irish, Scotch, Russian, Austrian, Bohemian, Norwegian, Swede, Dane, Dutch, German, French, Spanish, Italian, and others. If you would see by what process all these nationalities, with differences all forgot, are amalgamated into the homogeneous solidarity of the American nation, you will find it in the ideal awakened by possibilities and trained by universal education. And in that process of amalgamation and development, the most remarkable in the history of humanity, Shakespeare, making the largest appeal of all literature to the ideal, plays his noble part.

The awakening of the American ideal began in England in the days of Shakespeare; its development has followed in the new world then dreamed of. What wonder, then, that Shakespeare, who more than all others of his time or of any time reflects the possibilities of the ideal, should have been and should continue to be a factor in this development? In this past century of peace and unprecedented world-advancement, not all the petty jealousies of nations have wiped those ideals away nor broken, though they have

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sometimes strained, the bond they make between America and England. And so long as we are guided by the same ideals, we shall remain united, not England and America against the world, but America and England for all the world.

It means much to you, it means much to us that Shakespeare has played a part in making America stand as the last process of man's evolution. It is not the life he celebrates, not the characters *per se*, but the appeal to ideals in both that make him one with us. To you, to us, to all, in final analysis, Shakespeare means the everlasting appeal to the ideal. No nation can read him without lifting up the head. Of what other writer, of what other country can this be said? If you have produced him, be proud and glad. If we find inspiration in him, rejoice with us. As your perpetual ambassador he comes to us, and under the spell of his voice we forget all differences. As our ambassador of peace and good will and noble ideals, we return him to you, and by the tokens of the past we are assured that you will receive him kindly in our behalf, as we receive him from you.

DREAM

THERE is opium in the ivory bowl,
And butterflies blue in the sun-spread flowers
Lie trembling and dreaming away the hours . . .
By the light of your eyes I can see my soul!

BEATRICE IRWIN.

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A NOTE ON RE-READING "THE CENCI"

"HAS not 'The Cenci' been found out yet?" So wrote the late Mr Henley in a criticism of a more modern tragedy; and re-reading the drama as a new thing after a lapse of many years one is inclined to echo this very pertinent question. Indeed, one is left wondering how a previous generation could have considered, as most certainly they did, that this tragic experiment of Shelley was apparently the one great English drama which had interposed itself between them and the Elizabethan age. That it contains certain passages of singular beauty, and of a kind of fantastic horror, is of course undeniable; and when we reflect that so many genuine poets in attempting this form of art appear to have lost even the lyric gift which was indubitably theirs, while also failing to reach the different goal at which they aimed, Shelley may be given a comparative pre-eminence at least. Take for instance the following speech of Beatrice, and note that the language, though maintained at a sombre height, is throughout simple and natural, and, let us most gratefully add, is free from that obsession of Shakespearean mannerism which has been the shipwreck of so many similar attempts.

BEATRICE (*wildly*):

"Oh,
My God! can it be possible I have
To die so suddenly? So young to go
Under the obscure, cold, rotting, wormy ground!
To be nailed down into a narrow place;
To see no more sweet sunshine: hear no more
Blithe voice of living thing: muse not again
Upon familiar thoughts, sad, yet thus lost—
How fearful! to be nothing! or to be
What? O where am I? Let me not go mad!
Sweet heaven forgive weak thoughts! If there should be
No God, no heaven, no earth in the void world;
The wide, grey, lampless, deep, unpeopled world!
If all things then should be—My father's spirit,
His eye, his voice, his touch surrounding me;
The atmosphere and breath of my dead life!

. . . .

Does not his spirit live on all that breathes

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And work for me and mine still the same ruin,
Scorn, pain, despair? Who ever yet returned
To teach the laws of death's untrodden realms?
Unjust perhaps as those which drive us now,
O whither, whither?

If this can hardly be called great verse, at least the conception of the obsession of the murdered father after death is not only fine dramatically, but conceivable enough in a distraught brain. The whole passage is of course somewhat reminiscent, and one is reminded of " That undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns ": but despite this, the cry rings true.

But regarding the drama as a built-up structure, one finds it strangely intangible and unsatisfying. Of course, the whole motive and matter of the play are nauseous in the extreme, and it has been judged on that account incapable of representation before a mixed audience. But one fancies that the real difficulty and besetting doubt lies not in the moral shock or jar of sensibilities, but in a deeper artistic failure. The fact is that the Count Cenci is neither more nor less than a monster, and real tragedy has nothing to say to the mere monster. Its business is, as has been said, to show us the overthrow of something great, whether that overthrow be brought about by what we call blind Fate, or by some inherent weakness in a character otherwise noble, or by the malicious working of some jealous or vindictive personality. Thus only do we get the real Katharsis which the Greek philosopher postulated as the true object of all tragedy. But in this drama one is confronted by a figure of such irredeemable and fantastic wickedness that somehow the whole story seems to drift out of the orbit not merely of human experience but even of human imagination.

The killing of such a creature as the Cenci was and could be nothing else than the necessary poisoning off of some loathsome and fetid pest. It will be said that " the pity and the terror " are imparted by Beatrice—not by the father. To some extent this is true enough, but it does not destroy the fact that the object of her tragic action is a thing inhuman and entirely unworthy even of vengeance, which should have an element in it of the august to be in reality tragic. The play might be criticized on many other grounds, but as it seems to us it is the too abnormal and fantastic character of the Count which lends to the whole drama an air of unreality and a failure to move the primal instincts of human nature; since, however wild and discordant the cry, we should in great tragedy always be aware of one unceasing and normal rhythm, though it be heard far-off and intermittently as remotest surf.

STEPHEN PHILLIPS.

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THE CRAFTSMANSHIP OF GOD

OUT of the agony, after the strain,
Forged from the sacrifice, born of the pain,
What shall I fashion Thee, God, at the last,
Worthy, triumphant, vast?

Never from anguish and never from loss
Shalt thou beat aught but illusion and dross,
Nor from My furnace of infinite dole
Bring forth one living coal.

God, art Thou Waste?—Thou hast straitened Thy rule
Beaten and bent me and made me Thy tool;
Faith, failure, suffering past and to be,
What shall it profit Thee?

This shall it profit Me, soul of My choice,
This!—thou shalt listen at last to My voice,
And, in that stillness, of all thou hast heard
Set down, perchance, one word.

V. H. FRIEDLAENDER.

THE CYCLE

WHEN the world seems young and new,
And you think it's made for you;
When in all things there is truth—
Little Sister, this is Youth.

When your heart is all aglow,
With the sweetest joys we know;
When you live earth's pain above—
Little Sister, this is Love.

When you needs must stand alone,
Face great sorrows of your own;
When you stumble in the strife—
Little Sister, this is Life.

When your spirit rends the clod,
And soars up to meet its God;
When your body takes no breath—
Little Sister, this is Death.

British Columbia. NORMA FLUWERFELT.

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SOME RECENT POETRY AND VERSE

ABOVE the initials "R. H. C." there appears each week in the *New Age* a literary article characterized by a sanity and perspicacity strangely unusual to-day. "R. H. C." recently laid stress on the fact that a philosophy of life is essential to every true poet. The writer indubitably regrets in his private mind, as indeed every thoughtful man must regret, that it is necessary at any time to emphasize so apparent a truth. All sublimity carries with it a corresponding peril. Imagination is the sublimest faculty of the mind. It is the distinguishing attribute of every true artist. It is in the sweep of his imagination only that man can approach the mighty majesty and potency of God. It is by imagination only that man can come into intimate touch with the vast complexity of life and the phenomena of creation. Imagination is pre-vision—the act potential in the mind, the state potential in the soul. Before a mind can see it must have light—intelligence; before it can see far it must have a point of vantage—a breadth and elevation of thought; before it can see truly, authentically, it must have spiritual understanding—a philosophy of life. The greater the protean quality of the artistic mind the greater need has its possessor of a philosophy based upon reason wherewith to see life in scale, to measure values, and to know the permanent from the impermanent; without such a philosophy there cannot be either interpretation or proportion, without such philosophy art can no longer be a luminous and militant force in life, it must necessarily slip out of the progressive scheme and become a thing apart, nursing its own vanity, or merely exist the fondled parasite of an effete society. To this degradation no artist with a living soul will submit; and no true artist, poet or other, ever did submit. Poetry is the refined consciousness of man: it is, as I have said before, the spiritual perception of reality. If a writer add nothing to what is already apparent to the general eye and mind he has little excuse for the persistent accumulation of words. He is no considerable poet who does not add majesty to that which is already significant, and dignity to that which is temporally mean, who does not bring light to darkness, order to confusion, for poets and artists are assuredly prophets of the beauty, wisdom, clarity and order to be. It is their function and privilege to find and to praise the God in things.

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Mr Drinkwater opens his new volume of poems* with a little lyric which is delightfully apropos:

SYMBOLS

"I saw history in a poet's song;
In a river-reach and a gallows-hill,
In a bridal bed, and a secret wrong,
In a crown of thorns, in a daffodil.

"I imagined measureless time in a day,
And starry space in a wagon-road,
And the treasure of all good harvests lay
In the single seed that the sower sowed.

"My garden-wind had havened again
All ships that ever had gone to sea,
And I saw the glory of all dead men
In the shadow that went by the side of me."

It is only by a process of transmutation through the imagination and emotion, a process of the soul, that the realities of life become poetry. Poetry is not a transcription of fact, it is a detached, imaginative, and reasoned restatement of feeling. As an illustration, take these lines from Mr Drinkwater's "Building." Scene, a city.

"Stilled are the clamorous energies of day, . . .
The monotony of sound has suffered change,
The eddies of wanton sound are spent, and clear
To bleak monotonies of silence fall."

And again in the same poem:

"And in all I see
Of common daily usage is renewed
This primal and ecstatic mystery
Of chaos bidden into many-hued
Wonders of form, life in the void create,
And monstrous silence made articulate.

"Not the first word of God upon the deep
Nor the first pulse of life along the day

* *Cromwell and Other Poems* (Nutt, 5s. net).

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More marvellous than these new walls that sweep
Starward, these lines that discipline the clay,
These lamps swung in the wind that send their light
On swart men climbing ladders in the night.
No trowel-tap but sings anew for men
The rapture of quickening water and continent,
No mortared line but witnesses again
Chaos transfigured into lineament."

Here we see the imagination and emotion co-operating and getting at the soul-quality of fact. Frequently in Mr Drinkwater's book we find the soul-consciousness of poetry seeking to come to spiritual terms with the universe. In " Lady Street " the poet writes:

" And when the sunshine has its way
In Lady Street, then all the grey
Dull desolation grows in state
More dull and grey and desolate,
And the sun is a shame-fast thing,
A lord not comely-housed, a god
Seeing what gods must blush to see,
A song where it is ill to sing,
And each gold ray dispiteously
Lies like a gold ironic rod."

(This last line is a little strained.) Here again we have what I call the soul-quality of fact. The poet must not be misled by pseudo-manifestations of reality, by the merely transient accidents of time. It is the *super*-real, the *infra*-real which is the abiding concern of the poet. Poetry, I repeat, is the soul's superscription on the face of reality, it is not the portrayal of any mere aspect of life, it is the intensification, the amplification, and illumination of life itself, and its end is the fullness of joy and understanding, so that all men may sing with this poet with his eye on the glad birds, flowers, and beasts:

" But gladder than them all was I,
Who, being man, might gather up
The joy of all beneath the sky,
And add their treasure to my cup,

" And travel every shining way,
And laugh with God in God's delight,
Create a world for every day,
And store a dream for every night."

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It is in his lyrics that Mr Drinkwater's high merit is most conspicuous. There are excellent lines in the blank verse of "Cromwell," but as a whole this section of the volume lacks the verve, speed, and vividness necessary to successful presentation. The poet is too aloof from his theme. In the lyric interludes of the poem the intellect is a little too obtrusive, and the verse is rather chill. But the epilogue is fine in its reasoned abandonment. Here are the final verses:

> "But if you are immoderate men,
> Zealots of joy, the salt and sting
> And savour of life upon you—then
> We call you to our counselling.
>
> "And we will hew the holy boughs
> To make us level rows of oars,
> And we will set our shining prows
> For strange and unadventured shores.
>
> "Where the great tideways swiftliest run
> We will be stronger than the strong,
> And sack the cities of the sun
> And spend our booty in a song."

Here is the consciousness of high spiritual adventure: to read is to feel a dilation of the senses, an élan of the soul.

It is fitting that Mr Plowman's *Golden Heresy* should be noticed alongside Mr Drinkwater's volume. The two poets have a good deal in common. Both have a virile and hearty feeling for life; sanity is the backbone of their work. Mr Plowman is wholesomely free from paroxysms and similar afflictions peculiar to the moment. It is possible, even probable, that not one of the several *Ists* now fashionable has ever entered his head. He accepts things as they are, looks at them steadily, brings his heart and vision into play, and sings not like a drifter, or a precious verbalist, but like a man who has a living interest in the world and his fellows. We may therefore expect Mr Plowman to get occasionally somewhere near to the surprising core of things. He does. Listen very quietly to this:

> "But O the kiss of one whose lips
> Know no intelligence in love."

One repeats the words with a hush at the heart: they are a purification, a touch of primal innocence. There is a word which strikes the mind after

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reading this book: it is the word honesty. The thought, the feeling, and the expression have the distinction of honesty. How clean and straightforward is this:

HER BEAUTY

"I heard them say, 'Her hands are hard as stone':
And I remembered how she laid for me
The road to heaven. They said, 'Her hair is grey.'
Then I remembered how she once had thrown
Long plaited strands, like cables, into the sea
I battled in—the salt sea of dismay.
They said, 'Her beauty's past.' And then I wept
That these, who should have been in love adept,
Against my fount of beauty should blaspheme,
And hearing a new music, miss the theme."

Notice the suggestive economy of the words. It is as touching as sorrow that is mute—seen only in fond eyes. Mr Plowman's work does not readily lend itself to a reviewer's purpose, but this little lyric is irresistible:

THE CRIMSON POPPIES

"When we went out to take the air,
My dearie love, my heart's delight
Had crimson poppies in her hair,
But O, her cheeks were white.

"We watched the sunset doff his crown,
The silver moon shine overhead;
Then I looked up, and she looked down,
And ne'er a word we said.

"And then it seemed a thousand years;
And then I said, 'It's fair and mild':
And looking down I saw my dear's
Blue eyes, and, O, they smiled.

"We sat as still as still could be
And smiled till love was clean confessed,
And then I drew her close to me
And hid her in my breast.

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"When we went out, my heart's delight
Had crimson poppies in her hair;
When we went in, her cheeks so white
Had lovely poppies there."

A Rhapsody for Lovers,* by Arthur Maquarie. A comedy by Mr Maquarie was recently noticed in The Poetry Review. It is a pleasure to meet his work again, this time in lyric form. The *Rhapsody* charms the eye with its beautifully decorative borders, and the mind by its well-turned verses. One can imagine "Old Fitz" mumbling his pleasure over such a book. Mr Maquarie writes like one to whom literature is an art. He has the delight of a connoisseur in beautiful words, and we feel his joy in their selection. Very occasionally in the flush of his thought, carried along by the swing of his rhythm, the poet blissfully forgets the capacity of his reader and follower and obscures or defers his meaning:

"O lovers to you do I proffer these bursts and these closes,
Laden with woes that shall never, shall never transpire,
Whose anguish is neither in sun nor in dew nor in roses,
The whisper of redolent winds nor the lull of the lyre—
But the heave of the infinite bosom on which we were nestled
Sways yet in the orb of our soul as a haunting emotion
For which we have ceaselessly, aimlessly, uselessly wrestled,
As flotsam thrown dry that remembers the dance of the ocean."

(N.B.—Roses and lyres are for the moment quite out of fashion!)

This little lyric, on the contrary, is shining clarity itself:

"Look, for the lark hath leapt up with his breast to the sun,
Chiffing with chill in the shafts of dawn's golden delight,
Beating new morn with his wings like a song that hath run
From the fields and the hedges of sense to the dome of its might.
Look! for the lark hath swept up like a flicker of flame
From the heart of a lover whose love is desire without name."

Mr Maquarie's thought speeds down a copious measure with fine melodious effect:

* *A Rhapsody for Lovers*. By Arthur Maquarie (Bickers and Son).

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"Man is the meaning and measure of all that was thrust upon man;
The light that shone out upon chaos had power on the wave and the shore,
But man's was the magic that made it a wine of delighting that ran
Through the maze of his thoughts and desires, and the fields of his dreams evermore."

Mr Roberts takes his present work* just a little too seriously. Humour is a concomitant of wisdom, it tempers vanity, and is essential to self-criticism. His defects are largely those of immaturity. He is hasty, verbose, and derivative in a marked degree. He does not wait until he has something to say; he hurries, and hustles language in the hope that something may come—and sometimes it nearly does, as in "The Dawn of Forebeing." There is some elation behind this, but it has been allowed to waste itself in an impetuous welter of sonorous diction. Mr Roberts is a generous admirer of several poets, but his admiration for Wordsworth in too apparent:

"So deep a tumult of impressions rose
That, lingering till the voices of my friends
Grew faint adown the woodland ways, I stood
Alone amid the silence of the hills,
While deep within my breast emotions rose,
Bidding me dedicate myself anew."

And again:

"A glorious avocation then is mine,
If gloriously fulfilled, wherefore all things
Detracting from the object of my life,
All breaths of fickle fame, and vulgar wealth,
Or ostentatious pageantry of power—
These shall no more become a part of me."

This is quite commendable—in its proper place, but that place is not a book; a sense of humour would have suggested its excision. "The Strike" has vigour, and shows that Mr Roberts has some dramatic feeling, but it gains nothing by being put into blank verse. The poems on classic themes are pleasant, though they lack distinction. The book would have gained poetically by vigorous compression. At present there is a facility about

* *Through Eyes of Youth.* By Cecil Roberts (James Clarke and Co., 2s. 6d. net).

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this writer's work which betrays his qualities and does him injustice. But there is promise here—the fulfilment will depend largely on the growth of self-criticism. Meanwhile any inclination towards frothiness like this,

> " As one who writes in blood from gushing veins,"

should be rigorously repressed. The poet must remember that his own enthusiasm is conveyed to his readers with difficulty, and only by the power of art.

Creation,* by Horace Holley, is a capable and captivating little volume which thoughtful readers will enjoy. These brief poems are records of transient moods, but each mood is significant, and the poems taken together have a cumulative effect. Individually they are like faces vividly seen in a crowd for a moment, and merged in it the moment after. In the poem entitled " The Crowd " Mr Holley aims at a collective or mass impression. This is only a partial success because it is only in part true; conglomerate movement is there, but the touch that makes it human is missing. It had been better entitled " A Frenzied Rout." The use here of a free metre is generally fortunate. Mr Holley has read Whitman with discernment and advantage, he remains, moreover, resolutely himself. A pensive detachment is obvious in his pages, as here:

> " I drive my prayer along the crowded street
> But meet only a passionate, wilful race,
> Or here and there a wistful fellow pilgrim;
> And all the while the immanent, pitiless glory of God
> Burdens and breaks my heart."

But Mr Holley has vision too:

> " *Life* is the climber-up!
> *Life* is the pilgrim!
> We but a part of the road he treads upon
> Mounting the cloud-piled hill!
>
> " So being not the climber but the climbed,
> Not the eternal pilgrim but the way,
> I come to find myself
> Circled by a great confidence and peace."

* *Creation*. By Horace Holley (Fifield).

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*The Foothills of Parnassus** contains facile verse which can only irritate the lover of poetry. At his worst Mr Bangs can write thus:

" I'm going to laugh, I'm going to laugh,
I'm going to laugh,
Ha, ha!"

This, be it understood, is not intended to crack the ribs with hilarity, for with a violent sneezy effort he protests that he is " going to love " in similar fashion.

Wind on the Wold.† A little volume by a singer who is sometimes a poet too:

" Plover, plover! O weird wind rover!
Haunting the marshes of hollow and plain,
Out in the mist where you wheel and hover,
Who shall conjecture your secret pain?

" Plover, plover! O restless rover!
Sadder than sin is your cry in the rain:
What hath conceived it who shall discover,—
A tortured hope, or a lover slain? "

Perhaps the best poem is " The Bather." It stands out vividly, and is finely onomatopœic.

Poems.‡ Pleasant little verses written round pleasant little themes. A few have appeared in the *Westminster Gazette*. Expressions like " healing balm," " moon up stealing," " idly dreaming," " elfin-gay," " blossom-starred," " dewy lawn," etc., etc., are everywhere. Nor is a too liberal use of compound words commendable.

Unconditioned Songs.§ The best thing in this little collection is " Night ":

" I love the night and I fear the night;
O deep are the terrors the bush nights keep!
For the brave little birds that sing all day
Come fearlessly into my heart to sleep.

* *The Foothills of Parnassus*. By J. K. Bangs (Macmillan, 5s. 6d. net).
† *Wind on the Wold*. By Alexander G. Steven (Max Goschen, 2s. 6d. net).
‡ *Poems*. By Ina M. Stenning (Simpkin, Marshall).
§ *Unconditioned Songs*. Anonymous (Sydney J. Endacott, Melbourne, 2s. 6d.).

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"My heart is empty when they are glad,
But all their troubles they bring to me;
They fly the homeless hills of fear
And come to my heart cosily.

"And then with a woe that is not my own,
Sleep has no happiness, night no rest,
For all the fears of the frightened birds
Are fluttering softly on my breast."

*Eölsyné.** The narrative poems are the best, and these are rather dull. Perhaps the worst four lines in the book are these:

"With tongue as smooth as angel's, and
A face as dark as hell,
He wrought his subtle wonders, and
He worked his magic spell."

Probably the verse had a soporific effect ere the publisher's reader got thus far.

Irisbry.† Mr Campbell's book is of a very different species. An alert mind listens when it encounters verse like this:

"Heaven is peace. The key is found
In sightless air, unheeded sound,
Or such like atrophy of sense
When consciousness is in suspense:
The climbing thoughts lulled to a sleep
Of grey forgetfulness, like sheep
Gathered to fold: when near is blent
With distant, and the skyey tent
Of clouds and trilling larks and sun
And earth and wind and God are one."

Is not this like a memory speaking through the dim years to a heart that has almost forgotten?—

* *Eölsyné*. By N. Bindon Burton (Maunsel).
† *Irisbry*. By Joseph Campbell (Maunsel).

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THE MOTHER

"The hearthstone broods in the shadow,
And the dark hills are old,
But the child clings to the mother,
And the corn springs in the mould.

"And Dana moves on Luachra,
And makes the world anew:
The cuckoo's cry in the meadow,
The moon, and the early dew."

There is the sure touch and the vision in these pages. Wonder is unveiled, and the commonplace wears its innate nobility.

THE SHEPHERD

"Dark against the stars
He stands: the cloudy bars
Of nebulæ, the constellations ring
His forehead like a King.

"The ewes are in the fold:
His consciousness is old
As his, who in Chaldæa long ago
Penned his flock, and brooded so."

And in "The Farmer" comes the intimate touch:

"You poets cannot know the earth as I.
The birth you know but not the agony
Of travail; harvest, but not seeding;
Altar bread, but not the bleeding
Hands, the sweat, the press of thought
That, like a coulter, ploughs me through
Before the living germ is bought,
And swallows whistle in the windy blue."

I steal yet one more sheaf from Mr Campbell's harvest:

THE OLD WOMAN

"As a white candle
In a holy place,
So is the beauty
Of an agèd face.

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"As the spent radiance
Of the winter sun,
So is a woman
With her travail done.

"Her brood gone from her,
And her thoughts as still
As the waters
Under a ruined mill."

The book is a joy!

*The Reverberate Hills.** Mr Oppenheim is a lover of mountains. The spirit of high altitudes is in his pages. The great silences of stern and lonely places have touched his naturally strong feelings into poetry. These verses will say much to those who have sat in solitary thought on peaks austere and apart. They are aloof from a world of petty interests. Out of a central quiet of meditation they reach towards the moving infinite and the hush of the unknown. High peaks and pantheistic thought are akin.

"We are the part, and nature is the whole:
Whate'er we have was first in nature's soul.
Transcendent wonders in her breast may sleep,
Than life, than thought, than reason's self more deep.
Call not her language dumb, her methods blind:
Did she not forge thy heart and build thy mind?"

Mr Oppenheim likens the mountains to prophets—

"That speak a language to the soul not strange . . .
They seize upon a man with titan grip
And set him at the summit of his soul . . ."

They are—

"The trysting-place of human and divine,
Whence man may gaze on those infinitudes
In which his nature's cradled. For as earth,
With all her cities, continents and seas,
Hangs like a mote amid surrounding ether,
So rest our souls in all-pervading being
That laps us as an ocean a green isle,
Whose harmony's our discord, and whose laws
Transcend our narrow vision."

* *The Reverberate Hills.* By Edwin Oppenheim (Constable, 3s. 6d. net).

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*Moods of the Inner Voice.** At his best Mr Twells' thought has clarity and his language precision. But he frequently attempts to attain poetic ends by violent means, as here:

> "The twilight thrills me even as the dawn
> Was wont to stir my passions long ago;
> I drink the sun from heavens that are wan
> And taste the same delirium of woe . . ."

He strains ingloriously at the impossible:

> "Yield me a lyre, unmarred by carnal lust (*sic*),
> Whose cords are of fire, to speak the immaculate!"

His imagination does not truly possess his themes; as a consequence he uses metres incompatible with the spirit of the subject chosen. Could the marriage of measure and matter be more unfortunate than here?

> "Oh, what do we gain by breaking our heart
> On the echoless rock of Despair?
> Or what can philosophers ever impart
> To lessen the fact that we end where we start,
> In our hope, in our thought, in our prayer?"

Aids to Immortality of Certain Persons in Ireland and *The Living Chalice.*† Miss Mitchell is a wit—and a very entertaining wit. She prefaces her "Aids" with a review by herself—doubtless to save assiduous literary friends the trouble. Miss Mitchell has great fun at the expense of several people and causes. After renouncing "the Roman schism," Mr George Moore, via Miss Mitchell, chirps:

> "Ye pretty little Papist maids, whatever your degree,
> Come hither fearlessly and sit on my converted knee,
> Bid me to live and I will live your Protestant to be."

But the convert repines; the conversion was, unfortunately, not attended by dramatic effect expected. The "Ode to Bluff" opens thus:

* *Moods of the Inner Voice.* By J. R. Twells (Grant Richards, 3s. 6d. net).

† *Aids to Immortality of Certain Persons in Ireland* and *The Living Chalice.* Both by Susan L. Mitchell (Maunsel and Co.).

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"O Heavenly Bluff descend on us,
God that each Ulsterman inspires,
Wake into speech each timid cuss,
And make us sounding liars."

The fun is fair if the politics be faulty. Anyhow, Miss Mitchell is a wit. But the lady has another personality up her sleeve. Wit and verse are twins; but wit and poetry are generally very distant relations. But in Miss Mitchell's case the two latter have a mutual and amicable understanding—they never cross one another's thresholds. Here is the *other* Miss Mitchell of *The Living Chalice:*

"Give me great words my soul to wake
For the great ways that I shall tread,
They need a kingly speech who take
The lordly pathways of the dead."

Again, in "The Music of Silence" she writes:

"Break down my outposts, earth, with clash of war,
The game is rough but yet I have no fear,
The broken instrument can never mar
The perfect melody my soul doth hear,
Nor boisterous clamour of thy armies win
To where the Great Musician harps within."

The wit is poet too. This to convince the sceptical:

HOMELESS

"I asked for sunlight and a long, long day
To build my little home.
Setting an altar where my heart might lay
Fire ere the god should come.

"I built my walls with patient carefulness,
Secure and small, nor knew
A wild wind straying from the wilderness
Had sought their shelter too.

"My heart woke up in storms, my shelter sweet
In ruins fell apart.

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Once more I go by cruel ways to meet
The ordeal of the heart."

Momus or Apollo, Miss Mitchell? The British public has ever considered duality a gift of the devil.

In this *Little Book of Modern Verse** Jessie B. Rittenhouse has sought to compile an anthology which shall give some idea of the working of this twentieth century spirit in the poetry of America. Personally I am not sufficiently acquainted with the work being produced in that country to be able to quarrel with her omissions. Casually I notice that Mr Le Gallienne, an Englishman domiciled in America, is well represented, and that Mr Ezra Pound, an American domiciled in England, is ignored. Many of the poems in this collection might have been written any time during the last century. and by writers on either side of the Atlantic; others are born of the modern spirit. There is no mistaking the modernity in the "Subway Express," by Mr Chester Firkins:

"Life throbs about me, yet I stand
Outgazing on majestic Power;
Death rides with me on either hand
In my communion hour.

"You that 'neath country skies can pray,
Scoff not at me—the city clod;—
My only respite of the Day
Is this wild ride—with God."

There is also a modern expansiveness in "Renascence," by Edna St Vincent Millay.

"Above the world is stretched the sky,—
No higher than the soul is high.
The heart can push the sea and land
Farther away on either hand;
The soul can split the sky in two,
And let the face of God shine through.
But East and West will pinch the heart
That cannot keep them pushed apart:
And he whose soul is flat—the sky
Will cave in on him by and by."

**Little Book of Modern Verse* (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

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John G. Neihardt in "When I have gone Weird Ways" shows a glad and brave acceptance of time's high adventure which is characteristic of our day:

> "Fling back the dust I borrowed from the earth
> Into the chemic broil of death and birth,
> The vast alembic of the cryptic scheme,
> Warm with the master-dream."

These poems, and others like them, are good. But we do not measure the quality of poetry by the up-to-dateness of its theme or attitude only. It is not contemporaneity but continuity that a poet must seek. The great elemental truths, under slightly varying aspects, are common to all ages, for they are the primal and perennial stuff of human life. That which is peculiarly and aggressively modern is also that which is essentially transient. Real progress is never sensational, it is growth not ebullition. There is a hustling quasi-originality to-day which seeks to shock the public to attention, and, as people have a fleeting love for the unusual, it momentarily succeeds. But a great law operates remorselessly against the unusual which has its origin in vanity and eccentricity. It is much more easy to startle with a bold affectation than to surprise by a masterly excellence. Some very modern poets prefer to affront man's reason rather than to challenge his soul. The compiler of this anthology ignores such. It appears strange to one not an American that this volume shows so little of Whitman's influence. Great man that he was, and fine poet at his best, big Walt's "barbaric yawp" is no syren-song to the modern American ear; the later poets, his countrymen, prefer to walk sedately in the fashion of their staid brothers over the water rather than to dance in their own. Thus far Whitman seems to have made a greater impression in the Old World than in the New—age is frequently struck to thought by the antics of youth. Whitman was, and is, the personification of the youthful hope of America. He was proud of that youth and that hope—and there lay his greatness. If I may judge from this anthology, many of the younger American poets are seeking inspiration not in the experience of life but in literature. Much of the verse in this book shows no trace of the glowing contact of man with fate. I joyfully admit the book does contain poems which are direct and spontaneous utterances—e.g., the sonnet, "Mockery," by Louis Untermeyer:

> "God, I return to you on April days
> When along country roads You walk with me,
> And my faith blossoms like the earliest tree

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That shames the bleak world with its yellow sprays—
My faith revives, when through a rosy haze
The clover-sprinkled hills smile quietly,
Young winds uplift a bird's clean esctasy . . .
For this, O God, my joyousness and praise!
But now—the crowded streets and choking airs,
The squalid people, bruised and tossed about;
These, or the over-brilliant thoroughfares,
The too-loud laughter and the empty shout,
The mirth-mad city, tragic with its cares . . .
For this, O God, my silence—and my doubt."

Edwin Markham, Ridgley Torrence and a few others tingle at the touch of life, nor are they dazed or dazzled by modernity; they realize the greatness of time past, present, and to come, they know that man in his lowliest and saddest hour has kinship with the suns, is shaped by, and is shaping, the windy purpose of the world. It is the greatness of life and of the world which must be the poet's chosen theme. It is better in the words of Mr Percy MacKaye—

" . . . To die enamoured of eternity,
Though in apogee
Of time there sit no individual
Godhead of life, than to reject the plea
Of passionate beauty: loveliness is all,
And love is more divine than memory."

The best poets in the New World and the Old know now, have known, and will ever know, that work can survive only by virtue of the spiritual—the vital force within. The grandest poetry, the grandest art, the grandest life is the song of the Soul triumphant.

JAMES A. MACKERETH.

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VIEWS AND REVIEWS

THE death of Mr Watts-Dunton means more to us than the passing of a notable literary man. Our sorrow is intensified by a sense of personal loss, for he was a consistent and devoted friend of the Poetry Society and its journal, in which he maintained a deep, sincere interest. On his last birthday he sent a note to the writer asking for news and bidding him be more frequent in his calls, adding that nothing gave him greater pleasure than a chat about work and movements with which both were associated. A very few weeks ago Mr Watts-Dunton paid a generous compliment to THE POETRY REVIEW and its present editor in words very similar to those which Mr Alfred Noyes was using about the same time in the United States.

He regarded the journal as a steady, fine flame in the midst of mephitic lights, and was eager to know that there remained a public for the great poetry of all time. The extravagances of our days amused him; he saw how little they affected poetry or the fame of the great man whose friend or commentator he had been, and he maintained up to the last a fervent interest in the really serious work of the present day, anxious to know what was being done, and retaining a shrewd and encouraging appreciation of the poetic values of the younger generation. He anticipated a revival, or rather a development, of interest in the great Victorians and their predecessors, although he was of opinion that many of them would never again be read as a whole but only in anthologies. Swinburne, he thought, would have a longer hold on the public than any of his contemporaries because of the sheer beauty and music of his poetry, which was not handicapped by the dogma and Victorian attitude of Tennyson or the evanescent philosophy and science of Browning. Letters as well as ourselves are the poorer for the loss of his kindly wisdom and remarkable knowledge of the best in English literature, and many young literary men will miss his friendly guidance and criticism. It is now many years ago since the writer introduced to Mr Watts-Dunton a labouring man who has acquired an extraordinary mastery of the sonnet form, and perhaps the most valued reward the Sheffield steel-worker obtained for his devotion to sonnet literature and sonnet making was the correspondence that ensued with Mr Watts-Dunton, and his appreciation of the volumes he was able to publish.

NEWS comes to us by way of Chicago—the echo of an astute press agent—of "a nest of singing birds" established in London and "half a dozen bedrooms occupied by young men not unknown in the world of poetry. The presiding genius is, of course, himself a poet." He is described as "an alert, sensitive, progressive and capable person, about thirty years of age, and filled with a desire to do some good to mankind in his chosen calling." We are told quite seriously that "one detail of his work that is interesting him especially at present is the perfecting of some scheme whereby the poetry-readings may suffer less from the bashfulness, the affectation, the poor elocution, or some other defect, in the reader. An arrangement of the desk in

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such a position as to hide the reader and yet not intercept the sound of his voice is under consideration. But better than this, he thinks, would be the organizing of a company of trained rhapsodists or elocutionists, with a true feeling for poetry, to take the place of the author-readers themselves, who are so often least capable of rendering effectively what they have so admirably written." It is really astonishing how we progress and develop! Yet we seem to have heard all this before. Something similar was said in her inaugural address by the first President of the Poetry Society, and said with perspicacity too. We pity the poet-readers, who, having been found out, are to be thrown over—we are not told that they have ceased to be "an advertising stunt"—but we are glad the despised and rejected trained elocutionist is to come into his or her own. Sir Johnstone Forbes Robertson and Dr Hulbert will find that the tribunal over which they preside has a rival—something quite new and hitherto unheard of! Another turn and the Victorians will be restored.

The way has been prepared. Really rapid events are stimulating the coteries. Futurism, even with the big drum, has ceased to draw. It has been dallied with tentatively, half-heartedly, but is no longer the latest thing in the purlieus of Bloomsbury and Piccadilly Circus, where a spurious Bohemianism of poetasters and art cranks flatters itself that local notoriety is universal fame. Before the better taste and sanity of the Coliseum Philistines this intellectual half-world was driven to look for new extravagances, while from within came simultaneously a horrible shock. A "futurist manifesto," of the wild staccato type poured out so freely from Milan, appeared above a dozen signatures, and immediately ten of the signatories disowned the document and M. Marinetti. As usual, petty personal differences and puerile polemics were greater than the "cause." It is ever so in London. And to complete the bewilderment of the hesitating disciples of contemporary extravagances, the "manifesto" of the "Vorticists" appeared. Called *Blast*, it plunged readers into a wild whirlpool of capital letters. This "English Parallel Movement to Cubism and Expressionism" is to give the "Death Blow to Impressionism and Futurism and all the Refuse of Naif Science." The desperate iconoclasts, infected by Milan, who derided all English poetry but the verse produced in our own youth, and reached a dizzy height of audacious criticism when they solemnly condemned Mr Alfred Noyes and Mr Charles Cayzer as "the last of the Victorians and neither of them poets," find themselves feebly mortified and in danger of being tagged as Passéists, and are wondering whether the Victorians cannot be restored to grace. Perhaps their final protest is a resolution solemnly calling for the resignation of the Oxford Professor of Poetry for lecturing not only on Tennyson but on the personality of the poet instead of glorifying the present golden age.

Dr Warren said some very kindly things about Tennyson and the Victorian period. He described the poet as a splendid specimen of humanity: heroic, chivalrous, poetic in appearance, all through his life. Fitzgerald called him Apollo and Hercules in one, and Sidney Dobell said, "If that man had written the *Iliad* he would not have been surprised, and knowing Tennyson had inclined him to believe in a personal Homer." When Dr Warren himself became acquainted with Tennyson he was still a singular

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mixture of strength and sensitiveness. He was no less singularly shy. At their first interview he took refuge, like a shy child, behind a copy of the *Spectator*. When they were talking of Plato and the doctrine of souls entering into other bodies in a new life, Tennyson remarked that he hoped, if he had to live over again, he would be " not a poet but a pachyderm." He would have been disgusted by the foolish pen-pricks which are a feature of a certain class of literary (*sic*) periodicals, and of the shibboleths of a set which sees no merit in anything but its own work and efforts. Because we want vitality in poetry and scorn the " pretty-pretty " we are not justified in saying that " the poetry of the nineteenth century—from Shelley right down through Tennyson and Swinburne and Arnold and all the rest to Francis Thompson—is turgid and boresome and sloppy and wordy to an almost incredible degree. So much so," proceeds this Georgian authority, " that the wonder to me is not that people don't read poetry, but that anyone at all could be found to look at it twice. And the reason for all these things I object to is, I think, the peculiarly smoky air of moral, or shall we say, pedagogical abstractness with which the Victorian bard surrounded himself. Either he did the ' moral uplift,' like Tennyson and Arnold, or he clothed himself with the respectability of Putney, like poor old Swinburne, or he was amazingly verbose, like Rossetti and Thompson, or he was horribly literary, like the whole lot." This ridiculous pose is typical of much wild writing that has become a disease, but the weary young men identified with it are finding themselves faced with the necessity of maintaining their sensational " developments " by plunging into the whirlpool or rediscovering the Victorians. For obvious reasons, Browning will be the first of the latter to be taken in hand.

IT is almost superfluous for us to review this collection of plays by one of the most original and poetic writers of our time. His work is familiar to all readers. Eighteen months ago, in the first number under the present editorship, we had the privilege of publishing the most notable play in this volume, " The Gods of the Mountain " and last month we were able to present a series of characteristic tales, concerning which a reader was constrained to telephone us to express his admiration for the most delightful and suggestive fancies he had read. Under the circumstances we cannot do better than quote from the review of our New York contemporary, *The Forum*, which indicates the value put on Lord Dunsany's work by a brilliant American critic, who prefaces his article by stating, " A few nights ago I read Lord Dunsany's ' The Gods of the Mountain.' Then, after an interval of ten minutes for reflection, I read Lord Dunsany's ' The Gods of the Mountain ' again. It is ten years since I was guilty of such greediness. . . . To-day I have read Lord Dunsany's ' The Gods of the Mountain ' for the third time." Mr Charles Vale proceeds to quote largely from this particular play, and in conclusion says:

" Lord Dunsany has a predilection for the Gods, for, in addition to his creations in the present volume, he had previously written ' The Gods of Pegana ' and ' Time and the Gods.' No man is more competent to take those Elder Brothers by the hand and establish a new mythology, in which shall be symbolized the strivings and passions, the illusions and disillusionments, of the human race, now consciously growing old and a little world-weary. His style, trenchant and pregnant, follows the form of prose

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and conveys the substance of poetry. He is at once poet, playwright, philosopher, satirist and symbolist. His work, delicate and fine, yet strong, is one of the most remarkable productions of the last decade. That phrase may seem hackneyed; it is hackneyed; but not more hackneyed than the constant lament that these are barren days for literature, that there are no more giants in the land, and no signs of them discoverable. But if, then, we be beggared of genius, we can at least go to 'The Gods of the Mountain' and say, with Mlan and Oogno, 'Never had beggars such a time.'"

SOCIETY REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

An examination and audition (teachers, members and pupils) under the regulations published in THE POETRY REVIEW for October, 1913, will be conducted by Dr Hulbert at the University of London on July 4, at 3 p.m. The proceedings are not public but anyone interested may attend on payment of 1s.

ANGLO-AMERICAN POETRY AND PEACE

FOR the notable meeting on June 10 apropos of the Peace Centenary, Lady Naylor Leyland threw open her magnificent Knightsbridge residence, Hyde Park House. It was a perfect June afternoon; mellow sunlight flooded the Park where the rhododendrons rioted in bloom, and within the ballroom, overlooking the gracious spaciousness of the great pleasure ground, the little dais was banked with plants and flowers, and a wealth of roses heaped about the room completed the setting of a temple of peace and beauty. His Excellency the American Ambassador presided, Sir Johnstone Forbes Robertson being unable to come up from Hythe owing to illness. After Miss Lena Ashwell had read a prelude by Mr Alfred Noyes, Mr Henry Newbolt gave a short address on patriotic poetry and read a couple of favourite lyrics, and Dr MacLean, of the American Bureau of Education and Iowa University, read an "Ode to England" sent over for the occasion by Miss Florence Earle Coates. Prof. C. W. Wallace, the Shakespearean expert, spoke on "Shakespeare's Influence on Young America," and Miss Margaret Halstan, Miss Esme Beringer and Miss Evelyn D'Alroy read a representative selection of American lyrics, which we hope the Editor of *Poet Lore* will deal with in the next issue of THE POETRY REVIEW. After Chancellor McCormick, of Pittsburg University, had read Whitman's "Captain, my Captain," Mr G. C. Ashton Jonson proposed a vote of thanks to his Excellency, the speakers and readers and Lady Naylor Leyland for combining to make that meeting a distinctive success. In addition to the privilege of having the use of Hyde Park House at an anxious time, the Society is under a further obligation to Lady Naylor Leyland for her kindness in providing tea.

KENSINGTON

AT the meeting which took place at 2 Holland Villas Road, W., on Saturday, May 23, the subject was Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound." Mrs. Holroyd Chaplin read a rather brief but very interesting paper on the poem and illustrated it by reading various fine passages, assisted by Miss Florence Nigel. At the close of the meeting there was a discussion, in which most of the members who were present took part. The last meeting of the session was held on June 27. No further meetings will be held until the autumn.

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HAMPSTEAD

The reading of "The Countess Cathleen," which was announced for June 2, having been postponed, the evening was devoted to Elizabethan Sonnets and Lyrics. The President, Lady Strachey, and various members gave some very interesting readings from Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Herrick, Shirley, Sidney, etc. The meetings for July are: July 7, Poems on Fairy Lore; July 21, Translations from Modern Poets. No meetings will be held in August and September.

PUTNEY

On May 25 Miss Annie Wright charmed and delighted a large audience with her lecture on the French poetess, Marcelline Desbordes Valmore. She gave an account of her career, and compared her to Christina Rossetti in style. Her sympathetic and delicate analysis of Marcelline gave much pleasure to her hearers.

THE LAND OF LONG AGO

(WORDS FOR MUSIC)

In the rocky plains of time,
  Paved with shadows of the night,
Dense with mist and cold with rime,
  Stretching far from thought or sight,
Where no limpid streamlets flow,
    Is a land of Long Ago.

And upon its stricken ways
  Ghosts of palsied visions stray,
Stricken hopes that mock our gaze,
  Passing in the gloom away;
And their dust is shorn of glow
    In that land of Long Ago.

And the saddened air is dim,
  And the shrivelled skies are bare,
And Youth's wild exultant hymn
  Floats in accents of despair,
For a searching note of woe
    Haunts that land of Long Ago.

But as morning woos the light,
  And day's raptures rise again,
Then oblivion's hand of night
  Blurs the scars of grief and pain,
Falling on life's phantom show
    In the land of Long Ago.

ISIDORE G. ASCHER.

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Mr ACTON BOND (*Hon. General Secretary*), 8 Clifton Hill,
London, N.W. *Phone:* 6775 Hampstead.

THE B.E.S.S. exists for the purpose of making Shakespeare a vital force of the English-speaking race. Public Dramatic Readings are given in London by well-known actors. Throughout the country and in the colonies these Readings are given by the local members of each Branch, but unlike the usual method adopted by Societies previously to 1901, one of the principal rules of the B.E.S.S. is that all Branches should admit the Press free and the Public at a small charge to at least one meeting a year. Essay and Elocution Competitions, open to members in all parts of the world, are held annually. To prepare members for public Dramatic Readings and Costume Recitals, Reading Circles have been instituted in connexion with all the centres. Membership of one centre implies membership of the Society throughout the Empire. The Annual General Performances are held in the early autumn and the casts are representative of the whole Society. The Annual Subscription for Members is 5s., for Privileged Members 10s., the entrance fee in both cases being 5s. Privileged Members are entitled to front seats at all the Society's Meetings.

LONDON.—(Asst. General Secretary, Mr Hesketh Pearson, 4 Avenue House, Henry Street, St John's Wood, N.W.).

On Tuesday afternoon, May 26, at the Botanical Theatre, University College, Gower Street, W.C., a Dramatic Reading of "The Tempest" was given by a full professional cast. The house was filled in every part, and owing to the fact that this was the chosen play for the Oxford and Cambridge examinations of the year, a large number of schools were represented; many, indeed, had to be refused admission in view of the limited space at the Society's disposal.

The London Press was well represented at the reading, and the following are taken from the various notices that appeared on the following day: "Hundreds of girls and students of all kinds went to University College yesterday to hear a reading of 'The Tempest' given under the auspices of the B.E.S.S. There was hardly a change in the lecture room, and the actors, who were all professionals, were in lay costume. Yet the atmosphere of the play was really conveyed to the audience, many of whom knew that success in a Cambridge examination would depend on the way they took hints from these expert readers."

"Special mention must be made of clever little Phyllis Bourke, whose Ariel was very charming. Both in her songs and in her words Miss Bourke showed herself singularly gifted and unaffected. Mr Acton Bond's Prospero was, of course, notable, every word telling with dignified mien distinctly. Mr J. H. Leigh gave a clever study of Caliban. Mr A. E. Drinkwater was an excellent Stephano. Mr Stacy Aumonier's realization of Trinculo was good. Mr Reginald Owen's reading of Ferdinand was pleasant. Mr Fewlass Llewellyn read his Gonzalo as the honest, good old counsellor he is described to be. Miss Margaret Everitt read the stage directions very well. Miss Evelyn Hope spoke well the words for Miranda, and entered into the spirit of the innocent and sweet young girl. Iris, Ceres and Juno were well represented by Misses Louis Regnis, May Purcell and Muriel Crowdy. In an interesting cast there were also: Mr George Fitzgerald, Alonzo; Mr George Skillan, Sebastian; Mr Howard Rose, Antonio; Mr D. K. Bourne, Arian. One is grateful to the Society for the performance of a play not often seen on the stage."

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The duet "Honour Riches" as sung by Miss May Purcell and Miss Muriel Crowdy without accompaniment made an excellent impression.

London.—Essay Competition: The awards of this competition will be announced in the August number of The Poetry Review. Elocution Competition: Lady Tree will be the judge for the final of this competition, which takes place at the Haymarket Theatre (kindly lent by Mr Frederick Harrison) on Friday afternoon, July 3. There is a record entry for this year. A full list of the prize-winners will be announced in next month's issue. The preliminary competition for London took place on Friday afternoon, June 26, at the Passmore Edwards Settlement, when the judges were Miss Edith Craig, Mr Frank Cellier and Mr Franklin Dyall. Annual Performances: Already considerable interest is aroused in all parts of the country that the Festival Week will be held this year at Cheltenham. In consequence of the large number of well-known lady amateur members of the B.E.S.S. eligible to take part in these performances, it has been found necessary to have two ladies' casts for each play. The casts will be announced in the August number.

Ealing.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss M. L. Thomson, 51 Eaton Rise, Ealing, W.)—Mr Herbert Nield, M.P., has kindly consented to become one of the Vice-Presidents of this branch. The cast for the Pastoral performances of "Twelfth Night," which took place on June 27, under the direction of Mrs Cumberlege, was as follows: Orsino, Mr Forrest Dodd; Antonio, Mr John F. Drake; Malvolio, Mr B. W. A. Ordish; Feste, Mr G. P. Fletcher; Sir Toby, Mr J. Ben Johnson; Sir Andrew, Mr R. O. Sullivan; Sea Captain, Mr J. Stark Browne; Sebastian, Rev. E. C. Essex; Fabian, Mr Ellis Bloor; Valentine, Mr H. P. Crosland; Curio, Miss Cecily Dicken; Viola, Miss Annie Jackson; Olivia, Miss Lambert (afternoon), Miss Phyllis Megginson (evening); Maria, Miss Marjorie Wood. A full notice will appear in the next number of The Poetry Review. The last ordinary meeting of the branch took place on May 13 in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall, by kind permission of the Mayor (Councillor E. J. Morgan, J.P.), when "Much Ado About Nothing" was read by the members.

St John's Wood Circle.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss G. Cashman, 65 Belsize Park Gardens.)—This circle is continuing to meet during the summer months and the play being studied is "The Taming of the Shrew."

South Kensington Circle.—(Hon. Secretary, Mrs Julian Browne, 204 Cromwell Road.)—This circle will resume work in the early autumn, when one of the lesser-known plays will be prepared with a view to public performance at institutions, etc.

Watford.—Branch in course of formation. The following appeared in the *West Herts Observer* of May 9: "Twelfth Night" was performed at St John's Hall on Saturday even by Mrs Gerard Fox's Circle in connexion with the British Empire Shakespeare Society. One half-feared a tedious evening at St John's Hall last week when the programme showed that no parts would be taken by men; it seemed hardly reasonable to expect more than just an epicene Malvolio or Sir Toby Belch. But, as it happened, the performance was one of rare charm. Miss Gwendolyn Cashman was an

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astonishingly good Sir Toby, and Miss Rose Lloyd-King gave a vivid, interesting study of Malvolio. No point of the delicious humour of the garden scene was missed, and in the last act Miss Lloyd-King made one feel with Olivia that Malvolio had "been most notoriously abused." Other parts were excellently played. One must note in particular the very charming Viola of Miss Alice de Grey, who has an unusually musical speaking voice, the sincere and human Olivia of Miss Mabel Bruce Low, and the delightful singing of Miss Margery Home (Clown). It has been decided to form a Watford branch of the British Empire Shakespeare Society if a sufficient number of people will promise to join. Particulars can be obtained from Miss Lloyd-King, Tintagel, 5 Monmouth Road, Watford, or Mrs Fellowes, 49 Essex Road, Watford.

Belfast.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss M. Erskine, Longwood, Whitehouse, near Belfast.) —The annual meeting of this Branch was held in the Carlton Hall, Fountain Street. Professor J. A. Lindsay, M.A., M.D. (President), occupied the chair, and there was a large attendance. Apologies for inability to attend were received from the Lady Mayoress (Mrs R. J. M'Mordie), Sir William Whitla, M.D., J.P., and Mr F. C. Forth, Assoc.R.C.Sc.I. The Chairman said he was sure they would all be glad to know that there had been a considerable accession to the membership, and he desired on behalf of the Branch to give the new members a very hearty welcome. (Applause.) Sir Otto Jaffe, J.P., in moving the adoption of the report, said the balance-sheet was of a satisfactory character. It was interesting to note from the financial returns that "Romeo and Juliet" had been the most successful reading during the past season. (Laughter.) Sir Otto, in conclusion, complimented Miss Erskine upon the praiseworthy manner in which she discharged the duties of hon. secretary. (Applause.) Mr Samuel Bulloch formally seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. On the motion of the Rev. E. S. Pickering, seconded by Mr R. H. Shepperd, the Executive Committee was re-elected as follows: Mrs R. H. Carter, Mrs James Moore, Mrs G. H. Wheeler, Miss Joan Chipp, and Miss M'Tear. Mr C. G. Boas proposed, and Mr Eustace Gordon seconded, that the programme for the year should be: "As You Like It," "Cymbeline," "Richard I," "A Winter's Tale," and a recital or lecture. The motion was passed. Subsequently the members gave a thoroughly enjoyable reading of "As You Like It," the *dramatis personæ* being: Duke, Mr A. Newton Anderson; Frederick, Mr G. Coffey May; Amiens and Jaques, Mr G. Coffey May and Mr S. Bulloch; Le Beau, Mr A. Newton Anderson; Charles, Mr S. Bulloch; Oliver, Jaques and Orlando, Mr G. Coffey May, Rev. E. S. Pickering, and Mr C. G. Boas; Adam, Rev. E. S. Pickering; Touchstone, Mr Claude Murphy; Corin, Silvius, and William, Rev. E. S. Pickering, Mr T. H. Mayes and Mr A. Newton Anderson; Rosalind, Miss Eva M'Kisack; Celia, Miss M. M. Nagle; Phebe, Miss E. S. Gunning; Audrey, Miss Evelyn J. Bell. The members declaimed their lines in a manner that clearly demonstrated a deep interest in the reading, which afforded much pleasure to the audience. The vocalist was Mr G. Coffey May, whose singing was greatly appreciated, as were also the instrumental items by Miss E. Atkinson and Miss Wilson (first violins), Miss Margery Struver and Miss Smith (second violins), Miss Brett (violoncello), Miss Kenning (viola), Miss Joan Chipp (pianoforte). Miss Marion S. Weston was a tactful accompanist.

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BRISTOL.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss V. M. Methley, 9 Royal York Crescent, Clifton.)—During the tenth year of the Clifton and Bristol Branch the arrangements have included four public recitals and a lecture, in addition to the usual meetings of the Reading Circles. At the Society's Annual Festival Week at Weston-super-Mare, the Branch was represented in the casts by Mr George Holloway, who played Bassanio at four performances and Gratiano at the remaining two; Mrs George Holloway, who played Jessica at two of the performances; Mr G. W. Boyd, who undertook the part of Morocco on four occasions; Mr G. T. Watts, who played Lorenzo for three performances; and Mr J. F. Holloway, who played Gratiano for two evenings at short notice (owing to the illness of Mr Spragg, of Worcestershire) and also played the Duke of Venice at the last two performances. Mr H. Gough, who was one of the Magnificoes, and Master Young, who played Stephano, are also members of this Branch. The first recital of the season was in November, when Mr Athol Stewart had promised to read "Richard II," but at the last moment he was prevented from doing so, and the play was presented by a cast of local members under the direction of Mr G. K. Archbold. In December "Two Gentlemen of Verona" was given, under the direction of Mr George Holloway, and, in accordance with the objects of the Society, the reading was repeated at the Co-operative Hall, Kingsdown, at the invitation of the Workers' Educational Association. The Branch was represented by the Hon. Secretary, Mr J. F. Holloway, at the Annual Conference of Branch Delegates at the St James's Theatre, London. Private Reading Circles have been carried on as in the past few seasons, the objects being (1) that any member who volunteers to read may do so, as the number of readers in the public recitals cannot include all who wish to take part, and (2) that the Committee may have the opportunity of hearing new readers before casting the plays for public recital.

DUBLIN.—The following is taken from the *Irish Mail* of May 23: Under the auspices of the Dublin branch of the B.E.S.S., Professor Trench delivered a lecture on May 14, at the Irish Theatrical Club, Sackville Street, on the subject of "Olivia and Viola" ("Twelfth Night"). The lecture was in connexion with the Shakespeare birthday anniversary celebration. Dr J. A. D. Johnson presided. Professor Trench, in the course of his lecture, said "Twelfth Night" and "As You Like It" were written within a short time of each other. The stories were quite different, but comparing the two together they would see what were the lines on which Shakespeare's thoughts tended at the time to take, and what was the general character of the models of which the great artist was making use in his series of studies of life at that time. Obviously he was writing joyous comedy. The titles of the two plays only differed as six differed from half a dozen. In each of the plays they had a woman of greater interest than any of the men, so that Shakespeare was evidently engaged in feminine studies at the time. In each case the heroine upon whom their interest was centred went in masculine attire, and in each case she thus met the man whom she wooed, and was by him mistaken for a boy. In each case, when the truth was discovered, a wedding naturally followed. In each case the play ended with a double marriage. In each case there was the absurd feature of another woman falling in love with the supposed man, who was really the heroine in disguise. "Twelfth Night" was a play with much exquisite poetry in it, and it con-

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tained some of the most boisterous comedy Shakespeare ever wrote. But through the two characters, Viola and Olivia, their serious-minded dramatist set forth a most serious view of life—a high and noble view of womanhood. To him Shakespeare was the greatest of all the novelists. Shakespeare was not a preacher or teacher. An artist did not preach; he presented. Shakespeare's work presented high morality; that meant that he saw life so sanely, so many-sidedly, that, seeing that all life involved moral issues, he who read aright could not but read morals. . . . Viola and her story did not belong to what was ordinarily understood as comedy at all. There was scarcely another character in the play that was not a comic type. From the ludicrous Orsino to the ludicrous Olivia, the exception was the one whose situation and disguise and the nature of her employment as the Duke's messenger suggested a whole comedy of errors. Through all the comic incident she dressed, too, in the undignified garb of a young man, moved with perfect dignity and grace, a heroine of romance. " What is her history? " asked Orsino. " A blank, my lord," was Viola's reply. But it was not a blank, indeed, it had all been set forth for them. She who at the start found herself alone in a strange land, and who afterwards found herself in situations of almost inconceivable difficulty, triumphed at the end, rising to be wife of the man she loved and a Duchess. Not through self-assertion, but through self-abnegation. Her history a blank? The history of all the other Duchesses of Illyria was a blank, but this one had achieved immortality.—A hearty vote of thanks was accorded the lecturer, on the motion of Mr J. J. Rossiter, seconded by the Chairman. Subsequently recitations, Shakespeare songs, etc., were given by Mr L. O'Connor, Miss A. Hulton, Mrs Hugh Kennedy, Mr W. Earle Grey, Miss Mary O'Hea, Dr J. A. D. Johnson, Miss Florence Marks, Mr H. O. Tisdall, Mr W. J. Killeen, Miss E. Young, and Mr R. S. Watkin.

Glasgow.—(Hon. Secretary, Mrs Wyper, 6 Burnbank Gardens.)—By kind invitation of Mrs Thomson a dramatic reading of scenes from " The Tempest " was given by members of this Branch on Saturday, June 6, in the grounds of Kilmardinny. The British Empire Shakespeare Society can claim to have revived interest in the Reading Circle, a modest and valuable agency of intellectual betterment which flourished in quieter times than ours (said the *Glasgow Herald*). The Glasgow Branch of the Society, and there is none surely more vital, has been especially active in spreading the light by means of dramatic readings. In Mrs J. Wyper the Branch has an enthusiastic and alert Secretary, and Shakespearean players visiting the city are promptly enlisted as lecturers or readers. But members of the Branch do not entirely rely upon professional talent, and their interest in the Shakespearean drama is not dilettante. The tendency of the times is to absorb instruction, like medicine, in tabloid form. The literature of an age is daringly summarized in a slender volume, and Shakespearean classics are presented through the silent medium of the moving picture to the accompaniment of clattering teacups. The true road to learning is, of course, very much harder, and it is encouraging to know that there exists in our midst an earnest body of students who devote themselves seriously to the Shakespearean drama, who study the plays line by line, and who mutually gain enlightenment by the free discussion of the Reading Circle. That method, which involves hard study, which may also be enjoyable study, is the only real method. The dramatic readings occasionally given by

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members of the Glasgow Branch are the fruits of the industrious hours spent by the Reading Circle round quiet firesides. The latest reading took place in the hospitable grounds of Kilmardinny, at Hillfoot, the residence of Mrs Thomson. It was not the first welcome of Shakespearean students to her beautiful garden. A year ago "As You Like It" was given in these Arcadian surroundings, the woodland fringing the garden aiding the imagination to visualize the Forest of Arden. On Saturday the play chosen was "The Tempest." The manner of the readers, who were under the direction of Mr R. B. Wharrie, was admirable. They avoided the common error of attempting to blend the art of histrionics with the art of reading, which are entirely different. A wealth of gesture and dramatic attitude are a hindrance rather than an aid to effective reading; the voice is the real medium of appeal. The members of this Shakespearean circle showed true appreciation of their function; they read the passages with fine emphasis, with no overstraining, but easily and fluently. The highest tribute that can be paid them is that they read the play so intelligently that the story was made clear to the listeners, and the colour of the text brought out. The *dramatis personæ* were: Alonzo, Mrs Cairns M'Lachlan; Sebastian, Mr J. A. Bell; Prospero, Mr R. B. Wharrie; Antonio, Mr Ernest Rowan; Ferdinand, Mr Hugh Miller; Gonzalo, Mr J. L. Paterson; Caliban, the Rev. Norman Mitchell; Trinculo, Mr R. Ashmore; Stephano, Mr Hugh Miller; Miranda, Miss Minnie Ross; Ariel, Miss Nina M'Leod Jardine. At the close of the reading, in the unavoidable absence of the President and Vice-Presidents, Mrs Wyper made sympathetic reference to the tragic end of Mr Laurence Irving and Miss Mabel Hackney.

Stratford-on-Avon.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss Carter, Shottery Hall.)—The annual meeting of this Branch took place on June 9 at the Memorial Picture Gallery. Mr A. D. Flower (Vice-President) was in the chair. The annual report was presented by Miss Carter as follows: In January last this Branch completed the seventh year of its existence, and is probably justified in classing itself among the senior centres of the Society. There were five evening readings and six ladies' readings during the winter months. At all these meetings the full text of the plays was read—an innovation in this Branch. "Hamlet" and "Macbeth" were the plays chosen for the evening readings, three of the meetings being devoted to "Hamlet." Mr G. R. Foss was engaged to coach the "Hamlet" readings, but was unable to come for the last one, and Miss Nicholson took charge of the first "Macbeth" reading, the second being without a conductor. The ladies read "King Richard II" and "King Henry IV" (Part I) under the direction of Miss A. F. Millar. On February 21 two performances of scenes from the plays were given in costume on the stage of the Memorial Lecture-room, the intervals between the scenes being filled with songs from two of our members. Credit should be given not only to the cast, but to the two producers—Miss Eleanor Elder, who started the rehearsals, and Miss McLardy, who finished them. A critique competition was again run in connexion with this entertainment, and a curious feature of it was that four out of the six competitors paid an entrance fee of 2s. 6d. as non-members of the Society for the privilege of giving their opinions—(laughter)—which, we may add, were on the whole very favourable. Miss Lowe kindly acted as judge, and the prize fell to one of the non-members, Mr Harry Lupton. The elocution competition

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which followed last year's annual general meeting was confined to one class only, and in that Miss Dorothie Pidcock was first, Miss Avis Hodgson being second. Mr Alan Mackinnon, a Vice-President of the Society, kindly came from London to adjudicate. Miss Pidcock followed up this success by competing at the central meeting in London, where she earned laurels both for herself and this Branch by being bracketed first with another in the amateur ladies' class. (Applause.) On the same occasion Miss Avis Hodgson won distinction in a junior class. (Applause.) In the central essay competition, judged by Lord Howard de Walden, Mrs Allsebrook once more secured a "commended." (Hear, hear.) The annual dramatic performances of the Society were given last year at Weston-super-Mare, when the "Merchant of Venice" was produced. Our Branch had the honour of supplying one of the Portias, Miss Pidcock having been selected to play that important rôle. We are sorry to announce that a few months ago the Committee sustained a loss by the resignation of Mr G. W. Everard. He is happily still a member of the Branch, but wished to be relieved of the duty of directing it. He was an original member of the Committee, and his wide sympathies and sound judgment have always been of great value to his colleagues. (Hear, hear.) At the invitation of the Committee Miss Lowe kindly consented to fill the vacancy caused by Mr Everard's retirement. The Council of the Society has recently come to an arrangement with The Poetry Review, edited by Stephen Phillips, by which that publication has become our official organ. Each monthly number contains an account of the various activities of the branches, and provides a useful and interesting record of the Society's work. (Applause.) The report was adopted. The statement of accounts, showing a balance in hand of £13 12s. 5d., was adopted on the motion of Mr Flower, seconded by Mrs Melville. The Committee was reappointed, and Mr J. G. Flowerdew-Lowson was re-elected Hon. Treasurer and Miss Carter Hon. Secretary. In proposing a vote of thanks to the Chairman, Mrs Arbuthnot welcomed him back from his sojourn on the other side of the Atlantic, and thought it most appropriate that his first public appearance after his return should be at a B.E.S.S. gathering. (Hear, hear.) Miss Carter remarked that their thanks were also due to Mr Flower for the use of the Picture Gallery for their meetings. (Hear, hear.) An entertaining debate followed on Shakespeare's views of woman's place in civilized society, with special reference to the suffrage question. Mrs Arbuthnot read a paper by Miss L. J. Kendall, in which she sought to show that Shakespeare would have been a supporter of what are claimed to be "woman's rights"; and Miss Carter followed with an address in which she contended that suffragists could not claim Shakespeare as their champion. Mrs Arbuthnot, Mr Jaggard, and Mr Cale-Matthews took part in the subsequent discussion.

Worcestershire.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss G. M. Southwell, The College, Worcester.) —In connexion with this Branch a successful elocution competition, organized by Mrs Eeles, was held at Trinity Hall on Thursday, June 11. Mrs H. Urwick and Miss Walker judged the competitors' efforts. Those who entered were required to recite a short piece of tragedy and a comedy passage. Miss Parish was awarded the first lady's prize, and Miss Harrison the second prize. Miss Heath and Miss Bonning were placed third and fourth respectively. Of the gentlemen, Mr G. H. Hayes won the first prize, and Mr G. Brodie the second. Mr Douglas Herbert was third, and Mr Hancock fourth.

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At the conclusion Mr H. Urwick gave a few words of valuable criticism to the competitors, and, on his proposition, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mrs Eeles for the time and trouble she had spent in making the arrangements. Mrs Eeles proposed a vote of thanks, which was carried unanimously, to the judges and to Mr Urwick. Mrs Urwick afterwards presented the prizes. The prize donors were the President of the Branch (the Hon. Mary Pakington), Miss Gertrude Walker, Mr H. Urwick, and Mr B. Holland.

A Notable Production of "As You Like It"

Dublin.—(Hon. Secretary, Mr H. O. Tisdall, 21 Brighton Square, Rathgar.)—On Tuesday evening, May 26, and Wednesday afternoon, May 27, performances of "As You Like It" were given by members of this branch in the grounds of Lord Iveagh's residence at St Stephen's Green. A more perfect or more delightful setting could not possibly have been imagined (said the *Freeman's Journal*). It was in truth a suggestive commentary on the theories of those followers of a certain "cult" who hold that Shakespeare should be played with practically no scenic surroundings save weird and sombre "cloths"—little, if anything, better than the legend, "This is a forest." One cannot, of course, have, save on very rare occasions such as this, the privilege of real trees and verdant sward for a background; but that is no reason surely why the effort should not be deemed praiseworthy to combine the scenic artist's triumphs with the poet's imagery. Of all Shakespeare's incomparable works there is not one that lends itself so well to such open-air treatment as does this.

The performance was in every respect worthy of the occasion and the surroundings. A charming Rosalind was Miss Elizabeth Young. In her early scenes with Celia (Miss E. Sheidow) and Touchstone (Mr A. Loxton) she was particularly effective, and brought out the delightful humour of the situation with the most natural grace and *naïveté*, but she was really best in her dialogue with Orlando in the forest. The Celia of Miss Edna Sheidow was irresistibly simple and natural, and all the more interesting because so much devoid of self-consciousness. As Jacques, Mr A. H. Clarke played a very difficult part exceedingly well. Mr J. Johnson was the Duke, whose address, "Now, my comrade and brothers in exile," was spoken with admirable emphasis. But of the male characters by far the best performance was the Orlando of Mr W. Earle Grey. He looked the character to perfection, filled it with easy grace and appropriateness of action, and spoke his lines with clear and cultured enunciation. He shared most deservedly in the chief honours of the night. An admirable Touchstone was found in Mr Loxton; and the Audrey and Phebe of Miss Isabelle Greville and Miss Clara Hayden respectively were two most interesting character studies. The same may well be said of the William of Mr Dixon, the Adam of Mr Orpen, and the Corin of Mr Esler. Most, if not all, of these artistes owe much of their training to Miss Mary O'Hea, whose name is synonymous with all that is good in dramatic and elocutionary culture in Dublin. A very excellent programme of music was rendered by pupils of the Royal Irish Academy.

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"SHAKESPEARE AND 'DEMOS.'"

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW

SIR,—With the main drift and position of your article on "Shakespeare and 'Demos'" I am in entire agreement; that is to say, so far as it is a representation of the attitude of the poets on the question raised. But, given some poet of true vision, and endowed with adequate power of suitable expression, is there not something—may be, much—to be said in the opposite direction—from the standpoint of *intelligent* democracy, by which phrase I mean, broadly, those who can hardly be styled aristocrats? Is not democracy to-day—at least in some of its aspects and phases—altogether different from the time of Shakespeare, or even the earlier period of Tennyson? Democracy is not quite the ignorant, uninformed mass of persons they were then. Perhaps at bottom—in moral qualities—men are the same, for human nature, *per se*, is to-day what it was then. But wherein does the democrat differ from the aristocrat—so far as the possession and manifestation of the qualities of human nature are concerned? When an aristocrat is being thwarted, and his old positions are crumbling under his feet, in his desperation he can be polite enough to "damn the consequences" in pursuit of his own ends. Such persons, if not "a miscellaneous rabble who extol things vulgar," certainly are among those who adopt a course that is not far removed—if removed at all—from "things vulgar."

What are the ideals of intelligent democracy to-day? I submit, broadly, these: that the means of life may be more equitably distributed and fairly enjoyed; that equality of opportunity may be the heritage of every man. And, maybe, there are some spirits as fine—that is, as far removed from "things vulgar"—among the "plebs." as among those who regard themselves as aristocrats.

Perhaps it may be said that from the few who are so prepared to "gang their ain gait," and to "damn the consequences," you should not judge all; neither should you judge all from some of the democracy who are not very particular about consequences. I believe that the loftiest spirits seeking to guide "Demos" are simply desirous of a regenerated race, purged of those elements that, whether in aristocrat or democrat, are unquestionably "vulgar." Maybe there are as many real "curs" in the (so-called) higher walks of life as among the common people. Anyhow, I think it is time to recognize that there could be no aristocracy if there were no democracy. If every "Adam delved," and every "Eve span," we should all be aristocrats, or democrats—at least, we should all be contributing something to the material and social and moral well-being of the community. Why should the man "above" look on the man "below" with such contempt, when the man below makes it possible, very largely, for the other man to be above—so far as material conditions are concerned?

Let us, rather, seek to guide and ennoble "Demos," and to show the aristocrat what he should be and do, aiming, meanwhile, to eliminate from both the element of vulgarity and the spirit of the cur.

Yours truly,

11 Victoria Avenue, G. W. TURNER.
Brierfield, Burnley, Lancs.

[Several letters are held over.—ED.]

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THE SPEAKING OF VERSE ON THE ENGLISH STAGE

ON this subject the present writer may perhaps be allowed to speak with a certain authority, for he has had some half-dozen verse plays produced on the London and provincial stage, and though his remarks, the result of some practical experience, may not find general assent, he is, in this instance, at least, not merely beating the air. Apart, too, from the general question, one of the primary objects both of this Review and of the Poetry Society was the encouragement of this most difficult art; and now that we have happily been joined by the British Empire Shakespeare Society, which makes a special and continuous effort in this direction, the subject should need no introduction or apology in our pages. We have spoken of "this most difficult art." The difficulties, indeed, can hardly be exaggerated. For in the first place it would certainly seem necessary that, supposing the production of modern poetic drama, or, for the matter of that ancient, be deemed a necessary business of the theatre, the actor or actress called on to portray such plays should be personally acquainted with the best dramatic verse extant. We are well enough aware that the modern actor-manager, with few exceptions, does not recognize that such production is a necessity of any kind, and his view is strongly emphasized by the majority of dramatic critics. But allowing for this formidable objection at the outset, on the part of those in authority, we are none the less convinced that there is a very considerable and quickly growing force of opinion which enthusiastically would either recall to our historic boards an ancient splendour, or originate possibly some new form or variation of the poetic play. And here it is to be recognized that it is public opinion, that is to say, the desire of audiences, which has to be considered apart from and above the prejudice, which is not without financial justification on the part of managers and producers. We have said that for the proper speaking of verse on the stage it is necessary that actors and actresses should have a wide experience of the best dramatic poetry. But so far is this from being the case, that it would be a matter of extreme difficulty, and of arduous

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selection, to find among the great body of players some forty or fifty who were even rudimentarily conversant with the great English literature of the theatre. And we will go further and point out that unlike the continental system of education, that of our schools has no heed whatever for what should be an essential part of every Englishman's equipment. We are taught much against the grain to read, for instance, the Greek tragedies, and even this teaching is in the nature of a "dry-as-dust" drumming into young heads of grammar and particles; but the idea that, with the exception possibly of Shakespeare, passages from the great dramatists should be read and recited aloud, seems at present beyond the ken of the English schoolmaster. Yet in Germany, France and almost all other civilized countries, this reading and reciting aloud of vivid and moving passages from national dramatic poets is regarded as one of the chief features of education. In attributing, therefore, this ignorance to our players, we are not instancing them as lying under a peculiar disqualification; it is merely that, as we contend, the continual practice of speaking blank verse is an exigency of the art of the actor. We have very little notion of how verse was spoken by the actors of an older time, but probably we should find to-day that their delivery was both too ponderous and too full of pause. Still, there can be little doubt that far greater attention was given to, and far greater effort expended on, mere verbal delivery and sonorous diction than in our own day. We have it, indeed, on record that in the opinion of such a poet as Keats, the delivery of the elder Kean would seem at times "to rob the Hybla bees and leave them honeyless." In the present day the bees of Hybla could regard their stored honey with a sense of the most profound security. We have it also "set down" that the same actor in the character of Sir Giles Overreach, in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, when he came to the lines:

> "Or as the moon, when wolves with hunger pined,
> Howl at her brightness,"

actually, by the sound of voice, "rendered the scene visible." The writer well remembers playing in a Shakespearean company, when an actor of the old school spoke the famous lines about the hunted stag; and how, though the delivery of the veteran was to modern ears insufferably slow, not a word or image was allowed to pass without due emphasis and a cer-

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tain picturesqeuness of diction. Even as late as the performances of Sir Henry Irving, who was much criticized and ridiculed for his vocal and other mannerisms, one still retains with pleasure the phrasing of certain passages, notably the closing soliloquies in Macbeth. But, whatever merits or defects the art of declamation of the older school of players may have had, it is certain that the art has perished with them, and that there is now no art at all, either practised or even aimed at, in the speaking of rhythmical emotion on our stage. To such a pitch, indeed, has this neglect come, that one has heard actors told, and with considerable emphasis, to "speak the lines like prose," to "forget that it is verse"; this last adjuration unnecessary in the extreme. It would seem, and here we speak from acute personal experience, well-nigh impossible to impress on or even slightly to convey to actors and actresses, otherwise of the first rank in their profession, any notion of the sound or beauty of words, or the sway of a line. They do not regard any attempt of this kind on the part of the author with any kind of impatience or irritation, but obviously regard him as a person with an idiosyncrasy which must be humoured, at any rate, during rehearsal, or there is some risk of his becoming dangerous. What then, we wish to emphasize, is the fact not only that poetry is inadequately delivered by the present-day actor, but that even the difficulties of a just declamation are not even recognized. It is not so much that the obstacle is not overcome, but that it is not for a moment seen. Yet it cannot be too firmly insisted on that it is the first business of the actor to give full and just expression to the actual words and the sound of them, before addressing himself to what he calls "the business" of his part. The old apathy towards this beautiful and difficult branch of drama is, we believe, disappearing from the public mind, and interest is being quickened, but this will be of no avail until its exponents realize the importance of the vehicle by which alone it can be conveyed.

THE EDITOR.

❧ ❧ ❧

POOR Pride keeps walking where the people pass,
Along the paving stones her velvet flows:
Humility lies sleeping in the grass,
Her fingers round the stem of a wild rose.

MARGARET MAITLAND RADFORD.

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SONG OF BASKET-WEAVING

KULSAGH,* Kulsagh, my Mother,
I sit at thy knee
Weaving my basket of grasses,
Weaving for my harvest of berries when the Ripe Days come.
Thy fingers gently touch my hair with fragrance,
Thy mouth drips a song, for the wind has kissed it—
(Love sings in thy mouth!)
The soil listens and answers;
I feel a stirring beneath me and hear buds opening,
The river chants thy song, and the clouds dance to it.
To-night the stars will float upon thy singing breath,
Gleaming like slanting flocks above the sea,

. . . .

All the earth sings: and its voices are one song!

. . . .

I alone am silent: I alone, a maid waiting him, the Fate,
The Stirring One, the Planter of the Harvest,
The Basket-Filler.
Kulsagh, Kulsagh, Mother!
See how beautiful, how liberal, is my basket,
How tightly woven for the waters of love,
How soft for the treading of children's feet,
How strong to bear them up!
Kulsagh, Kulsagh, Mother, remember me—
Ere the Sunset and the Dropping Leaf!

* Kulsagh; Cedar-tree.—Considered the source of life as it supplies all the necessities of life, even food in fish famine, to British Columbian Coast Indians.

CONSTANCE SKINNER.

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A LATER LAZARUS

DIM faces, grieving eyes
  Through a mist inclined to me:
A little noise of sighs
  Like a wind died quietly;
A drifted whisper came, " He dies,"—
  Far off it seemed to be.
Then an inrush as of many skies;
Then sudden calm, so cool, so wise.
Calm, too, my soul—beyond surprise,
  Calm with eternity.

The shadow of the yew
  Lay grotesque upon the floor;
A drowsy murmur grew
From the church chimes; came the coo
  Of the pigeons as before.
Mid the quiet green and blue
Quiet, quiet I, who knew
  That the body lived no more.

They seemed so near, so far,
  The common day's affairs;
The clock familiar
  Tick-tacked upon the stairs.
  I felt my mother's prayers
Steal Godward from a star.

They wept who yet could weep:
  A wonder mine, the thrill
Of Being, strange and deep;
  Calm, wholly calm, my will.

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Time seemed a dream in a sleep,
  And death a ripple of ill
  That had trembled and was still
Upon a glassy deep.

I turned from tears away:
The dead have nought to say
But praise: God dulls the clay.

My body, flesh and bone,
  Haunted the ghost of me:
The man that I had known
  Was more than memory,
His flesh and bone, his flesh and bone
Clung yet to me as though my own,
A something better than a stone,
  Dim with mortality.

I came to a strange, still place;
  My footfall made no sound.
Each grey bough, mute as a dead dream's face
  Hung in the hush profound:
So still it was I heard in space
  The worlds go round and round.

I paused like a guest unbidden:
  An awed content was mine:
I stood, like a nun close-hidden
  With the Whisperer divine,
And listened: no voice of the body stirred,
Nor did soul utter a word.

I listened: the earth from me fell
  Like a shadow silently:
I heard my own death-knell,—
  But I was the light in the tree—
The wandering gleam on the fell—
The toll of a blue harebell
  In the green grass under me.

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My *self* like a shade withdrew:
  And somewhere God had stirred:
The earth was a life that knew,
  The sky a spirit that heard;
And I was the flash in the dew,
  The lilt of its love in the bird,
  And the sea's long wonder-word:
The fullness of life flowed through me—through,
  Like mind through a conscious word!

And that which was dim grew clear,
  And that which was dark lay known:
There was nor There, neither Here:
  The many were one alone.
Spirit was I with an immanent ear
At the naked core of life,—more near
  Than intimate blood and bone.

Outcast at a scorn-slammed door
  I sobbed, the virtue that fell;
Pale-lipped on a palace floor
  I shrank at a marriage bell;
I smiled, a King whom the plaudits tore;
  I laughed in a maniac's cell;
With bliss that from heaven to heaven did soar
One, and with woe that evermore
  Shudders from hell to hell:
All births in all things born was I,
All deaths in all that die.

I moved with bodiless things
  That wait in procreant gloom;
Felt Being's bubbling springs,
  The murderer start in the womb;
I was pity pale that in darkness clings
  To the cloudy skirts of doom,
  And the prescience of the bloom
That in desolation sings.

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I looked through time, and saw
The years in the folded hour;
Saw thought to her purpose draw
The wandering winds of power;
Saw pinioned centuries gnaw
Pride's splendid mortal flower;
Saw fearful shapes that lower
'Mid yeasty worlds and cower
To the Will that is the Law.

And I was the soul of place,
And the fire in the eagle's eye;
And, pinnacled far in space,
I felt the sea-things die:
A thought in the bland eternal Face
I lingered, even I.

I had no human pain;
It seemed not strange to be
As merciful as summer rain,
As free as a wind on the sea,
To flash in soul and to attain
All knowledge instantly,
To know in all eternity
No moment void or vain.

Through ether shimmering white
From realms like a sunset-flame
The hymn of the day and night
Like wizard wonder came;
I saw the suns in quiring flight
Circle like song-birds in God's sight,
Lauding His marvellous name
Who leads all stars aright.

Safe in that heart I lay
Whose pulse is night and day. . . .

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A sudden blurr of pain;
 A thunder as of strife;
And a heart that turned in vain
From the terror and the stain
 And the arrogance of life....

Ah, wonder wide to view!
 Ah, spirit-life that stirred,
That caught at God nor knew!...
 I have both seen and heard
A truth too brightly true
 To be dimmed by a mortal word:
The river of life flowed through me—through,
 Like song through the heart of a bird!

JAMES A. MACKERETH.

THE VOICE

HOW dark the night!
It seemed as if the tiny clouds did weave
A web in which to wind the watching stars,
To hide their light.

That whisp'ring voice!
So was it that Satanus spoke with Eve,
So with his murmuring tones he moved her heart
To fatal choice.

O voice so dear!
O whisp'ring, swaying voice! How could she leave?
Even the breathless, palpitating sea
Was hushed to hear.

J. E. BRAY.

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THE MAN WHO SAW HIS SOUL

I HAD dwelt with my soul for years three-score
  In a lean and a lonely land:
Tho' it moved like a shadow behind and before
  Its form I never had scann'd:
One night I felt that it went to explore,
  And stay'd it with voice and with hand.

I caught at that which I scarce could hold,
  To tremulous webs akin:
I look'd on a shape like a dark wave roll'd,
  And a drowning light within.
And something pass'd—a shudder, a blast,
  A whisper of fear and sin.

"Come thou," I mutter'd once and again,
  "My secret and sombre mate":
It came like a phantom ship on a chain,
  A trembling shadow of weight.
Strangely I spell'd by the lamp I held
  The silent runagate.

And at first there was only a curd of cloud,
  And a glimmer within its deep,
Then—tremulous, changing, half-allow'd—
  A semblance began to peep.
At last a figure, huddled and bow'd,
  That the eye might gather and keep.

Fearful and faint and shadowy-thin,
  It had hardly a human size:
"Stand up," I spoke, "O brother and twin,
  And give me to view thine eyes":
They shunn'd my gaze, and they couch'd within,
  As wrens when the sparhawk flies.

I tightened my grip in mastership:
  "Look on thy Lord!" I said.

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Then, rising as rats from a frightened plunge,
The eyes swam into the head:
Or ever their look my vision took
I would mine own had been dead.

I thought on the mummy that Moses knew—
This thing was older by far:
I thought of the cells that guard from view
All passions that maim and mar:
But this was a face from another place,
Forbidden of sun and star.

We gather'd each other as two that gaze
Adrift on a plank forlorn;
I question'd the face as a woman surveys
The thing she has darkly borne:
And the face look'd back through a shifting glaze
Commingled of fear and scorn.

Now in the haze of the mingled gaze
A zest began to grow:
Then did I hear a chuckled laugh,
Gloating and foul and slow:
It seem'd to spread and touch the dead
In the seas and hells below.

"What hast thou wrought, O Thing," I said,
"That shamest the form of man;
Lifting to me such eyes as be
Under eternal ban?"
"All mirth," he spoke, "since Adam awoke,
Or desire of the beast began."

"Bend low thy head," the monster said;
"My mouth to thy drinking ear:
Rejoice thou must, if hate and lust
Thy drowsy flesh can cheer.
Oh, long ago did the devils crow
Whenever I came anear."

Then did he tell in whispers fell
Of thoughts that crawl and hide;

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Of deeds that make the leaves to shake
By the lonely riverside,
That beat for ever about the world,
Like wings by God denied.

He told of the fires of old desires
That burrow and root and twine,
With the coil and hiss of the new-slough'd snake,
The grunt of the wooing swine:
His eyes were moist as his pride rejoiced,
And he chuckled, "All are mine."

I look'd in the eyes that were leering up,
And drew their message in:
A million years held out a cup
And bade me drink their sin,
And all the lips that are loved in Hell
Did kiss me as their kin.

Hate in my heart leapt fierce and high
With the might that hate can give:
The light in the face I loved must die:
Yea, love was fugitive:
This Thing had power at the utmost hour
To slip from its sheath and live.

This Thing could fly the doom whereby
All else is dispossest:
That sucks the stars till they shrink and die,
And folds the seas as a vest,
That touches the fiercest hands to lie
Like white flowers over the breast.

This Thing would baffle the dusky bar
Where all beside is stay'd:
This Thing would house in the ages afar,
A whispering horror unlaid,
Shaming the light in April eyes,
Making the graves afraid.

"O God," I spoke, "do Thou revoke
The life of eternal space:

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Look down and see the things to be
  Shut in this deathless face:
Let judgment stand in a mortal hand
  And doom it by Thy grace."

My clutch on the Thing was the grasp of God.
  Wide wings were overhead:
Ages or hours, wills, portents, powers
  Strove, and the night was red:
Till something cried, and cursed, and died,
  While dreadful dews were shed:
Then all the worlds were pacified,
  And holy quiet spread:
  "Mercy of God!" I said,
  And knelt beside my bed.

FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE.

WEARINESS

MY darling, I am weary of the world
And tired with fruitless strife against the sport
Of gods malicious, who withhold the dawn.

Fain would I glide, with all my torn sails furled,
Into thy rest, as into the wished port
The water-weary ships at last are drawn.

So would I go, so gently, all strife ceased,
My own will furled, thy love to lead me on
Between thy sheltering arms, the watch released,
And then at last drop anchor, peace now won.

F. BRITTEN AUSTIN.

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OTAKAR BREZINA

A SELECTION OF POEMS FROM *THE MYSTIC DISTANCES* (1895), *THE DAWN IN THE WEST* (1896), *THE HANDS* (1901). TRANSLATED FROM THE CZECH ORIGINALS BY P. SELVER.

THE decade from 1860 to 1870 was a critical period in the development of modern Bohemian literature, for between those two dates was born a brilliant group of writers, some of whom are now well on the way to acquiring a European reputation. And for a poet who writes in the Czech language this is a severe test. I am thinking of such men as Antonín Sova, whose lyric poems are almost too delicate and sensitive for translation; the robust polemist, J. S. Machar; Fr. S. Procházka, a singer of patriotic rhapsodies; Antonín Klástersky, an original poet of great pictorial charm and an untiring translator from the English; Jaromir Borecky, who combines Slavonic melancholy with a Latin precision of form; Petr Bezruc, the rugged and headstrong champion of the Silesian miners. And then there is Otakar Brezina, different from them all, just as they are different from one another. Such is the remarkable variety of modern Bohemian poetry.

Otakar Brezina (whose real name is Václav Jebavy) was born in the year 1868. His birthplace was in Southern Bohemia, where a mystical habit of thought appears to have survived from the Middle Ages. I lay stress on this fact, because Brezina's style is to be regarded as the natural expression of a man who has inherited a brooding temperament from a long line of ancestors, and whose whole environment has fostered this tendency. The remarkable code of symbols that he has gradually developed is, therefore, something quite different from a desire for the unusual as a means to notoriety. Of this, indeed, Brezina cannot reasonably be accused. He has spent his life as a school-teacher in obscure Moravian towns, sending out, from time to time, his volumes with their scanty but precious contents. Beginning with the year 1895 appeared *The Mystic Distances*, *The Dawn in the West* (1896), *The Polar Winds* (1897), *The Temple Builders* (1899), *The Hands* (1901). A volume of prose essays, *The Music of the Springs*, was issued in 1901. These books, whose whole contents fill the one fairly large volume of his recently collected works, represent Brezina's spiritual progress, from the melancholy cravings of *The Mystic Distances* to the rich and passionate optimism of *The Hands*.

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In his earliest volume Brezina shows a fondness for languorous Alexandrines, but as he proceeds he discards rhyme more and more, to find his most impressive utterance in free rhythms of various types. Yet even in his last book the rhymed poems are of very great beauty. The fact is that Brezina's mastery over rhythm is unerring, whatever metre he may use. The strange and haunting cadences of his verse are as characteristic as those of any great poet must be.

Brezina's native language, the Czech, has proved a valuable asset to him in the formation of his style. With its numerous inflections and its supple syntax it is able to condense much thought into few words. In spite of its wealth of images and superb rhetoric, Brezina's poetry frequently attains a brevity of style which may appropriately be compared to the laconic utterances of an oracle. When, for instance, he writes:

"Pro tajemství bolesti, smrti a znovuzrození,"

he expresses in six words what in English must be expanded into twelve:

"Because of the secret of grief, of death and the new birth."

Hence, in the case of Brezina, the problem of translation becomes particularly acute. Among living tongues, only a Slavonic language can at all fully reproduce his linguistic qualities. In their own way, these are as unique and, therefore, as untranslatable as Elizabethan English.

But, even so, Brezina's work bears ample traces of the limitations of language as an expression of thought. He is obliged to attach to certain words a special significance beyond the one they usually bear, and hence his curious uses of such words as: zahrada (garden), kov (metal), vinobraní (vintage), úl (hive), západ (west, sunset), ostrov (island), to mention only a few. Exactly how far Brezina has enlarged the range of these words, in order to fit them for his purposes, must be learned gradually by a careful study of his work.

It is perhaps interesting, but hardly profitable, to trace the influences of other writers on Brezina; Blake, Shelley, Whitman, Mallarmé, Maeterlinck—these are some of the names that might be suggested—but it does not follow that he was directly influenced by them. There are remarkable parallels, too, between him and Tagore, from whom he must obviously be independent.

The issue of Brezina's collected works might be taken as a sign that his poetical activity is completed. But while recently in Prague I was informed that he has a number of fresh manuscripts in his possession. All "the

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brethren for whose hives he has planted lime-trees" will await with some impatience the publication of these new poems. Perhaps when they do appear, a small community for their reception and comprehension may be found also in England. That is the hope with which I print these translations in THE POETRY REVIEW. For, as Brezina wrote in a characteristic letter to myself: "No mystery is more joyful than this federation of spirits mutually aiding each other across all distances of earth and time."

P. SELVER.

DEAD YOUTH

At the old key-board, in the slumbering metal strings,
As in billowing of harps I heard a cadence of rhythms,
That with the tear-wet dew of weary and lamenting chords
Clung to the gently quivering line of the strings.

Pondering arose in my soul like a heavy fragrance,
And the song, that I had heard chanted in my youth,
Breathed upon my face and clutched me by the hand
And led me to the hushed gardens of bygone years.

The beauty of the heavens shone with dalliance of glitterng planet-clusters,
Wherefrom a starry magic trickled into the hushed waters of time,
Where in a crystal coffin like the dead body of a saint,
My youth lay in the winding-sheet of faded spring-tides.

The pollen of roseate dreams budded on the oval of its countenance
And the hard splendour of my tears girded it as a diadem
In the gloss of unsullied limbs, which I had embalmed
With the fragrant treasure of my pure memories.

And the warmth of dead charms, which in freshness beckoned to me
Beneath a rose-hued veil, which the dawn of my days had woven,
The glow of lingering glances, which rest faded in the soul,
And dead kisses, whose fervour has burned me not,

The bitterish blood of grapes, from whence I drained no ecstasy
And the fire of embraces made chill by pondering,
A shower of scattered blossoms, which once sank into my lap,
But withered and perished at the touch of my hand.

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The glow of looming dawns, that set no blush upon my face,
The faint flame of dewy rainbows, which bathed me not in coolness,
The glimmer of bygone days of splendour, which time has changed into night
As it has changed the serene calm of nights into a clouded day void of charms.

It all blazed up in my soul and in the music of perished cravings
Quivered in an echo with a deadly sobbing;
Over the corpse of Youth I stood in meditation,
Like a lover by the body of a dead seduced maiden.

The Mystic Distances.

A MOOD

Faint with the heat, a murmur on the calm branches falls,
Motionless hanging, while in grievous intervals
The forest breathed, oppressed; sap in a bitter tide
From the burst herbage let crude-savoured fragrance glide.
'Neath the unmoving trees pale faintness sought a place,
Sat by my side and breathed forebodings in my face,
Grief of the ceaseless question in my eyes immersed,
And with my soul in speech of lifeless words conversed.
The sun's o'er-ripened bloom withered in glows of white,
Quailed in the dusk of boughs, and 'mid blue leaves took flight
In listless calm's mute wane of strength; in mosses hid
It smouldered, lulling me in weariness amid
A bath of mystic breath, as though 'neath waves I lay,
And from my opened veins blood softly oozed away.

The Mystic Distances.

THE DAWN IN THE WEST

'Tis the May-tide of shadows. The swelter of noon is long since ended,
Wearied the drunken dream of the blood, and in purer accents it plays.
The glowing bars of our prison with crackle of fire are rended,
And the fruit of our unripeness grows ripe in the sunset-rays.

Grieve not, my soul, that we enter thy natal city darkling,
And that barely at dusk shall we see its gardens, when vespers are o'er;
Our own extinguished days shall set the path-way sparkling,
And we with a shout shall be greeted by hopes we dispatched long before.

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Day darkens the lustre afar—at night the peaks will be glowing.
With the crashing of shattered housetops the heaven is opened wide,—
In a cadence of brotherly voices, whose breath is a fragrant flowing
From world unto world like music of ships swimming side by side.

In the bliss of the unleashed light, in the word with its unknown tracings,
'Neath shadows that thou as secrets didst fling upon earthly thought,
Like a signal uttered in anguish and stifled by metal casings
The earth-dream in glory of thee amid billows of gladness is caught.

O Eternal! May our forebodings with them who are steeped in griefs find favour,
Let us chant a hymn with words that in every language betoken death.
For to us, who believe, is thy day the ripening time with bitterish savour,
Bursting in grievous reapings and tenderly cooled with an eventide breath.

The Dawn in the West.

THE LEGEND OF SECRET GUILT

The glow of my coming hours illumined this moment in dreams
And bloomed in the halls of my glory with every lustre ablaze:
My coming spring-tides and multiple graces let music ripple in streams:
Lips dazed me with sparkle of laughter and breath that with mockery teems,
And eyes, where awaited me silence of rapture glowed with a yearning gaze.

But vainly I wanderd where shook in rhythms of baffling might
The song-note of Life. Some Shadow before me and after me going
Flitted from hall to hall, and quenched the shimmer of light.
The mirrors grew dim, the yearning quailed, and the music's conquering flight
Thrust to the lowliest octave of grief, in muteness was flowing.

O my soul, from whence did it come? And how many centuries, say,
Had it passed through my ancestors' souls, before unto me it came?
How oft as a requiem-cloth did it rest on a marriage-array?
On how many rose-hued smiles did its graveyard breathing prey?
And in how many lamps did it quench the ether and salt in the flame?

The Dawn in the West.

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FANATICS

We rove through the mystery of earth, and from silent things we seek to know
Of the spring-tide that approaches not, of the blossoms that bud not;
Ever with a single greeting to the winds that are wafted to the coming ages,
Ever with a single unended thought, and an uncompleted song,
Oath-bound witnesses of the secret.

We, O earth, thy step-children, were nurtured with the milk of sorrow
As though at the breast of mothers that had been seduced;
When our brethren gratefully drank from thy tiny wells of sweetness,
We stood, ever athirst, before the salty waters of oceans,
And only the tragical music of their tempests filled us with rapture.

We have knelt in a prayer of thanksgiving while countless railed upon thee
And we have wept where countless blessed thee;
Our voices were asparkle like the sun, when myriads grew mute in their awe,
And when hearts and chimes rang out in triumph at the return of victors,
Our lips, prophetical, were locked in an anguished spasm of silence.

Princes of the earth and bondsmen, scourged to the blood,
Came together as brethren in the cathedral of our devotions;
We bestowed the solace of kisses upon all branded brows,
We fathomed heaviest dreams of earth, like the sigh of a mother,
And where our brethren turned away in horror, we still felt love.

In the smiles of beauty and in alluring glances of things
We saw the grave-light of our consecration burning;
From the silence of anguish we heard the craving whisper of kisses welling up,
From the silence of loathing and irk—the joyous beating of youthful wings,
From the silence of bliss—the muteness of an inner fire where the damned are in travail.

From our morn to our eve we have only passed through ages of the future;
When to our brethren we seemed to be nearest, we had departed the farthest.
Though we were poorest, yet from precious lustres, marble and metals of mystery

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We built up temples to the Eternal, and endowed the word with splendour afresh;
Though we were humble, we held sway over souls in the name of thy mystical power.

And though we have lived in unnumbered lives, and have bloomed in the glow of all blossoms,
And by the sun of our love we have raised the whole universe as a cloud into the azure of phantasy,
And have bowed ourselves down to the beasts in the yoke, as to the brethren of our enchantment,
And have felt the bliss of all conceptions, and in our bosoms have had the grievous stir of the unborn,
And in our hearts the fire of all hearts—we remained in solitude.

Only the dead and brethren approaching from future ages
Have replied to the joyful tidings of our covenant;
Amid the thirsting of our will, as if in the noon-tide blaze
They who were dearest to us have grown mute and blenched, and the grace of our glances
They received with dread as the perilous kisses of those smitten with a grievous sickness.

Secretly they declared us traitors of earth, when its glory,
The morning fire of eternity we greeted prostrate in rapture;
When as seers we dreamed of the woman, the queen of the new love,
Of the man, the gentle herdsman of the elements, the prince of mystical strength,
Who shall rule over sorrow transformed into flames of the loftiest yearning.

Of the welding of all the myriads into the One Man of redemption,
The steersman of a spirit-earth, who shall float to the shores of thy secrets,
In the track of thy holy winds spanning the sails woven by ages,
And in a new language, potent as the language of angels, pure as the language of children,
He shall give names to the blossoms of thy invisible gardens.

But not even in the glowing mistiness of the remotest worlds
Have we lighted on peace; we have envied the dead their mute wisdom;
Above every region of beauty whither our gaze has reached in conquest,
The tokens of thy sovereign sway in all infinities
Before us in dark menace loom up as citadels guarded by loftiest spirits.

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From the azure of a thousand azures flashed up in gigantic orbits
Tier upon tier of thy structure, ever more clarified, with boundless perspective;
From star to star, as if thronging to new abodes, in the igniting June of thy will
Hierarchies of spirits arise, a mystical bee-swarm from a single hive
Intent on their sweet task with a riddling song of melancholy.

The loftier the contest, the deeper and greater its concealment, the more fateful the eddies of thy glory,
The nearer to the eternal ocean, the greater the heights whence thunder the cataracts
Of our musing, each drop the simmering of fire in the clash of worlds;
Words are crushed like corn in the stamping-mills of thy tempest, and in their flight
Fall before the majesty of thy sway like ashes upon our heads.

And then before our closed eyes, there flashed a new creation;
Like a red pillar, the galaxy of all suns led us thereto;
And from the glowing goblet of yearning, where the magical well of dreams ran dry,
Eternally athirst we drank the lees of the wine that was vinted in our winepresses,
The draught of immortality, the destruction of shapes, the sign of the unending.

The Hands.

TIME

Lime-trees that we have planted for the hives of our brethren,
Temples that we have built in fire and silence for thy glory,
Hands that the fever of life set trembling in toil and delight,
Have long mingled in the glowing dust upon the pathway of thousands;
Star-clusters whereon we bestowed the tenderest names of our yearning
Sparkle before the eyes of the living in altered rhythm and dalliance.

New heavens are revealed in thy secret:
The sun of thy days casts its shadow on the yonder side;
Like divers from thy oceans with treasures of the ages, new mornings have arisen,
On new meadows thymian, worm-wood, rushes and cummin scatter their fragrance,

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And in goblets of radiance a mystical autumn sheds sorrow and dreaming,
Of potent wines the most potent.

But we tarry devotedly as we tarried of yore;
We see a thousand earths uprise from a bath of fiery vapours.
Suns, like jealous lovers, redden and blench in yearning before them.
From passionate, sorrowful hearts roars the overwhelming ferment of radiant blood—
Wearied by the ages we ever tarry for thy mystical advent,
For the white flashes, blossoms of thy cloud, lilies of thy eternal spring-tides.

Tokens glittered around us; the conquering hosts of our kindred,
In the purple tents of sunsets, that rose up from their fires,
The heavens in gold and blood, like the reflex from ages of ripening fruits
That were fragrant afar in the feverish solitude of the elect.
And on morning-paths, like jewels lost at the riding forth of queens,
The magical dew of past nights flashed in tears from the meadows.

Gaining its freedom, the earth faded. In the terror of our immortality
We behold from our mystical shores how the torrent of thy glory is wafted onward;
In black arches, an infinity of outstretched bridges,
We behold ever more splendid worlds, floating with signals of coloured fires;
But the stars are as grains of sand in hour-glasses,
And afresh and afresh they are turned by the silence, the decree and the weight of thy will.

Crushed by the immensity of thy glory we ever tarry in anguish and muteness
For the sweet smile of thy solace, the ending of the days,
The cooling of a hotly kindled dream, for the higher illumining of time,
The shattering of a mystical bond, and forgiveness,
And our tears, an eternal rain, flow into living hearts,—
There they burn in drops of fire and yearning, there they resound with a sob of love.

The Hands.

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SHAKESPEARE AND WOMEN'S PLACE IN CIVILIZED SOCIETY

AS ILLUSTRATED BY A FEW OF HIS FEMALE CHARACTERS

IN Shakespeare's delineation of human character, whether simple or complex, he was always absolutely just. He drew his portraits with unerring accuracy because he copied Nature, and not as did the old Greek painters in Italy, who imitated the drawings of other artists, which caused their work to be stilted and untrue to life. In this paper we are to consider certain aspects of woman's character and her place in the world which represent the sterner or more masculine side of her mind and will, enabling her to perform deeds of vengenace, of courage, of self-sacrifice, and of leadership. Strength of character displayed in bravery and bold daring may proceed from three causes—from inheritance, from natural endowment, or from force of circumstances. Women possessing these faculties are sure to be in some sense rulers of men. Shakespeare recognizes this, and illustrates his opinion by giving for our study, amongst others, the portraits of Lady Macbeth, Portia, wife of Brutus, Volumnia, mother of Coriolanus, Cleopatra and Queen Margaret, wife of Henry VI.

From the very first entrance of Lady Macbeth upon the scene, she captivates, thrills, and holds our senses by the magnetic power of her o'er-mastering will. In her soliloquy after reading her husband's letter she says, " Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and *shalt* be what thou art promised." She evidently considers herself the prime ruler of her Castle and of all within it. " The raven himself is hoarse that croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan under *my* battlements." To her husband she says: " He that's coming must be provided for, and you shall put this night's great business into *my* dispatch." Doubtless Lady Macbeth had inherited courage and daring from her royal forefathers, and the fact that Duncan belonged to the younger line and herself to the elder, and that her family had suffered great wrongs at the hands of his relations, was, perhaps, an incentive to the hideous crime which fills us with so much horror, while her over-weening ambition for herself and her husband plays a most important part in the tragedy. Shakespeare's judgment of her acts is open and unbiased—yet he does not leave out the Nemesis which duly overtakes her.

We cannot but reflect how differently Lady Macbeth might have used her talents and opportunities for the welfare of her own dependents and in readiness to assist her husband in difficulty or danger. She was endowed

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with considerable mental power, was beloved by her husband, over whom she exercised a strong ascendency. She might have persuaded him to discontinue his visits to the Weird Sisters. She might, even after the murder of Duncan was discussed between them, have listened to his reasons for not committing the crime. But she had over-stepped the bounds of caution, and her dominant passion led her further and further from the possibility of any drawing back.

In Portia, wife of Brutus, we have a totally different exponent of female courage and its incentive. It is from devotion to her husband, and the desire to help him in his worries, that springs the idea and its accomplishment of inflicting upon herself a painful wound. She wishes him to recognize that she is worthy of his trust, and she succeeds. She says, "I grant I am a woman; but, withal, a woman well-reputed—Cato's daughter. Think you I am no stronger than my sex, being so fathered and so husbanded?" Brutus then reveals to her the secrets of the conspiracy in which he is engaged, but when the crucial moment is at hand she is overwhelmed with torturing anxiety and suspense, and acknowledges that "she has a man's mind, but a woman's might."

Volumnia, mother of Coriolanus, is, perhaps, the strongest of all Shakespeare's women, for with the reputed stoicism of a Roman mother she combined wisdom, patience, and common sense. She says to her son, "I mock at death with as big heart as thou," and yet she would have him show mildness and submission when speaking to the people. "Prithee now, go and be ruled," she begs. Before the final scenes of his tragic life Coriolanus extols Volumnia and the other two ladies as the makers of peace between Rome and the Volsces.

"Ladies," he exclaims, "you deserve to have a temple built you: all the swords in Italy and her confederate arms could not have made this peace."

Thus Volumnia succeeded in saving the State, the City of Rome, and its inhabitants, knowing, perchance, that it might be at the cost of her noble son's life.

What shall we say of Shakespeare's "Great Egypt," Cleopatra, of whom Enobarbus said, "Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety." All advantages of mind and body were showered upon her by Nature in rich abundance. Ruler absolute of a powerful State, surrounded by all the treasures of Eastern magnificence, with countless servants at her command—there was indeed a noble sphere for a woman and limitless in its possibilities. Yet, lacking in power to rule and control herself, she brought ruin upon Antony, terror upon the State, and destruction upon herself as well as on others with her. The craftsman of this great drama

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leaves us, however, one shred of admiring pity for fallen greatness in the fortitude with which Cleopatra planned and carried out her death.

The last example I shall quote is that of Margaret, Queen of Henry VI. Princess of a poor and petty State, without dowry except in good looks, she is wooed and married by proxy for his Master, Henry the Sixth, by the artful and aspiring Duke of Suffolk, who brings her over to this country to be England's Queen. In such a position she had before her a fair and wide field to cultivate. She was lavishly endowed with powers of ruling, and was bold and fearless in leading her forces into battle against the ambitious Duke of York. She might have protected her feeble husband from the intrigues of his restless nobles by giving her support to the good Duke Humphrey in his efforts for the common weal. Instead of which she treated Henry with contempt, caring only for Suffolk and his advancement, which she hoped to compass by the death of her Sovereign's one true and faithful servant. She cared not for her husband's sorrow nor for the ruin of the State. Her only anxiety was for Suffolk's life when the Commons demanded his death. " O, Henry, let me plead for gentle Suffolk! " she exclaimed. It is in the hour of extremity after the battle of St Albans that Margaret appears to the best advantage. She rebukes the slowness and meek submission of her husband, urging him against his will to fly at once. " If you be ta'en," she says, " we then should see the bottom of all our fortunes; but if we haply scape, as well we may, if not through your neglect, we shall to London get, where you are loved."

Margaret's was a proud, undaunted spirit; one calamity upon another assailed, but could not crush, her. We cannot but admire the fearlessness with which she accuses the foul tyrant, Richard of Gloucester, of his abominable crimes. So thoroughly does she make him see himself, as in a mirror, that even he, the hardened murderer, quails beneath her rain of curses.

It is certain from these examples that Shakespeare considered women to be capable of filling an important place in the history of nations; he lets us see their mistakes and follies as well as their good points, and leaves us to trace for ourselves whatever punishment may be due to the former. If we think of some of Shakespeare's other heroines, women of gentle nature who wrought for the good of others, such as the constant Imogen, the faithful Paulina, the helpful and clever Portia of Belmont, we must acknowledge that such women possessed high and noble powers of thought and action, and, if their work could be weighed in the balance with that of their more notorious sisters the former would, doubtless, be found truer and more lasting.

L. J. KENDALL

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The Poets and Poetry of To-day

For article descriptive of this new feature see THE POETRY REVIEW for July.

No. 1

ROBERT BRIDGES

(POET LAUREATE)

I love all beauteous things,
  I seek and adore them;
God hath no better praise,
And man in his hasty days
  Is honoured for them.

I too will something make
  And joy in the making;
Altho' to-morrow it seem
Like the empty words of a dream
  Remembered on waking.

"Poetical Works of Robert Bridges": Oxford University Press, 1914. 2s. net.

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A NEW WOMAN-POET

BY S. GERTRUDE FORD

THE advent of a new woman-poet is an event of profound importance to the literary world at any time; the world of womanhood having been, till recent years, so seldom interpreted from within by the poet's revealing voice—always of the nature of a new apocalypse. In our own day, when woman is conscious of herself and her potentialities as never before, the portent has a new significance: the value of an emerging world-power's sudden birth into speech, into song. That is why we find such interest in the religious mysticism of Miss Evelyn Underhill, in the rich word-arabesques of Mrs Rachel Annand Taylor, in the Irish school of women-singers—Katherine Tynan, Dora Sigerson Shorter, and the late Nora Chesson; or in the exquisite " conceits " (no other word seems to fit them so well) of Mrs Helen Parry Eden's *Bread and Circuses*. That, also, is why some of us have for some time found peculiar delight in the poems* of Miss Rose Macaulay, now first collected in book form.

Miss Macaulay is perhaps better known as a novelist than as a poet to most readers. Everybody remembers her remarkable prize novel, *The Lee Shore*, which, a year ago, won the first prize in Messrs Hodder and Stoughton's £1,000 novel competition; and even before then *Views and Vagabonds* and its predecessors had given eloquent promise of her success in this realm. But her poems were seldom seen outside the Problems Page of the *Saturday Westminster*, from which the present writer has often cut them out with reverent joy, longing for their preservation in more permanent form. The *Saturday Westminster*, indeed, may claim to be the " authentic mother " of Miss Macaulay's muse, most of her poems being the direct result of the subjects set in its famous weekly tournaments. And it is a fact of notable interest to lovers of poetry that, without the chance wind of such suggestion, the seed bearing such a genuine growth of song might never have taken root. For in *The Two Blind Countries*, we have no hesitation in saying, is something more than mere poetic accomplishment; the tricks of the poet's craft and the flourish of his familiar tools. Here is what is never familiar, however often repeated; new as each child's face, as each morning's

* *The Two Blind Countries*. By Rose Macaulay. Sidgwick and Jackson, 2s. 6d. net.

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dew. Here, in a word, is Poetry, the wonder for ever impalpable and for ever unmistakable; inhaled like an essence or a fragrance; as subtle, and as real.

Let us give an example. One of the surest tests of poetic genius, as distinct from mere talent and accomplishment, is the power to breathe new magic and music into a theme old as Poetry herself. From Job, who saw the moon " walking in brightness," ages before the Greeks saw in her Endymion's " fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste," the Queen of Night has been a source of inspiration to the poet. Yet does not the brief lyric, " On Crying for the Moon," achieve a new, an individual note? Underived from any poetic antecedent is the charm, the distinctive music, of the first and last verses, a duologue between Endymion and Poena:

" Lavender, sweet as charity,
Fills all the garden ways;
The bees, drunk with the clover wine,
Make music of the days.
Oh, hide thy face in rosemary,
Oh, bind thine eyes with rue. . . ."
" But in a white night, a wan night,
A pale light grew."

" The earth, spinning so giddily,
Carries us past regret.
She hums a tune, like a honey-bee,
' Haste onwards and forget! '
See, little brother, they dance for thee,
The stars in a silver crowd. . . ."
" In a still hour, a secret hour,
Their lady bowed."

Here is the old Greek myth revived; not galvanized artificially, but flushed with warm, young, veritable life. Humanized, too, and made of universal appeal; for the sighs of all lovers of all lands breathe through the lovely simplicities of the verse and give it a beating heart, a living soul.

So with " The Thief," a curiously original picture of a boy in an orchard, " full of pears and joy," in the glamour of a September sunrise; so with the equally original, if less beautiful, tramp poems; so, again, with " The Door," which in other hands might have been a mere account of a picnic bonfire, but in Miss Macaulay's is a wind across the ages, rekindling the gray ashes which were once red torment, about the death-place of beauty

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innocent as Joan of Arc's. Here and there the original common-metre breaks, lengthens, as if too strait to hold the tense horror of the thought:

"The hazel leaves had a stir and thrill,
As if they watched men die;
And the centuries tumbled at a shrill,
Sharp, long-forgotten cry.

. . . . .

"The red fire leapt and lit your face;
I winced—you were so white
To have come once more to the ancient place
Of red pain and black night."

And there is an equally weird suggestion in the sonnet simply entitled "Cards." Where, again, another poet would have given us a pretty vignette of a group round a candle-lit card-table, "in a dim lily-illumined garden," Miss Macaulay records a battle of invisible powers, good and evil, around one unconscious soul.

Everywhere, in this slim book of only thirty-three poems, one encounters the same two characteristic attributes, apparently contradictory, but here fused in a union as natural as it is delightful: sense of the occult and of youth defying it, laughing it down, setting it at naught. The atmosphere of *The Two Blind Countries* clings to the whole like the pale mist of dawn, heavy, still, with fears and phantoms of the night; but through it strikes the rosy sunrise that is the heart of youth—youth the insouciant, the invincible, gay, confident, charming; able to sing its way through the world and the other-worldly. Like Dolly Denver and her lover in the king-cup meadows, after the ominous vision of St Mark's Day, the spirit embodied in these poems finds life good,

"And when we've done living, we'll die."

The goal is dim but the way is beautiful:

"The pleasant ditch is a milky way,
So alight with stars it is."

And we can take Colour for our friend, and Light for our Guide, sings Hope the indomitable, and

"Love and plunder the good wayside
Down to the brief road's end."

It is a poem where an enchanting metre sets to music a thought old as the human heart and young as its morning-time, when the body "feels its life in every limb" and the soul is one dew-drop.

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Sometimes the metrical effects of this book are almost too audacious, though oftener they are justified, as in the subtly-shifted accents of "Epiphany." Sometimes, too, we get a phrase bald even to banality, or a word which jars, like the adjective "dullish," or the line about a tramp's sleep in a ditch among jam-pots. But no one can keep the strictest laws of her art better than Miss Macaulay: witness the two perfect specimens of the rondeau which close the book, or the sestina on pp. 48-9. And at her best her thought rises into the serene and lofty atmosphere of indubitable poetry: poetry which speaks the language of Truth and sets it to her own music. The second of the "Two Hymns for St Andrew's Day" is one of the most authentic utterances of the latter-day Urania; sheer magic, alike in its music and its thought. I have space for three verses only, but they will convey some idea of the charm of the whole:

"When Andrew went a-fishing
All night in Galilee,
Dawn would bring him a heavy net,
Or five fish, or three;
It was all as the sea would have it,
And fisherman's luck, said he.

. . . . .

"Christ sends one man a-fishing
For brown folk in the isles,
Among the happy bread-fruit trees
From Hawaii to Hawils.
When the head-hunter runs him down,
'Fisherman's luck,' he smiles.

. . . . .

"All ye who go a-fishing,
Know this of the patient art:
Eight nights' harvest may break your nets
And the ninth break your heart.
Then on the dawn-tide tearlessly
With fisherman's luck depart."

With this, which will surely become one of the chief classics of missionary poetry, we may not only conclude our notice of Miss Macaulay's first volume of poems, but justify our hopes of its possible successor. For here we have imagination made articulate, truth made audible; the voice, clear beyond mistaking, of a new woman-poet.

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A BALLAD OF MEN AND OTHER VERSES. By William Blane. (Constable & Co., Ltd. 1913, 3s. 6d. net.)

PLEASANT verses, somewhat uninspired but affording evidence of a mind cultivated, rich in experience and responsive to many appeals. The poem which gives its name to the book scarcely deserves the precedence accorded to it. The phrasing lacks in freshness, and the effect of the whole is blurred and confused. "The Soul of a Millionaire" belongs to quite another order, although rhetoric rather than poetry, the verse-scheme is ingenious, the language adequate and picturesque and the effect completely satisfactory.

Toll for the soul of a millionaire!
Lo! for the wheat, the chaff and tare—
The good undone,
The fame unwon,
The will unchanged and the spendthrift son!
Nay, judge him not—he meant to prepare,
But the angel of God took him unaware.
Toll!
Toll—for his soul!
The rueful soul of a millionaire.

CORNISH CATCHES and Other Verses. By Bernard Moore. (Erskine Macdonald, 1914. 2s. 6d. net.)

TO write good dialect poems, we must be somewhat sentimental and mildly humorous but above all have an intense local patriotism. Mr Moore is a devoted lover of Cornwall and even in his serious or more general poems he seldom gets beyond his beloved county. Genuine dialect poetry has a real place in art, because it gets into intimate relation with actual unsophisticated humanity. Mr Moore has the root of the matter in him and writes with obvious sincerity and a contagious enthusiasm; we find here serious sentimental poems, poems of humour, poems in which humour and sentiment are combined, and every one of them truly human. We resist the temptation to make lengthy quotations, and instead recommend all our readers to purchase the book, which we can do without any hesitation. We give just two verses:

"Jenny and me in the kittereen
Drove from Callington Fair;
There was very much less than an inch between
Jenny and me in the kittereen
For wasn' we both of us turned nineteen?
An' wasn' there Love to share?"

. . . .

"Don't 'ee cry did un say? Well you'm feyther just wanted to cheer 'ee,
But men dosn' knaw where the best cup o' comfort is kept.
Cuddle down; cry it out on you'm own mother's bosom, me dearie.
Then the lil' maid slept."

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Many of Mr Moore's non-dialect poems, though they may not be so noticeable, are worth reading, as can be seen in verses such as the following:

> "I have loved Beauty. I have seen the sea
> Fringe with its silver all the golden shores,
> Have heard it crooning music ceaselessly
> To ancient tunes frayed from the tempest's roar!"

ATEL IN GORTLAND and Other Poems. By Henry Ransome. (Oxford, B. H. Blackwell, 1914. 2s. 6d. net.)

MR RANSOME is a typically academic poet, his work is always careful and accomplished, and there is a serene atmosphere throughout his volume. We read it with a certain pleasure, but mostly our mood remains calm and unexcited. There are here poems which one would be glad to read more than once, amongst these are "The Prisoner" and "To a Ship at Sea." "The Dark Woman, Stranger," which we give in full, is the work of a real poet.

> "O, Dark Woman, Stranger, from what wilderness
> Hast thou travelled hither coming swift and late,
> Why dost thou walk like a queen in thy loneliness,
> What's thy mission, that thou will'st not wait?
>
> Tell me where thou heardest the strange songs thou singest,
> Full of ancient sorrow and wild, wild grief they sound,
> And where gottest thou the red gold wherewith thou ringest
> Thy dark throat round?
>
> Why are thine eyes burning and thy breath impassioned
> With scent of strange blossoms that grow not 'neath the sky?
> O, Dark Woman, Stranger, what God those wild limbs fashioned
> Never to die?"

THE SONNETS OF SHAKESPEARE: New Light on Old Evidence. (Putnam. 7s. 6d.)

THE controversy which has raged for so long about the sonnets of Shakespeare and the mysterious Mr W. H. of the dedication, has been given a fresh impetus by the Countess de Chambrun, who has made it her chief business to champion the cause of Henry Wriottesley, Earl of Southampton, as "the onlie begetter." She has collected all the evidence on the subject, and has used it very ably. Still, one cannot help thinking that she has done more to refute the claims of Pembroke than to vindicate those of Southampton. It must be remembered that Shakespeare did not apparently mean the sonnets to be given to the world, and that Thomas Thorpe, the piratical publisher, was presumably responsible for the dedication, and would not have been likely to leave out a title, if he had thought the sonnet's application to a nobleman was possible. Arguing on the face of things and in ignorance, it seems very

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unlikely that the two outstanding persons in Shakespeare's life, the young man of the earlier sonnets, and the dark lady, should have been members of the nobility. We have no knowledge as to who Shakespeare's friends were, beyond the actors in his company, and the contemporary men of letters, who were almost all of the same station in life as himself. People are naturally tempted to look for Mr W. H. and the dark lady in the ranks of the nobility, because, if they belonged to that order, they would both stand more chance of identification, and when identified, more could be found out about them. If one assumes that the mysterious personages were members of the merchant, shopkeeper or actor classes, they are, of course, lost for ever. Even if one puts them as high as untitled gentlefolk, one must give up the search. Therefore, because one would like to find them, they must be nobles. But this seems hardly sufficient.

There seems to be no doubt that the personal element in the sonnets is real. They do contain direct references to facts and individuals, and, moreover, they do express sincere emotions. There would be more likelihood of Mr W. H. being the Earl of Southampton if Shakespeare in the sonnets was merely elaborating, like some of his contemporaries, a cold system of poetical flattery. But of such poems as "When to the sessions of sweet silent thought," or "Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth," or "The expense of spirit in a waste of shame," it is true to say that "with this key Shakespeare unlocked his heart." The Countess de Chambrun's arrangement of the sonnets is perhaps itself open to criticism, but the idea of departing from the customary sequence is excellent. They were certainly not written in any definite order, but at different stages of his career, and give expression to a profound view of life—partly the result of reflection, partly of direct personal experience.

THE GOLDEN BOOK OF SONNETS. William Robertson. (Harrap. 3s. 6d.)

THE criticism which is invariably levelled at anthologies should be less applicable to one which is limited to sonnets. At any rate, though one may be surprised at the inclusion of some pieces, one may reasonably expect to find therein all that one considers to have claims. Mr Robertson's intention, however, which he has emphasized in his preface, seems to have been rather to collect those sonnets which the average person is not likely to see anywhere else than those of intrinsic merit. This criticism is only applicable to that part of the book which contains the work of recent authors, to whom, as he says, he has given "a friendly preference." With the claims of the elder poets he seems to have dealt very ably, but it seems very strange—indeed out of all proportion—that Sir Philip Sidney should be represented by only two sonnets, while several modern men have been awarded as many as six. This discrepancy is of course due to the professed design of the book, but Mr Robertson claims that the adequate representation of our greater poets has secured "a better balance for the collection." In the opinion of some, at any rate, a much better balance would have been obtained if he had left them out altogether. The work of the numerous and very minor poets to whom he has been so generous, must necessarily suffer by comparison with Shakespeare, Milton and Wordsworth. In short, the balance of this book is formed by quality on one side and quantity on the other. Surely in poetry, if in nothing else, individual excellence cannot be overcome or equalled by sheer weight of numbers? Mr

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Robertson's preference, however friendly, must needs be damaging to the authors concerned. Nevertheless, apart from what we consider to have been the mistake of including a more or less adequate selection from the greater poets in his work, Mr Robertson's book needs no apology. For those who take a special interest in the work of recent and living authors it should be most valuable, as many of the poems which he has included are out of print.

"Q" ON POETRY

MESSRS BATSFORD have published six more Fellowship Books. Of the latest additions to this delightful series we are most attracted by Dr W. L. Courtney's altogether charming exposition of *The Meaning of Life* and Sir A. Quiller-Couch's treatise on Poetry. We do not presume to criticize "Q's" genial generalizations; it goes without saying (to use one of the cliches detested by young Cambridge and by those who increase the density of their own brains by cudgelling them for strange recondite phrases for trite thoughts) that he has produced a delightful essay—one that will not satisfy his "futuristic" friends. As a man of culture, he quotes and draws his illustrations from the classics and from such back numbers as Shakespeare and Sidney, Traherne and Davis—Sir John not W. H. He has respect for what Mr Watts-Dunton said, and he seems to believe in Tasso's proud declaration, "Two beings only deserve the name of Creator, God and the Poet." Drawing to a conclusion "Q" remarks that to those who follow the argument of this little book, "the theory of poetic 'inspiration' will be intelligible enough. It earned a living in its day, and, if revived in ours, might happily supersede much modern chatter about art and technique. The philosophers did poetry no great harm by being angry with it as an 'inspired' thing: for that, in a measure, it happens to be. They did it far more harm when they took it seriously and made it out to be a form of *teaching*. For by the nature of things there happens to be something of the pedant in every philosopher, and the incurable propensity of the pedant is to remove everything—but literature especially—out of the category to which it belongs and consider it in another with which it has but a remote concern. (Thus, a man will talk of Chaucer as though his inflexions were the most important thing about him.) Now to acclaim Homer as a great *teacher*, and to use him in the schools, was right enough so long as the Athenians remembered (and is right enough for us, so long as we remember) *how* he teaches us, or rather *educates*. What we have described the Poet as doing for men—drawing forth the inner harmonies of the soul and attuning them to the Universal—is *educative* in the truest sense as in the highest degree. So long as we remember this, the old dispute, whether the aim of Poetry be to teach or to delight, is seen to be futile: for she does both, and she does the one by means of the other. On the other hand, you cannot leave a delicate instrument such as Poetry lying within reach of the professional teacher; he will certainly, at any risk of marring or mutilating, seize on it and use it as a hammer to knock things into heads; if rebuked for this, plaintively remonstrating, 'But I thought you told me it was useful to teach with!'"

"Q.'s" intention has evidently been the very right one of revealing the poet as a helper of man's most insistent spiritual need and, therefore, as a member most honourable in any commonwealth: since, as Ben Jonson says: "Every beggarly corporation

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affords the State a mayor or two bailiffs yearly; but 'solus rex, aut poeta, non quotannis nascitur'"—these two only, a King and a Poet, are not born every year. "When a poet can seize upon a Universal truth and lay it bare; when, apprehending *passion* in this instance, he can show it naked, the master of gods and men, levelling queens with milkmaids—'totus est in armisidem quando nudus est Amor'; when he can reclothe it in the sensuous body of Cleopatra, 'Royal Egypt,' and, rending the robe over that bosom, reveal the Idea again in a wound so vividly that almost we see the nature of woman spirting, like blood, against the heaven it defies; then we who have followed the Poet's ascending claims arrive at his last and highest, yet at one which has lain implicit all along in his title. He is a Poet—a 'Maker.' By that name, 'Maker,' he used to be known in English, and he deserves no lesser one." |

"THE PERSONAL EQUATION IN MODERN POETRY."

To the Editor of The Poetry Review.

Sir,—Will you allow me to add a word or so more with regard to the subject of "The Personal Equation in Poetry" *à propos* of the friendly criticisms passed upon my little paper by Mr James A. Mackereth and Miss Rose E. Faulkner?

Mr Mackereth says that he is "largely in agreement with my opinion" that greatness has little to do with a definitely expressed moral purpose" and then goes on to say, "But I hold that the greatest and noblest work is the product of a great and noble soul." With the latter view I am entirely in accord, yet why the "but"? Surely all that a definitely expressed moral purpose can point to in a poem is the writer's *wish* to appear on the side of the angels. It is no guarantee that he *has* a great and noble soul, merely that for reasons of his own (they may or may not be worthy ones) he is anxious to emphasize the moral point of view. Had Mr Pecksniff written verse, he would assuredly have underlined the moral purpose. I am far from suggesting that all moralists in verse are Pecksniffs; but I do suggest that they are not necessarily "great and noble souls"; whereas the great and noble soul necessarily expresses in every line he writes the moral beauty of his character; he exhales nobility as a flower exhales fragrance by the very law of his being. For this reason I hold that Wordsworth's real nobility is best expressed when he is not consciously striving to find an ethical basis for his inspiration, for in so doing he unwittingly contracts the largeness of his inspiration or (to adopt Mr Mackereth's happy phrase) his "deeper criticism of life and of truth."

As regards the verse, "One impulse from a vernal wood," I did not suggest that Wordsworth said "A vernal wood may teach you more of man," etc. What I did say was that the *Beauty* of a Spring (which is another way of saying "one impulse," etc.) cannot teach more . . . since it has nothing to do with *moral questions*.

I am quite at one with Mr Mackereth in what he says in his exegesis of Wordsworth's lines; Wordsworth, of course, felt that the benison of beauty may be more inspiring than the formal philosophies. And he was perfectly right. But—is this thought happily and inevitably expressed in his Muse? Surely we value the vernal impulse not because it *teaches* more of man . . . and of moral evil and of good, but because it puts one in

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the right attitude for appreciating the wisdom of the great thinker. Teaching implies an intellectual process, whereas the impulse born of beauty is flashed upon our imagination in a way that we cannot analyze or syllogistically explain. Why use the parlance of the pedagogue to announce a mystic intuition?

Miss Faulkner asks, " Do not temperament and personality need the restraint of character in an artist as much as in a banker? " Certainly. But " who deniges of it? " I certainly did not. What I objected to was character *didactically* expressed.

" ' If didactic art is the basest form of art,' " she says, " why have we banded ourselves to make poetry a power in our schools? " Why, because, as Miss Faulkner would agree, there is in great poetry an uplifting inspiration and a healing balm, that is of the greatest service to man. But wherefore should Miss Faulkner assume that its greatness lies in its didacticism? Who more definitely didactic as a poet than Tupper? Who less definitely didactic than Keats? Is Tupper then more of a power than Keats? Or, is the " How doth the little busy bee " of Dr Watts more dynamic than Shelley's " Ode to the West Wind "? It is quite true, as I suggested in my article, that our great poets are at times explicitly didactic. But is it for this explicit didacticism we value them? Surely not. " The Ancient Mariner " is not a great poem, is not a poem of subtle spiritual beauty because in a stanza the poet declares " He prayeth best who loveth best," for that line merely sums up in a simple statement what the entire poem atmospherically and implicitly suggests. The poem would be just as fine a force for good if the summing up, admirably as it is done, were omitted. Let Miss Faulkner recall what Coleridge has to say on this matter. " Is " (she asks) " Wordsworth's ' Ode to Duty ' base or a ' Grammarian's Funeral ' or ' Abt Vogler,' or ' Rabbi Ben Ezra,' or ' Saul '? "—meaning, I assume, base art (though she seems rather to confuse base art with moral turpitude). May I express it somewhat differently? May I ask her whether she adjudges these poems as powers because of their moral purpose or because of the *Art* by which the moral purpose is expressed? No one has suffered more than Browning by having what is called his " message " wholly divorced from his supreme power as a dramatic artist.

Ultimately, it matters little what a writer teaches, it is what he *is* that counts, for what he is must sooner or later colour and envisage his entire work.

" Abt Vogler " is a fine poem, not *because* but rather *in spite of* its didactic note, and " Meeting at Night " and " Parting at Morning " (which have no trace of didacticism) are finer still.

Yours faithfully,

24 Dryburgh Road,
Putney, S.W.

ARTHUR COMPTON-RICKETT.

UNPUBLISHED POEMS OF KEATS.

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—As a student of the poetry of Keats and as I had the honour of being adjudged a premium for an article on it, published in this REVIEW, a few conclusions on the late discovery may perhaps be of interest to your readers. Whether the exhumation of these supposed and evidently juvenile products can serve any useful purpose, or add in the most minute degree to his everlasting fame is not a question for discussion. Personally,

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however, I have grave doubts as to whether the verses quoted by "The Thunderer" bear any recognizable stamp of this poet's genius; as it seems to me that by some accident or other, they are not what they claim to be, and my surmise is founded on the following facts:

The Times informs us that "they occur in an album of copies from Keats's poems, by Richard Woodhouse," who was an admirable friend and transcriber of his MSS. Such being the case, would not the poet have signed his name to verses *not included in his published works?* Had this been the case, the writer of the article in *The Times* would have mentioned the fact. In those days, as anyone with any literary pretensions wrote album verses, Keats, who must have possessed a due sense of his own surpassing powers and who always felt the quickening stir of his own genius, surely would never have allowed himself to be included amongst the neophyte rhymers of his day, and if so, he would certainly have signed the poems.

The scraps of verse quoted in the article are thin and commonplace, and may have been indited by any scribbler.

The lyric which has been so widely commented on has not, to my mind, the hall-mark of the poet's genius. The first three verses are certainly pretty, fluent, and musical.

"—a voice, chaster than a Nun's," is apt; "Cold as a sunrise in September" is not a true simile. Sunsets are cold in December, and not in September, when they are still flushed with the tints of the lingering summer. Again, "Lips teaching no blisses, and never pouting for kisses," have a true simpering quality unworthy of the author of "The Eve of St Agnes."

The last two verses, however, which ought gradually to rise to the very acme of the subject are enfeebled and disfigured with the banal and commonplace expressions of *squeeze*, fit for a grinning comedian in a third-class music hall! Thus, if my other doubts as to the genuineness of the poem are not sufficiently convincing, this one is an almost absolute proof of its origin, other than that of Keats. The readers of this are also aware that our grand master of verse hardly ever selected an inappropriate word.

He had, amongst others, *one* of the characteristics of genius, i.e., the faculty of taking infinite pains.

The *mot juste* always came natural to him; the best, the most exact, and beautiful expression of thought was his heritage. It is a heresy then to imagine for a moment that he could have dropped a vulgar word in the perfection of a love lyric. Therefore, it is almost conclusive that this poem was not the offspring of his genius.

. . . .

Whilst on the subject, I must call attention to an error of the cultured Englishman, who writes for *The Daily Mail*, in his assertion that "Lord Byron had no good word to throw at Johnny Keats." In a MS. note of this great poet, I read the following: "His fragment of 'Hyperion' seems actually inspired by the Titano, and is as sublime as Æschylus. He is a loss to our literature." This hardly accords with the remark of *The Daily Mail's* brilliant essayist.

Yours, etc.,
ISIDORE G. ASCHER.

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"THE FINEST SPECIMEN OF HEXAMETERS."

To the Editor of The Poetry Review.

Sir,—In reading Hester Brayne's very admirable article in this month's Poetry Review I was struck by the fact that, in dealing with the failure of Southey, Coleridge and others to reproduce the hexameter in English, she omitted mention of another poet who, though less known, is here at least deserving of far higher praise. I refer to Charles Kingsley. Of his "Andromeda" I have no hesitation in affirming that it is the finest specimen of hexameters in the English language. There can be little doubt that the English language is not generally nor naturally adapted to this form of metre—in truth "the noblest ever moulded"; the play of accent alone is not a sufficient substitute for quantity, yet it is not too much to say that in the "Andromeda" we have the one solitary exception that, by paradox, proves the rule. Beside it, Longfellow's experiments in this direction appear (saving our reverence for that poet) like so much metrical prose. Between the power and facility of the "Andromeda" and the slow, laboured, ponderous diction of the "Evangeline," with its rather "treacly sentiment," there is a gulf that nothing can bridge. Any dozen consecutive lines of the former will challenge comparison with the finest passages that can be quoted from the latter, or, indeed, I venture to say, from any other English hexametrist. Yet Kingsley was very diffident in the attempt, and very modest in the execution, of this achievement. "I never had dreamed," he says, "of daring to write hexameters." Moulded on the Homeric model this poem has not only all the spontaneous rush and sonorous roll of the original, but accurately imitates it in scansion, even to an occasional and effective spondiac ending in the fifth foot. It was written by the ear—"as I firmly believe Homer wrote his, and I should make a word scan two different ways, as he does, whenever I chose, minding always to make accent and metre coincide." [In his opinion also much ordinary English conversation is unconsciously hexametrical, and he gives an illustration of this in an amusing verbatim account of an afternoon's fishing with his "Gardener George."] The poem flows like a torrent; there is no monotony here; indeed, I am sure that Hester Brayne would be relieved and refreshed by its contrast with the "drumming monotony hideously unpleasant" of other versifiers from Clough to Mr Bridges. What could match Kingsley's word-picture of the storm among the columned rocks of the basalt; or the coming of the mystical sea-maids; or the famous simile of the "osprey" where the minute observation of the naturalist is clothed in the glowing language of the poet? I think the finest single line in the poem occurs in the description of Perseus, where his lips unclosing

"Poured from their pearl-strung portal the musical wave of his wonder."

Lastly, perhaps, not the least notable feature in Kingsley's management of the hexameter is the use he makes of the caesura, suiting it to his sense often with telling effect. It is a pity the "Andromeda" is not more widely read.

George Seaver.

Leicester.

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" A NEW FEATURE "

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW

SIR,—Your interesting front article on " A New Feature and Some Considerations " opens up some questions of importance to readers and writers of poetry. Perhaps the most vexed subject that touches the author is that of reviews and reviewers, and as the author of but two books I have had some strange experiences. It is not of reviewing, however, that I wish to write, but rather of the considerations which the proposal of a new feature in THE POETRY REVIEW opens up.

As an aggrieved poet, I have long held the opinion that the reviewer in his present state is an entirely useless person. His sole function to-day would appear to be that of the iconoclast of the little gods and the idolator of the mighty ones. As very pertinently commented on in another page of the REVIEW, we live in the age of little despairing coteries of notoriety hunters, whose sole mission in life appears to be that of insulting the quieter, more genuine, laborious devotees of an art exacting the greatest devotion.

It would seem that to be a poet, in the eyes of these noisy propagators of theories, one should be anything but respectable and Victorian. Verse must neither scan nor rhyme; it should choose a theme as low and vulgar as possible, and explain it in language totally lacking in beauty. Incident, plot or point are, to-day, entirely unnecessary —it is the duty of the modern printer to make bad prose look like new poetry. Of course, the new craze will soon die out; these young men will weary of mutual admiration, and finally descend to writing uninspired criticism for academic journals. We need not trouble ourselves concerning them, but rather we should turn our attention to the serious young men of whom a poet like Alfred Noyes is the worthy figurehead. And it is of these serious young poets that I wish to speak. They join no coterie, they live outside literary circles and movements, and do not gain admittance into the Reviews of the day because they will not descend to writing the rubbish that passes for poetry in their pages; they are men, indeed, who are working silently and unnoticed, their industry only marked by the issue of modest volumes that receive little or no notice.

I could name a dozen such poets, but I will not, because they would not thank me; but your proposal for the printing of representative poetry in this REVIEW touches them vitally.

It is in procuring notice and encouragement for these writers that the REVIEW can render a great service to the cause of English poetry; but the attempt is likely to be attended with grave danger. *What will be the criterion of selection?* Individual taste was ever faulty and capricious. Knowing this, I gave up reviewing poetry, because I believe more harm than good is done by reviews, and I suggest that the " reviews " of the future should be selections of the *best* verse, and not of the worst, as is now the case, from the books under notice, accompanied by no comments, and by that test the poet will rise or fall alone.

I am delighted to notice that your new proposal has something of this nature in it, and I sincerely hope that the poet will be allowed to make his own selection * and then be prepared to accept the verdict.

* [This plan was adopted in the recently published anthology of contemporary poetry, *A Cluster of Grapes*.—ED.]

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The verdict, of course, will affect that measure of all literary success or failure—the sales, and on this point, *à propos* your moan over the shyness of borrowers at public libraries, I would like to mention that recent figures confute your melancholy conclusions since the annual reports that have come under my notice inform me that poetry stands next in number of issues to fiction, and in connexion with the latter I am sorry to state that a degenerate newspaper of my own city finds matter for tears in the decline of the number of fiction borrowers and the increase of serious readers! I wonder whether that leader writer is a broken-down novelist.

Regarding the sales of poetry books, I think the modern poet has little to complain of. Francis Thompson in our own time sold twenty copies of his second book, and now it is a very poor modern minor poet who cannot reckon upon a twelve month's sale of 300 copies—at least the experience of my poet friends and myself leads me to this conclusion.

It is with all hope that I wish the new departure of The Poetry Review all success—it may be the beginning of a new, saner, and sounder principle of criticism. The reviewer has stood before the author and his audience too long—let the poet and the public speak and choose for themselves, for their capricious taste, individual bias and favouritism will be no more.

I am, Sir, etc.,

Cecil Roberts.

July, 1914.

A DEFENCE OF INTROSPECTION

To the Editor of The Poetry Review

Sir,—I venture to resent the allusion of the author of "The Homer of the Isle of Man" to "that introspectiveness which is characteristic of most young poets," and in defence subscribe the following lines—alas, too inexperienced, I fear, as is the youth of the author.

Yours sincerely,

Henry W. G. Bidgood.

East London College.

"Frail is his brush, who cannot see
  With artist eye to left and right
Beauteous shapes, ideally,
  And depths of shade and glorious light;

Who, in the dull grey city smoke
  Is blinded by the faery gloom;
To whom no spirit ever spoke
  From dim deep corners of a room;

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Nor feels the charm of city nights,
The hum beneath an ebon sky,
The red and green of railway lights
And glow of engines roaring by.

No artist he, who needs must look
For beauty into distant land.
E'en as his soul should be his book
So, inspiration is at hand!

When gazes from the infant's eyes
Bewildered sense of growing things
It turns, with wondering surprise
On twinkling stones and jingling rings.

The folded curtains of the cot:
The sun that dances on the wall:
A golden coin: a flower pot:
His vision in his world and all.

And so—impulsive youth's desire
To share with all its ecstacy
Takes heat from out the nearest fire,
And burns—for all the world to see!

Into his soul the poet looks,
Finds there a universe alone
Such as should fill a thousand books
And leave the greater part unknown.

Deter him not!—when from his flower
He sucketh honey like a bee;
But honour to the glorious power
That shall unveil his soul to thee!

H. W. G. B.

MR ALFRED WILLIAMS ON CRABBE AND POETRY

Mr Alfred Williams, in a brief but excellent address at the Crabbe Centenary Celebrations at Trowbridge, said: First of all I should like to say how glad I am to see our poets celebrated, to hear their praises openly sung, and to have their works brought to the notice of all the people, to whom they most certainly belong, though only a few appear to recognize this and make bold to claim any sort of relationship with them. Of course, it is said—and you have all heard it over and over again—that poetry is out of date now. There is no doubt but that the majority of people believe this to be

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really true. They are allowed to think it at school in the first place. When they leave there and go to work they are induced to credit it in a far greater degree. "There is no time for poetry here," they are told. All that is required of them is to show themselves smart and active, alert and alive to everything that tends to increase the prosperity of the business, and promote material welfare, and never mind about such things as higher culture. And as for poetry—who on earth wants to be bothered with that? What, that silly stuff! I can't think how you can read it. There's no sense in it. It would soon drive me to sleep. I can't understand it at all. There is a lot of truth in that last remark which accounts for those preceding it, and explains the attitude of many people towards poetry. They don't understand it. Whose fault is that?

In the first place, I blame the schools, then the publishers, and, to some extent, the newspaper Press—the schools for not teaching it more popularly, the publishers for keeping it in the background, and the Press for not giving greater prominence—not to mere contemporary verse, I don't mean that—but to the great proven poetry of all time, that was, and is, and will be as long as civilization shall last. There are many thousands of people in England who would read the world's best poetry if it were brought to their notice. But they have not had the opportunity. They have never heard the names of many of the greater poets; no, not even of their own country, which fact I never think of but with pain and shame. Shakespeare they have heard of, Milton, Chaucer, Burns, and one or two others, but they are ignorant of the rest. And how many people are there in Wiltshire, outside Trowbridge and Salisbury, Wilton and Bemerton, that know nothing of Crabbe and Herbert, Sir Philip Sidney and Massinger, who ranked amongst the great dramatists of the Elizabethan age?

It is false to say that good poetry is out of date, or that it ever will be so. It is equally false to say that it is not useful, for we owe seven-tenths of our civilization to it, in one way or another. He who has read the poets, from Homer downwards, can easily testify to this, and he is able to dispense with the great bulk of prose literature. For there is life, there is history, there is knowledge, there are the true beginnings of things, the foundations upon which rest most of the chief glories of our own times. Only a little while ago I read in the newspaper that a famous French ironmaster was complaining of the great sterility of imagination and lack of originality among the members of his scientific staff, and he unhesitatingly put it down to the fact that they had not had a classical education, and did not know the poets.

The truth is, we cannot do without poetry. Christ said "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" And what would it profit men now if they should gain the whole universe, at the expense of the little sacred flame, the sweet perfume mysteriously within them? Everything material is perishable. The most astounding scientific feat may be equalled or surpassed within a few days or weeks of its accomplishment, but the spirit and works of the poet are unapproachable and immortal: there is no eclipsing or dimming the glory of his achievement.

I expect you are beginning to think that this is a long way from the subject of Crabbe. In reality, it is very closely connected with it. I aimed to say, briefly, why, in my view, the poets are not read and why they ought to be read. And here some defence of Crabbe becomes necessary. The chief reason why he is not more generally read is not that he is deficient in poetry and good qualities, but because he is supposed to have erred in the

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matter of style. People don't like the couplet. They are weary of it. What did for the age of Dryden, Pope and Cowper does not please now. With Shelley, Keats and Wordsworth a new kind of poetry arose, something more burning and intense. The old forms were cast aside, and were thenceforth only to be adopted by those we are pleased to name the " small fry." But nobody will ever make me believe that the couplet, in the hands of Dryden, Pope, and one or two others, is not greater and more magnificent as literature than is most of the poetry of the nineteenth century. And you can understand it, which cannot always be said of the other. It is great and it is simple.

Nearly all great poetry is simple. There is poetry, we know, that is great and not always simple. Such is that of Æschylus, of Pindar, of Horace and of Shelley. But there are greater than those. There are Homer, Virgil, Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, and, I might say, Victor Hugo, and their work is nearly always simple; and certainly it is greatest where it is most simple. The same people who find fault with the couplet would assuredly have condemned the hexameter, to which the couplet may be somewhat likened. They would also damn the Alcaic, which, in my opinion, is one of the most vigorous metres in all poetry.

But I am old-fashioned, I admit that. It is not that I care for new things less, but that I love old things more. At any rate, the old-fashioned things remain, especially the poets. And so will Crabbe remain, though he did choose the couplet, and write simply and severely, and chiefly of commonplace things and people. Certainly, if he had put more power, more feeling, more intensity into his verses, he would have done better, and he would have been more widely read than he is to-day. He rather missed his opportunity; but we must remember who and what he was, and the position he occupied. If, with the vast knowledge of life at his command, he had chosen to whet the sword, what havoc he might have made! But though he had plenty of courage, he had not the temper of the fighter. He could not have written the " Masque of Anarchy," or " The Ode to Freedom," though he must have been aware of the great amount of injustice abroad in the land in his day. Of hope in humanity, and in a happier future for the race here on earth, he had but little, and he never thought of trying to improve the lot of those with whom he was in such close sympathy by a system of reforms from without, by anything akin to a social revolution. That was not within his province, and he knew it. So he left it for others. Instead, he chose to paint, gently and firmly, but always faithfully, life and manners, and scenery, too, as he saw them, and handed it on to us, not heightened and coloured with the splendid glow of poetic imagination, but in unadorned simplicity and verity. That is the great strength of Crabbe. That is why he continues to maintain an honourable place among English poets. That is why he deserves to be read and studied, especially at the present time, when we want to know all we can about the lives of the poor and their condition in the past.

THE FIRST PRODUCTION OF THE P.D.C.

As is now generally known, the Poetic Drama Centre of the Poetry Society will initiate its activities by the production in the autumn at the Court Theatre of the " Rhesus " of Euripides, recently translated into English verse by Prof. Gilbert Murray. To provide a guarantee fund, seats are now being booked at reduced prices, and members

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may obtain up to four stalls at the subscription price of 7s. 6d. each instead of 10s.; dress circle, 5s. instead of 7s. 6d. and upper circle for 3s. instead of 5s. For the "Rhesus" production, non-members may obtain tickets at this advance rate on becoming temporary members of the P.D.C., for the nominal subscription of 2s. 6d. It is intended that the "Rhesus" performances shall inaugurate the complete P.D.C. scheme, which will include the production of new and other poetic dramas, readings and social meetings. A dramatic reading of the "Rhesus" was given on July 17 at 39 Wimpole Street, by kind permission of Mrs Waggett, who also provided tea for the large audience. The reading was arranged by Mr Acton Bond and was very effectively and impressively done, the entire proceedings being an excellent augury of the success of the enterprise.

THE JULY EXAMINATIONS

An examination of teachers and students in the "Art of Speaking Verse" and the science and practice of Eurhythmics as applied to reading and speaking, was conducted by Dr Hulbert on behalf of the Poetry Society at the University of London on July 4. Subsequently Dr Hulbert made the following awards:

Medal: Senior Pupils.—Dulcie Clowes.

Certificates: Pupils.—Senior: D. Ford, Louise Woodbert; Junior: Margaret Bolton, Joan Fairbairns.

Adult amateurs.—Miss Alice Wingrove, Miss E. Gander, Miss Hannah Sills, Miss Isabel Jenkins, Miss Gladys Smith.

Professional Teachers.—Pass in Sections II and III.—Miss A. Fischer.

Dr Hulbert, in the course of an address, said all those who had submitted themselves for examination had very distinct voices and succeeded in a very great extent in conveying the meaning by the voice. But when gesture was used, he was struck by its lack of meaning. Only occasionally did the gesture coincide with the voice and help in conveying the meaning of the words. For a listener it was very difficult to follow the meaning of something heard for the first time, and if they used inappropriate gesture which did not harmonize with what was going on in the mind they interfered with the meaning and failed to convey a clear appreciation of what was being spoken or read. But a distinct voice and correct pronunciation were not sufficient. What was being said must be heard in a way that would prevent misunderstanding. The voice must be used so as to portray the real feelings and ideas in the mind of the speaker. And this could only be achieved by the control of the whole body, by a system of breathing that did not interfere with the positions of the vital organs, by a poise that was neither rigid nor slack. Physical culture, as at present practised, tended to destroy the power of the voice. It produced a stiffness of the trunk and an unnatural attitude, which were as bad for voice as for health. Dr Hulbert proceeded to say that they must not simply look at a poem before reading or reciting it, but must study it and try to get at the poet's meaning—or what they thought he meant. There was no superficial meaning in poetry; what seemed so simple was full of beauty and significance, if it was poetry at all, and, unless the reader had fathomed this, the result was a mere jingle of sounds which soon tired the hearer. His greatest joy was when some one read or spoke something

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he did not know, and made him understand it, and conveyed to him the full meaning and significance of the work. Actors and actresses got their effect from the voice; only third and fourth rate ones relied on what they described as feeling to get them through. The emotions like the voice must be guided by the intellect, and this co-ordination of the mental and physical was of the greatest influence on personal development.

HAMPSTEAD

The next meeting of the Hampstead Centre will be held on Tuesday, October 6. The programme for the autumn session will be announced later. Information respecting the work of this centre can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Mrs L. Tilly, 193 Camden Road, N.W.

KENSINGTON

The last meeting of the session took place on Saturday, June 27, at 86 West Cromwell Road. Mr A. P. Graves gave a lecture on the Poetry of Ireland, in the course of which he spoke of the very early origin and rapid development of the poetic art in that country and quoted many examples beautifully rendered in English of ancient Irish poems. At the close of this deeply interesting lecture, Mr Graves, in response to questions, gave a short critical survey of the work of several Irish poets of to-day.

The first meeting of the autumn session will take place on Monday, October 12.

PUTNEY

On June 22 a meeting was held at 14 Carlton Road, the subject being "Satire." Mrs Innes gave an address in place of Mr Gordon Fulford, who was unable to be present. A short account of Mrs Innes's clever and interesting paper is given below. Members read satires from Byron, Pope, Thackeray, Dryden, etc. The meetings will commence again in October. E. H. Ramsden Price, Hon. Secretary.

SATIRE IN POETRY

Mrs Innes, in her address on "Satire" at the Putney meeting, sketched the origin and growth of poetical satire from the period of its alleged founder, Lucilius, down to Alfred Austin, the late Laureate. She argued, however, that satire in prose probably existed before the time of Lucilius. A period of nearly 3,000 years, from the creation of Adam to the birth of Lucilius, had to be considered, and was it probable that husbands and wives could have existed all that time without discovering the usefulness of prose satire as a conversational weapon? Assuming the account in the Talmud of Adam's first wife, Lilith, having fled from him, to be correct, Mrs Innes's contention was that Lilith would not have taken so extreme a step without letting fly at least one Parthian shot of satire at her ex-lord-and-master.

The two derivations of the word satire were then pointed out, to wit, firstly, the correct one from *satura* which meant "a dish filled with a medley of ingredients"—such a dish, for instance, as the French "potpourri," or the Spanish "olla podrida."

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The oldest Roman satires were called by this name because they also were, figuratively, "dishes filled with a medley of ingredients," the chief ones being sharp banter, rude jocularity and savage onslaughts on the vices or follies of the time. They contained also a medley of scenic or dramatic improvizations, expressed in varying metres. The second, or incorrect derivation of satire was from the Satyrs, the woodland demons, half human, half goat, of the Greek mythology; and this mistake had, for a long time, it appears, a baleful influence on the poetical satirists, who seem to have considered it their duty to conform to the style, or in other words, lower themselves to the level, of these imaginery demons. The writings of Horace, however, had nothing of the Satyr about them, but have been compared to a glass in which we behold mirrored the tastes and habits of the Augustan age. His satire is, on the whole, humorous and playful, Not so that of Juvenal, who made a most violent, but well-deserved, attack on the vices of Rome.

During the Middle Ages there were many satirical writers in Europe. In all their poems, the priests were the special objects of attack. The vices, greed, folly and ignorance of the clergy were dilated on with great gusto. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, however, the tone of the satirists improved very much, when clergy were no longer assailed, but society, political opponents, or literary rivals, were made the butt of the satirists' arrows. This sometimes led to duals, and eventually softened the style of the poems. Even the bitterness shown by Byron in his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" and in other poems, was in a comparatively short time felt to be foolish and undignified, and Horace and James Smith, who satirized all the living poets of their day in the "Rejected Addresses," were so gentle in their wit that the victims enjoyed the joke as much as anybody. Thackeray's satire also was both brilliant and harmless, like sheet lightning. Mrs Innes concluded by reading an extract from Byron and another from Thackeray, showing the violence and vindictiveness of the former, and the calm, judicial method of the other.

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THE B.E.S.S. exists for the purpose of making Shakespeare a vital force of the English-speaking race. Public Dramatic Readings are given in London by well-known actors. Throughout the country and in the colonies these Readings are given by the local members of each Branch, but unlike the usual method adopted by Societies previously to 1901, one of the principal rules of the B.E.S.S. is that all Branches should admit the Press free and the Public at a small charge to at least one meeting a year. Essay and Elocution Competitions, open to members in all parts of the world, are held annually. To prepare members for public Dramatic Readings and Costume Recitals, Reading Circles have been instituted in connexion with all the centres. Membership of one centre implies membership of the Society throughout the Empire. The Annual General Performances are held in the early autumn and the casts are representative of the whole Society. The Annual Subscription for Members is 5s., for Privileged Members 10s., the entrance fee in both cases being 5s. Privileged Members are entitled to front seats at all the Society's Meetings.

THE ANNUAL ELOCUTION COMPETITION

London.—(Assistant General Secretary, Mr Hesketh Pearson, 4 Avenue House, Henry Street, N.W.)—On Friday afternoon, July 3, at the Haymarket Theatre (kindly lent by Mr Frederick Harrison), the annual elocution competition (final examination) was held, with Lady Tree as judge. Competitors from the following branches took part: Chelsea, Derby, Ealing, Glasgow, Leamington, Newcastle-on-Tyne, New Cross, Norwood, Plymouth and Stratford-on-Avon. There was a record entry this year, and the standard was unusually high. The London preliminary examination took place a week before this meeting, in the large hall at the Passmore Edwards Settlement, when the judges were Miss Edith Craig, Mr Frank Cellier and Mr Franklin Dyall. At the final examination, the following awards were made:

Amateur ladies: Miss Beatrice Fulton (first), Miss Gwendolyn Cashman, and Miss Gladys Mawer (second), Miss Mabel Gulich, Miss Amy Guttwoch, Miss Gladys Hall, Miss Eileen Hunt, Miss Graeme Kennedy (highly commended), Miss Dorothy Vernon, Mrs Harold Wilkes (commended).

Amateur ladies (between ages of fifteen and nineteen): Miss Vica Hayne (first), Miss Avis Hodgson (second), Miss Marjorie Lunn (highly commended).

Amateur gentlemen: Mr Harold Wilkes (first), Mr Charles Thompson (second), Mr L. Josephs, Mr Bernard Ordish (commended).

Juniors: Miss W. Tingay (first), Miss Rita Harvey (second), Miss Lily Mountford, Miss Flora Robson (highly commended), Miss Flora Suss (commended).

Professional ladies: Miss Annie Jackson (first), Miss Margaret Everritt (second), Miss Sybil Attwell (highly commended), Miss Elsa Dinelli, Miss Marjorie Home (commended).

Professional gentlemen: Mr George Skillan (first), Mr J. A. Stelling (highly commended), Mr Alfred McMahon, Mr Douglas Stevens (commended).

Mr Acton Bond, in proposing a vote of thanks to Lady Tree, said that none of her distinguished predecessors had more patiently considered the different candidates'

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work, and the awards showed justice and discrimination on the part of the judge. Lady Tree, who was received with great enthusiasm, said, in reply, that not only was the standard of work very high, but the selections covered a very wide field, some being unknown to herself. It had been a most interesting competition, and she had spent one of the most inspiriting afternoons of her life. In response to a special call, started by Lady Tree, Mr Acton Bond said, as Director of the Society, the afternoon's work had given him a great deal of pleasure, for at last a number of the competitors had spoken Shakespeare's lines as verse and not as prose; the rhythmic melody of the verse being given with a full appreciation of its beauty. What better proof, if proof were needed, than that, with proper training and such opportunities as the B.E.S.S. afforded, verse could be spoken as verse and still give the full meaning of the lines, without destroying its wonderful rhythm by rendering it in a prosaic, everyday manner? Votes of thanks to the preliminary judges for the arduous work they had had in dealing with so many competitors, and to Mr Frederick Harrison for kindly lending the Haymarket Theatre, were also proposed by Mr Acton Bond and carried with acclamation. At the close of the meeting, Lady Tree intimated the pleasure it would give her to become a Patron of the Society.

Ealing.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss M. L. Thomson, 51 Eaton Rise).—On Saturday, June 27, the branch gave two pastoral performances of "Twelfth Night." The following account appeared in *The Middlesex County Times*, of July 4: The production of one of the comedies of Shakespeare in pastoral form is one which has much to commend it, especially when there is available such a natural setting for the plays as that afforded by the grounds of the Ealing Vicarage, placed at the disposal of the branch by its President, the Rev. Dr Oliver. Perfect weather conditions, another essential to the success of such undertakings, prevailed when, under the capable direction of Mrs Cumberlege, two very enjoyable performances of "Twelfth Night" were given. Those who have followed the fortunes and progress of the branch will remember its former productions of "As You Like It" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream," the success of which set a standard of excellence by no means easy to maintain from year to year; and the acting members of the branch must be congratulated on having so well maintained the high standard on the present occasion. There was a large and appreciative audience at each of the two performances, among those present in the afternoon being Sir James and Lady Fraser, Dr Black, of the great Edinburgh publishing house, and Mr Acton Bond, the hon. director of the society, who, before he left, congratulated Dr Oliver and the hon. secretary on the success of the performance.

The stage managers, Miss M. Linklater Thomson (hon. secretary of the branch) and Miss Phyllis Megginson, deserve special commendation for the manner in which they held their forces in hand, the promptitude of the entrances, and the briskness and "snap" of the performance.

Avoiding the bizarre effects of certain recent and much-talked-of Shakespearian productions, the players appeared in simple but effective Elizabethan dress. Appropriate music had been selected and arranged by Mr J. Ben Johnson, the following ladies forming the small hidden orchestra: Mrs Summerhayes, Miss B. Nalder, Miss Effie Taylor, Miss Stanier, and Mrs J. Ben Johnson.

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An outstanding success was the Viola of Miss Annie Jackson, a young actress of great personal charm, with just the right temperament for the realization of this most lovable of all Shakespeare's disguised heroines. She was by turns boyish and womanly, sparkling and serious, and in the love scenes with the Duke spoke the familiar lines with an evident appreciation of their poetry and passion. Another study of quite professional soundness and consistency was the Sir Toby Belch of Mr J. Ben Johnson. Admirably made up, he was the drunken old roisterer to the life. With him must be associated Mr R. O'Sullivan, who cleverly emphasized the bleating fatuity of Sir Andrew Aguecheek; and Miss Marjorie Wood, who acted with delightful sprightliness and a genuine sense of comedy as the shrewd-witted Maria. Together with Mr Ellis Bloor (a very acceptable Fabian), this clever trio gave an excellent account of themselves in the episode of the fooling of Malvolio, whose formality and self-complacency were neatly hit off by Mr Bernard Ordish. The part of the Lady Olivia had been studied by two members of the branch, viz., Miss Winifred Lambert, who played it with a pretty air of dignity in the afternoon, and Miss Phyllis Megginson, who was no less successful at the evening performance. We have further to commend the elocution of Mr H. M. Forrest Dodd as the Duke Orsino, of Mr John M. Drake as Antonio, and of the Rev. C. E. Essex as Sebastian. Mr G. P. Fletcher studied the part of Feste, the jester, on pleasantly rational lines, without even that slight suggestion of wandering wits by means of which so many actors have sought to give pathos or eccentricity to an obviously sane and commonsense character. Of the minor studies, we liked best the Sea Captain of Mr J. Stark Brown—a homely but thoroughly convincing bit of acting. Miss Cicely Dicken (Curio), Miss Munroe (Maid), Mr Douglas Francis (Officer), and Mr Harold Crosland (Valentine), completed the cast, and were well in the picture.

An Essay in Criticism

Stratford-on-Avon.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss Carter, Shottery Hall)—Prizes were offered for the best criticism of the two Costume Recitals, which were given on February 21, at the Memorial Lecture Room. Miss Mary M. Lowe was the judge, and the prize was given to the following, which is printed in a somewhat curtailed form for general information and as an example to other Branches of an interesting form of competition: "An entertainment of a scrappy but agreeable nature, consisting of scenes from four of Shakespeare's plays, was given by the local Branch of the B.E.S.S. last Saturday on the curtained stage of the Memorial Lecture Room. . . . The principal speaking parts, Leontes and Paulina, were sustained by Mr Wedd and Miss Dorothy Lowe. They are both parts of more than ordinary difficulty, and their exponents acquitted themselves with credit. Great emotional contrasts are demanded of Leontes, and Mr Wedd did not quite succeed in marking the difference between the remorseful grief-stricken widower and the joyful husband of the restored Hermione. Though bearing herself with dignity and some authority, Miss Lowe's representation of Paulina did not suggest the dominating personality of that remarkable woman. In Shakespeare's gallery strong female characters are by no means rare, but Paulina is a veritable *maîtresse femme;* . . . . Hermione was very well played by Miss Pidcock, both as the motionless statue and the living wife and mother, and Miss Avis Hodgson's Perdita was natural and

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charming. It was very good-natured of Miss E. Melville to sacrifice her appearance in order to play the silent part of Florizel. In the scene from "King John" Miss Avis Hodgson invested the part of Arthur with great intensity of feeling, and completely merged herself in the terror-stricken boy. She was not always quite clearly heard in her most impassioned appeals, but it was an excellent performance. Mr Wedd's Hubert, again a complex part, was very good, and nothing marred one's enjoyment of the scene except, perhaps, the rather garish fire which was employed to heat the iron. It would have been better left to the imagination. The garden scene from "Richard II" followed, in which Mr Randall as the gardener gave us a reminiscence of the lamented George Weir. The lines were spoken with just the right feeling, and the rendering of the part was altogether admirable. Mr Wedd gave good support as the Servant. . . . . The sorely-afflicted Queen was beautifully played by Miss Eleanor Melville; diction, gesture, and appearance were all just right, but one regrets that she had not sufficient confidence in herself to make her exit to Shakespeare's own exquisite words. She was quite strong enough to get off the stage without employing so cheap a device as the improvised ejaculations. The part of the lady was very sympathetically played by Miss Pidcock. One would have been glad to see a little more of this performer; another scene n which a more active part might have been allotted to her would not have unduly lengthened the programme. . . . . A couple of extracts from the "Merchant of Venice" concluded the entertainment most artistically with fare of a lighter character than that hitherto provided. In the first of these the demerits of Portia's suitors were pleasantly discussed by Miss Melville and Miss Dorothy Lowe as Portia and Nerissa respectively. The former should be complimented on her admirably clear enunciation and simplicity of speech. She gave us an unaffected and winning Portia. . . . . Miss D. Lowe played Nerissa nicely, but in rather too sober a key. The other extract from this play was the last of the three casket scenes. If Mr Pemberton's delivery of blank verse had been smoother there would not be much to cavil at in his Bassanio. As a wooer he was ardent and courteous, and in the long speeches we had more of the text than is usually given. Gratiano's cheerful disposition was cleverly indicated by the Protean Mr Wedd, and Mr Mairet played Salerio with good elocution and emphasis. . . . . Incidental music of a pleasant and unobtrusive kind was played on the piano by Mrs Howe, and the waits, which were remarkably short considering that some of the performers appeared differently garbed in each play, were agreeably beguiled with songs from Mrs Flower and Miss Melville.

Annual Essay Competition.—Judge, Lord Howard de Walden. In order to allow time for further consideration, the awards will not be announced until the September issue of The Poetry Review.

Back numbers of The Poetry Review containing special B.E.S.S. reports and articles may be obtained for 7d. each post free from the publisher. A parcel of 20 for propaganda purposes will be sent for 2s. 6d.

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WAR-VERSE

IF the attitude of the British public towards verse generally be accepted; that poetry, at its best, is but an ornament, and not a necessity of life; and further that it is an ornament better discarded by honest men, then certainly at a time of national stress, such as the present, and of public anxiety, the cry of our poets might well be regarded as a special impertinence. But the world at large has not taken, and I think will never take up, this attitude of brutal indifference, but will continue to regard great poetry at any rate as perhaps the highest form of human toil, and as being

> " the prophetic soul
> Of the wide world dreaming on things to come."

But it may be objected, that without dissenting from this exalted view of poetry at its highest, it remains none the less a question whether when men gird themselves to the task of war; when such a vastness of separation and of suffering is threatened in what is termed "real life," the war-lyric and the battle ode are not rather to be resented. Yet Shakespeare, so excelling in all forms of verse, is here not less excellent. Even at this moment he is more widely quoted and his name is more often adjured than that of any of his successors. Once more has one encountered the famous lines:

> " Nought shall make us rue,
> If England to herself shall prove but true."

or:

> " Come the four corners of the world in arms,
> And we shall shock them."

And instinctively we recall the splendid speech of the Chorus in Henry the Fifth, which begins:

> " Now all the youth of England are on fire,
> And silken dalliance in the wardrobe lies;
> Now thrive the armourers, and honour's thought
> Reigns solely in the breast of every man:

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They sell no pasture now, nor buy the horse,
Following the mirror of all Christian kings,
With winged heels as English Mercuries.
For now sits expectation in the air."

and the three later lines:

" O England, model to thy inward greatness,
Like little body with a mighty heart,
What mightst thou do, that honour would thee do."

Say what we will of the needlessness of poetry at a time so rife with resolve and action, there is about these lines—and many others could, of course, be quoted—something that stirs the heart " like the sound of a trumpet." Milton has a caustic reference to war, on the other hand, as will be remembered, in " Paradise Lost ":

" Devil with devil damned
Firm concord holds; men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heavenly grace, and God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy;
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enough besides,
That day and night for his destruction wait."

But Milton in the same poem magnificently describes the effect of martial music on the embattled demons; and might it not be urged that sonorous verse and pealing song might play their part, as undoubtedly the songs of the war-minstrels did in older days. Take this passage:

" Anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Derian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders—such as raised
To height of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle, and, instead of rage,
Deliberate valour breathed; firm and unmoved
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat ":

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Leaving these names behind, it is matter for surprise that Drayton's splendid poem on Agincourt is not more widely popular, and more often in the mouths of men. Not only is there a swing and energy in these verses, which have rarely been matched, a kind of lusty joy in sheer fighting, the very sound of hammering blows, and hissing shafts; but a metre is here—I speak under correction—invented which is exactly suited to the press and jar of battle, and with what a triumphant zest is the song composed. Yet for hundreds who know the "Charge of the Light Brigade," there are not ten who could quote a verse of "The Ballad of Agincourt."

Coming to a later time, no English poet has had so much of the sound and fury of battle in his verse as Byron. Notably "The Siege of Corinth," little read now if at all, abounds in rushing stanzas. We get:

> "Lightly and brightly breaks away
> The morning from her mantle grey,
> And the moon will look on a sultry day.
> Hark to the trump, and the drum,
> And the mournful sound of the barbarous horn,
> And the flap of the banners that flit as they're borne,
> And the neigh of the steed, and the multitudes hum,
> And the clash, and the shout 'They come, they come!'"

But it is not fair to the poem to quote from it, it should be read in its entirety, for its effect is cumulative, and its success is due, as so often in the verse of this poet, not to single elaborated tones, but to a general onrush of sound and colour. The Waterloo verses, so pregnant now with issues, remain unsurpassed in their way in spite of being recited almost out of existence, and the sudden change from the ballroom to the battlefield is matchless in its vivid vigour. "The Burial of Sir John Moore," a poem much in the Byronic vein, and in fact attributed to that writer, has a solemn and pensive beauty, and the rhythm is specially happy. The war poems of Tennyson, though undoubtedly they hit the public time after time, have perhaps something too much of the hysterical about them, certainly the lines in Maud seem to ring a little hollow after this lapse of time. Surely Tennyson's best war-poem is "The Revenge," a ballad of the fleet, with such lines as:

> "And while now the great San Philip hung above her as a cloud
> Whence the thunder-bolt will burst long and loud

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Four ships of war that day
From the Spaniards drew away
And two upon the starboard, and two upon the larboard lay
And the battle thunder broke from them all."

The ending of the poem is specially fine, for all the verse seems to move and fall and rise with the sound of the gathering storm and rising sea.

No one who has ever read it is likely ever to forget the noble passage with the lines:

" When a wind from the lands they had ruined awoke from sleep
And the water began to heave and the weather to moan,
And or ever the evening ended a great gale blew
And the whole sea rose and fell on the shot-shattered navy of Spain
And the little ' Revenge ' went down by the island crag
To be lost evermore in the main."

This passage and, indeed, the whole poem might well be taken as a model for verbal music by our as yet unheard minstrels.

THE EDITOR.

The dislocation of peaceful interests has compelled us to reduce the number of pages this month, but the POETRY REVIEW remains a larger magazine than many of its contemporaries. We trust the REVIEW and the Society will not be further affected, but subscribers and members whose subscriptions are unpaid are urged to pay promptly and without further notice, and the Treasurer appeals for increased subscriptions and donations. Additional funds are needed to meet current expenses and the absence of new subscriptions, as well as to compensate for the probable suspension of several important autumn events and the diversion of certain donations. Members and readers are urged to assist in maintaining the Society and its Journal.

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PRAYER BEFORE WAR

2nd AUGUST 1914.

LORD God, ere yet our drums are rolled,
  Kneeling before Thine awful Throne,
We pray that us-ward as of old
  Thy favouring mercies may be shown—
    We who too often filled with pride
    Have in our hearts Thy power denied
  And trusted to ourselves alone.

Thou hast been gracious unto us,
  And stood as guardian at our gate;
Steadied us on the perilous
  High path of our imperial fate:
    Our strength is Thine, and Thine no less
    Bearing with our unworthiness,
  The end for which Thou mad'st us great.

Oft have we failed Thee—turned aside,
  Well knowing the right, to do the wrong;
Thou hast been tolerant of our pride:
  But hadst Thou borne with us so long
    Had, in our wildest folly, we
    Once quite forgot that but through Thee
  Our feet were firm, our hands were strong?

And now in this our time of need
  On Thee, Lord God, we fain would lean;
We know that Thou hast marked our greed,
  And our soul-treacheries sorrowing seen:
    Forget that we too oft of old
    To ends unblessed by Thee were bold,
  For in this matter our hands are clean.

Wherefore we would—forgive that so
  We dare to speak who are but dust—

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That Thou for us concern mightst show
No further than our cause is just;
Thou know'st how hard for peace we strove;
That without wrath e'en now we move
And do but fight because we must.

Not glory is our end, nor gain,
And though with resolute hearts we go
Nourishing still the high disdain
Our fathers felt for fear and foe:
Thy help we humbly pray for Thou
To whom in armour girt we bow,
Alone to what we march dost know.

The day of trial is come—the day
So long foreseen, so fraught with fate:
And ere the word is given we pray
(Remembering Thee, ah, not too late!)
That Thou wilt hold us, Lord, no less
For our persistent faithlessness,
Still to thy purpose dedicate.

W. G. HOLE.

THE YOUTH OF BEAUTY

A YOUTH came down to the City, from over the Hills of Sleep,
He came like the star of morning that fronts the waking deep:
His cheeks were mantled with roses, his brow like ivory gleamed,
And his eyes were dark and lustrous, the eyes of one who dreamed.

He came to the gate of the City, and went thro' the streets of men,
Singing the Song of Beauty they never will hear again:
He moved in the crowded market where merchants sought for gold,
Where love was purchased with riches, and Honour itself was sold.

O strange was the song of his singing, with passion the strains o'erflowed
Till his face was lit with glory, and his eyes were fires that glowed;
The merchants, forgetting their bargains, went up to the place where he sang,
And women, with children, came running at sound of the notes that rang.

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Like the full, fierce torrents of Springtide, filled with a mountain tone,
Eager for sunlit meadows after the cold, high zone,
Now like the blended music of myriad, birdlike notes
Flooding the stream-girt valleys, from out a thousand throats.

Dreamily, dreamily, sweetly, now high, now low, now soft,
The radiant youth was singing, and as he passed they oft
Turned to the ground their faces, for in their eyes the tears
Gathered and glistened and falling, broke thro' the seal of years.

The merchant heard in the singing the voice that was his when, a boy,
He stood by the knees of his mother in the far-off days of joy:
The children listened with wonder—a strange, sweet story this,
Filled with a sorrowful yearning; whence came this Youth whose bliss

Had stopped the hum of the market, had voiced the grief of years,
And made them think of something—sad to the point of tears?
For a maiden ceased from kissing the lips of the youth she loved,
And the children's eyes grew rounder, and never a listener moved.

" Come with me out to the sunshine, follow me where I lead,
And leave behind in silence the woeful weight of greed;
Men of the City your labour is useless for ye shall go
Borne out on the breath of Winter, nor reap the things ye sow!

" Others shall follow after and reap your gift of tears
With moans and heavy sorrow bearing the weight of years:
Come! for the things immortal are the things ye need not seek—
The dreams endure for ever, the facts of men are weak!

" Who shall destroy the sunset, and who shall silence the lark?
O ye who toil for sorrow, O ye who work in the dark,
Scatter the gold of your minting and gather the gold of the sky,
For the things unmade of men are the things men cannot buy! "

He sang, but some were scornful, the merchant turned away—
A sunset was a sunset, a thing of every day,
For dreams he had no leisure, and they had little to give,
For he must toil for a living—though he never had time to live.

The maiden turned to her lover who drank the magic song,
She raised her lips to kiss him, and proved that love was strong

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To shatter the thought of the morrow with bliss of the present hour,
And they left the dreamer singing and sought a sheltered bower.

The mother called to her children; who knew what evil spell
This song of peace and beauty placed on their ears?—ah, well—
The beauty that never sickens, the rapture that never dies
Is less than the lips of children with laughter and piteous sighs.

" Come with me over the mountains "—he sang to the dwindling throng—
" For men are sad with toiling, and many are worn with wrong,
I go in quest of Beauty, in search of things that are
One with the noonday silence, one with the evening star.

Follow me over the valley, there's death in the city-gloom,
Your backs are bowed with labour, your brows are writ with doom,
O there is Death in your laughter, and Sorrow within your eyes;
Come where the light shall fail not, and silence makes ye wise! "

The youth went on thro' the City and down the echoing street,
His brow bedecked with roses, and sandal-shod his feet;
The maidens gazing after beheld his radiant face
Intense with the passion of Beauty, and lit with holy grace.

On thro' the gate of the City, he went towards the height
That gathered about its summit the battlements of night:
His song passed into the silence from whence it came to men—
The passionate Song of Beauty they never will hear again.

The gold of the earth they garner, the woes of toil are theirs,
Famine, Oppression and Sorrow come with the wearying years,
Dreams they are fain to purchase, for dreams and rest they weep—
But the Youth of Beauty returns not from over the Hills of Sleep.

CECIL ROBERTS.

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THE QUEST OF THE MUSE

ONE day she left me. She had always been
A shy, capricious visitor; and so
I did not greatly grieve; " for soon," I said,
" She will come tripping lightly back again,
As she so often has returned when least
I waited for her coming." But the days
Went by, and week succeeded weary week,
And yet she did not come; till round my heart
There grew the shadow of a fear. And then
I sought her in the mountains, by the sea,
And in the moonlit forest, for perchance
She might be holding faëry revelries.
But still I could not find her, and there closed
Around my heart the fetters of despair.

But suddenly one day she came again.
I strove to speak to her; but ere my lips
Had framed a trembling syllable, she said
" I cannot stay; I must go forth at once
Upon a quest." And in her eyes I saw
A strange, new light—the light of one who sees
Far, far beyond all boundaries of earth
And sky.

" Oh, tell me on what distant scene,
On what ulterior shore you gaze," I cried.
" What means this strange new light upon your face?
What go you forth to seek?"

And, in a voice
That mingled pain with hope, she made reply:

" Till now I lived upon the mountain height,
Round which there rolled the morning mists of hope—
The filmy, floating mists of dawn; the sweet,
Light, silvern mists of youth; the silken veil
Which God draws round the young until their eyes
Are strong to see the world. Above, below,

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I gazed into those faëry heights and depths
Of gossamer; and, tho' I could not see
Thro' them, yet in suggestion did they seem
More beautiful than the clear light itself,
Perchance the too clear light, which (as I thought)
Must flood the whole wide universe beyond.
There, out of rumour of all wars of men
And things, and fed by Nature lavishly
With nectarous dreams, I dwelt alone and free
And ten times happy—in that I had seen
No hint of sadness—in my narrow world.
Narrow? But ah, how fresh the mountain air;
The mountain springs how pure; and ah, how white
The mountain snow!

But suddenly a breeze
Ruffled this little world of mine; and lo! —
Like some great fleet of vessels putting forth
From port, and scattering by ones and twos
Until they all are lost, like distant waves,
Upon the boundless sea—the silvern mist
Floated away in multitudinous wreaths,
Which slowly mingled with the air; and, God!
Beneath me where I dreamt a faëry glen
Must lie, I saw wan, winding plumes of smoke
Rising against those grey, inclement skies
Which, in my childish innocence, I had dreamt
Were warm and blue!

'Return to me,' I cried.
'Return, O silvern haze'; but ah, the last,
Thin clouds of mist vanished, like sails that fade
Upon the horizon; and below me now,
Pile upon tumbling pile, there spread a world
Of blackened roofs! And, by some unseen force
Impelled, I left my lonely mountain height
And wandered down with sad, reluctant steps
Into the valley, where, with dusty feet
I entered the great city—which, they said,
Was called Humanity. There did I scan
Highways of pleasure; broad, bright avenues
Of laughter and of joy; trim, spotless squares
Of law; and many a crowded market-place.

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But intersecting everywhere, I saw
A brimming river known, they said, as Tears;
And, as I followed its long, sinuous course
Thro' all the place, it led me down at length
To a great sea; and, reaching here, I knew
That I was but upon the outset now
Of a far longer journey than I dreamt.
For this was the wide sea of shattered faith;
And, as I stood upon its marge, I heard
Strange voices that I knew must be obeyed
Calling from, ah, who knows what distant realms,
What unknown countries of experience,
What undiscovered continents of thought,
Beyond?
          And I must hasten there at once.
If, after I have crossed this sea and all
Those far uncharted lands of thought, I still
Can keep my life, my hope, my joy, undimmed,
I will return to you again at length,
And stronger, nobler than I leave you now.
If not "—she quivered slightly—" you will know
At least that I have died in the attempt.
Good-bye, good-bye!" she said.
                                        But, as she went,
She sang one final fleeting little song:

" Hills of youth, farewell, farewell!
    From your innocence, your snow,
    Forth into the world I go,
  All its tangled ways to spell.
Still where your clear dew-drops glisten
    I would keep my happy lot;
But I hear a voice—ah, listen!—
    Where thou wouldest not!

  Hills of youth, farewell, farewell!
    Forth I go by land and sea.
    What the miles may hold for me,
  What the years, ah, who can tell?
But if still I fondly cherish
    Your clear dews within my heart,

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Hope and courage shall not perish
On the waste or in the mart!

Hills of youth, farewell! The dust
Clings already to my feet;
Sounds confused around me beat!
Help me still to keep my trust!
When the shadows or false brightness
Of the world before me swell,
Hold before mine eyes your whiteness!—
Hills of youth, farewell!"

Her voice faded and died, and she was gone.
Whether once more, at the clear break of day
Or in the evening hush, I e'er shall hear,
As in times past, that golden, happy voice
Echoing down the heart's glad corridors,
I cannot tell; but I will always keep
The doorway of my heart thrown open wide,
In case—in case she e'er should come again.

GILBERT THOMAS.

TESTIMONY

WHAT ha' you done, said the Angel to Smith,
That you vex the sacred door?
Never a one of your rawspun kith
Has asked for the keys before!

. . . .

Open or shut! said the stranger shade,
I would test my chance or quit;
And a salted pelt from the old fly belt
Should yarely weather the Pit.

My time-sheet's signed in the Shops of Time
And the harvest's reaped and sowed—
Is your fairway closed to the vagrant's grime
And the bitter brand of the road?

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Here at the gates you may cast the scale
To mete revenge or ruth,
To measure the cost of the beakers tossed
From the foaming vats of youth.

For it's little we recked of the holy script
Or the musty creeds of eld,
When the magic lure of the outskirts gripped
And the wander lust impelled;

And it's little we heeded the burdened soul
While the godly hugged the rear,
And the hungry wild took tithe and toil
Of the foolish pioneer.

But we kept the frontier code throughout,
And the only code they keep
Who blaze the trail where the weaklings fail
And the cowards rot like sheep!

So runs the Law: That ye lead the van
By the sign of staff and pack;
That ye ever seek the farthest peak
And scorn the well-worn track.

That ye force the ford and bridge the ditch
And hail the desert bride
With an open hand when the strike pans rich
And a laugh when blows betide.

Open or shut! Have you ought in store
For us in your Paradise,
Who have known the worth of the good raw earth
Beneath the sapphire skies—

Who have seen day's swooning crimson sped
And the golden plains grow pale
Till the moon like a silver lamp o'erhead
Revealed the northward trail?

Reckon the cost! I ha' paid my shout
So long as my thews were whole—

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'Fore God! I'd as lief be damned without
As whine for a shriven soul—

But where and wherever my race was run
My race was run on the straight;
And this—and the like—is the whole I ha' done
Might stead me now at the gate.

. . . .

I'll ha' you done, said the Angel to Smith,
And your hide is scared with sin;
But how shall I measure with script or creed
The old, tough souls of the frontier breed?—
Sooth you may enter in!

LEWIS MACDONALD HASTINGS.

TO THE MOON

(The Belgians declared that the bright moonlight was beneficial to them during German night attacks.)

CALM moon, that thro' the trees
Peers with thy soft, pale eyes,
Whilst the summer breeze
Sinks, as the painful sighs
Of broken hearts that would, but cannot weep,
Where art thou sadly gazing whilst we sleep?
Is't that neath thy calm face,
Bathed in its own hot blood,
The flower of a race
Lies trampled in the mud,
And looks on thee with eyes of agony? . . . .
A thousand bleeding men that would but die!
Torn lungs and shell-rent limbs . . . .
Hard sobs through tight-clenched teeth . . . .
Bright eyes that death's hand dims . . . .
A blood-drenched field beneath . . . .
How can'st thou gaze so calm-eyed, silvery-white,
Whilst, choked with pain and blood, men writhe all night?

HUBERT DAYNE.

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A LUMP OF CLAY

DEEP buried in a bed
Of curling leaves and petals red,
From a blooming rose-bush shed
Upon the floor, forgotten lay
The sculptor's lump of clay,
With careless hand the proud knight brushed aside
The leafy quilt, and there a treasure spied.

Inhaling gratefully its breath he cried:
" What substance rare is this I scent?
From what sweet bower of heaven camest thou?
No earthly source this perfume could have lent,
No part in our coarse dirt was thine, I trow."

But promptly the lump replied: " Nay, nay,
I was like thee, only a lump of clay,
That in the ground, unvalued, lay,
Until the rose's company
Its own blest fragrance gave to me.
'Twas thus my lips new breath, my blushing face,
Have gained some claim to finer grace;
And this poor bit of common earth
Is prized as never it was worth,
So she, thou wed'st this noonday will,
With God's help, make a man of thee,
If only thou hast wit to see
How love thy acrid heart may fill
With sacred sweetness; yea, may turn
Life's clay to gold; the flames that burn
May change to home's pure altar fire,
And, as her loftier aims inspire
To nobler acts, knighthood's dream-ideal
Shall be transmuted to a living real."

Then reverently the proud knight bowed
And kissed the lump of clay;
But not one word aloud
Of his deep thoughts would say.

JAMES THOMPSON BIXBY, Ph.D.

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SWINBURNE: SOME IMPRESSIONS*

IT is not my intention to more than briefly refer to some of the impressions that I still retain of a Poet who at one time I thought destined to be the greatest, the most powerful, and the sweetest singer in the English language. That I have to some extent modified my ideas does not necessarily mean that my judgment was wrong, but age and experience often materially alter our views. None of us who have read and loved poetry from our youth up can fail to remember the sensation created by the publication of Swinburne's "Poems and Ballads," and the storm of controversy it created—the virulent abuse on the one side—the wild and extravagant enthusiasm on the other—but the abuse and the enthusiasm have waned and given place to a saner, deeper, and more discriminating appreciation. Now, in looking over my Swinburne volumes, I confess that I do not warm to some of those passages which I find double lined with my pencil—nevertheless there is so much left to admire that the preparation of this paper has given me a strange and pleasant experience which I am glad to have the opportunity of expressing to the Poetry Society.

Before, however, I deal with the subject of his work, I wish to record the deep debt of gratitude that the world owes to Mr Watts Dunton for the heroic and continuous self-sacrifice with which he for thirty years devoted himself to Swinburne. Few of the present generation know of the precarious conditions of Swinburne's life when Mr Theodore Watts, as he was then called, undertook the responsibility and made arrangements to have Swinburne live under his roof and so saved the Poet from degeneration and probably death. I know this as a fact, and I am pleased to mention it, that Mr Watts Dunton should be duly honoured for his faithful and unswerving friendship, and in dealing with Swinburne's works however inadequately the influence of that friendship should be remembered. To what extent a poet's physical nature is responsible for the glories and the deficiencies of his work can interest us to-day only to point out that in Swinburne's case he was blessed, or cursed (who knows which?) by a frail body. This fact may have been partly responsible for his natural poetic genius producing works of immense literary value, though somewhat devoid of that masculine experience which has influenced other poets to carry out their work in closer relationship to practical life.

* A paper read at the Kensington Centre of the Poetry Society, March 16.

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How far the "Poems and Ballads" were based on actual experience we need not inquire. The extremely sensitive imagination of the Poet was doubtless to him actual experience, and his powers of poetic expression gave him opportunity of description which some will always consider impossible without a real contact with, and knowledge of, the life he depicts in such rare and opulent language. Be this as it may, whether we take his poems, his dramas, or his essays and criticisms, we must recognize not only the music but also the sense to be worthy of place in the foremost ranks of literature. His metrical force is so spontaneous and so passionate that, unfortunately, it sometimes obscures the sense, and we are apt to forget the meaning of the words in his affluent diction. This gift is one of Swinburne's greatest charms, and at times it appeals to us with such force that we do not look too critically at the sense or the beauty of the thought expressed until familiarity with his verse produces in us a more critical spirit, and we begin to look for the motive and a clear meaning of the passages. Let me instance this phase of Swinburne by referring to his poem entitled "Rococo." No one will deny its music and felicity of expression, but when all is read and pondered, what is the result? To me there comes but little other satisfaction than pleasure in the swing and rhythm of the song. The thought is deficient, and at best is unworthy of such a beautiful setting. It is not, however, my intention to complain, but the point I wish to make is that Swinburne's splendid power of poetic utterance was apparently so completely under his control that even trivial fancies could be endowed by him with beautiful and poetic language. He was like a jeweller intent on setting all his gems, whether precious or no, in the finest gold. That he should have had this power is a cause for rejoicing. and his wonderful musical facility will continue to charm so long as poetry is appreciated. One could write and say much on the wonderful alliterative manipulation of words which he developed. He had a host of imitators who more or less found themselves able to catch the public taste for a time by their Swinburnian rhymings.

Let us now pass to the much more interesting consideration of the value and purpose of Swinburne's work, and if I attach too much importance to this, I trust I may excuse myself by saying that I am more interested in this phase—one of many—of a poet's work than in any other.

A poet's environment is surely responsible for much of his work. Granted that Swinburne was one of the greatest singers of his age, it can scarcely be doubted that if he had lived and worked a century earlier or later his trend of thought, if not his whole effort and purpose, would have varied according to the particular phase of thought in his time. We have to be grateful to the Gods that he has lived at all, and in endeavouring to under-

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stand his message, to some extent we must attribute his glorious success or his partial failure, as far as his teaching is concerned, to surrounding influences and circumstances.

His age was essentially one of rebellion and change. In religion, politics, and social life, for half a century before he reached the thinking age, Europe had been endeavouring to cast aside the old ideas associated with Authority, the Divine Right of Kings, and the power of the Church, and to assimilate the new and fascinating teachings of Democracy. The first French Revolution, the Italy of Mazzini and Garibaldi, the extension of the Franchise in England, the American war to abolish slavery; all these stirring political episodes, together with the enthusiasm of Blake, Shelley, and Byron, the teachings of Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall and Spencer undoubtedly helped very materially in influencing Swinburne's genius, in awakening and developing his poetic thought and encouraging his rebellious spirit. He seems often to have been possessed—as Lord Byron was—with a demon of perversity, and delighted in shocking the respectable susceptibilities of his time. Gifted and enthusiastic, bold and almost anarchic, he brought to bear on the spirit of the age his strong poetic instincts; and his vigorous command of language has left us some of the most powerful incentives to revolt and resistance in the English tongue.

It may be only conjecture, but it appears to me worthy of note how far his trend of thought was affected by his studious seclusion. Being a voracious reader he early and eagerly devoured all the writing that came in his way, and apparently beginning with the Greek poets and dramatists gained from them that fatalism which characterizes their tragedies. The *awe*fullness of destiny that works out to its end regardless of man was appreciated fully, and as we saw in the " Poems and Ballads " was met with a whole-hearted determination to live his life, and see for himself where his modern ideas of freedom and independence of authority would lead him. Youth with desire and opportunity gave the slackest rein to passion, with the result that, apparently before Swinburne began to write seriously, he found that passion of the flesh brought disillusion, suffering, and remorse. It is certainly a most remarkable volume these " Poems and Ballads." The erotic poems (written at an age when most poets etherealize and purify the description of the passions) appear to me to show either his imagination or his actual physical indulgence had left him weary and unsatisfied though still defiant. Now and again we get a glimmering of a higher mental state of mind, as in " A Ballad of Burdens," which embodies all the phases of horror and suffering but in the " envoie " shows a desire to warn others of the dangers of passions being allowed to run riot. I mention this poem not

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because it is better than others, but because it fairly represents the condition of mind which appears to me to prevail in most of the important poems of this volume.

In most of Swinburne's poems that deal with the passions we find a lack of encouragement to tenderness or spiritual companionship with women, and this, to my mind, is one of the defects which must alienate much of the sympathy that some of us feel for one who so early in life found so little to praise, so little beautiful in the association of the sexes. At the same time we owe him gratitude for bringing before the world so graphically the fact that in passion deliberately carried out for the sake only of pleasure, there can but result,—bitterness, and then eventual death of all that is best in human nature. It is a great lesson that must yet be learned by humanity, but which is surely appreciated to-day to a far greater extent than in the past. I have refrained from dealing with a few of the other type of poems in the volume of "Poems and Ballads," but there are some, such as "To Victor Hugo," "A Song in the Time of the Revolution," that properly belong to the "Songs before Sunrise" series and which show the beginning of our poet's enthusiasm for political and religious Liberty. In "Songs before Sunrise" his wonderful impetuous poetic spirit caught the excitement of his day and found a new vent for its poetic fervour in the pursuit of the glories of Democracy. He brings us perilously near to anarchy in praising Man as a very God to be honoured and worshipped.

> "A creed is a rod
> And a crown is of night
> But this thing is God
> To be man in Thy might.
> To grow straight in the strength of thy spirit, and live out
> thy life as the light."

In this song of "Hertha" he strives to embody the whole of his religious philosophy or whatever he calls it, and with his marvellous singing cries with every variation of tone and rhyme "liberty," "equality" and "fraternity," and what these words meant to the world escaped (so many thought) from the toils and trammels of authority. In the "Hymn of Man" we have the apotheosis of Rebellion and Revolution.

Whilst deploring the purpose we are carried away by the intensity of his conviction expressed with an unequalled wealth of language. The conclusion is terrific in its sardonic force: "O God, Lord God of thy Priests rise up and show thyself God." It would indeed be interesting to follow the turns

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and arguments that Swinburne's analytical mind revels in, in discussing the interesting topic of pantheism or Comtism, and in "The Pilgrims" we have the close hand-to-hand fight portrayed; the victory, if there be any for either side, can only be adjudged by the individual reader.

In discussing these questions from Swinburne's standpoint, we should remember that his social circumstances were easy, his tastes could be freely indulged, and his literary work was his hobby, not his necessity. For the majority who are apparently doomed to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow such teaching may, probably should, be considered pernicious and altogether misleading and, as will be shown later, did not satisfy Swinburne.

It is perhaps a little out of date to many who have read their Carlyle, Ruskin, Browning and Tennyson and can see how the world progresses—one age being dependent upon the past and again giving way to the future as it gradually unfolds itself. Swinburne's philosophy, however, was not written in vain, and at present is not dead, but it does not satisfy the present-day aspirations nor can we imagine it will ever be of much interest in the future except to students and historians. There is no longer any need to fight and cry for Democracy and Liberty. It is here, and almost overwhelming us with its world-wide flood, but there is no fear of disaster. Man is working upward and onward, and already whilst Swinburne was singing fiercely his song of negation and rebellion, Carlyle, Ruskin, Kingsley, Tennyson, Morris and Browning were leading the van with a more positive constructive thought. The world moves slowly but surely onward, and when Carlyle wrote his "Everlasting Yea" and Tennyson wrote his "By an Evolutionist" and "Crossing the Bar" they had reached a higher plane of thought than Swinburne could reach. When Browning says—

> "Grow old along with me
> The best is yet to be.
> The last of life for which the first was made
> Our times are in his hand
> Who saith 'A whole I planned.'
> Youth shows but half. Trust God see all—not be afraid"

he touches a chord in human development which sounds a higher note than any that Swinburne struck. These lines are now and will be, I feel sure, prized and cherished when Swinburne's ideals will be forgotten. I speak of ideals, not his poetry, for that will surely appeal to the future generations and live as the very perfection of poetic achievement.

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I have left myself little time to deal with Swinburne's dramatic works and essays, but there is nothing I have read of his that is not brimful of beautiful thoughts, appreciative, almost fulsome, praise of anything and everything that can be called poetry, either dramatic or lyrical. He was probably the least capable man to judge even ordinary things from a practical point of view. He was first and last a poet, and his plays are and will remain, as in all likelihood they were intended, works that can only be fully appreciated by those whose love of poetic drama can be satisfied by reading. "Atalanta in Calydon" could perhaps be staged, but except for a select few the lengthy choric interludes and the Greek setting of the play is and will remain caviare. Far better read and learn some of the splendid passages, than try to get a visible idea of the actual play, which of course does not appeal to the realistic cravings the modern playgoer demands.

Swinburne's negative philosophy finds full scope for display in the dull fatalism of the plot, the *hopelessness* of life from the poet's point is well evidenced in that chorus beginning "Before the beginning of years." Unfortunately this lack of hope in Swinburne's nature tinges most of his work. The character of Mary Stuart which he develops with such tragic intensity is not a pleasant or lovable one. She has something too much of the beautiful devil in her.

It is said by some that the spirit of the age denied to Swinburne the gift of reverence. It is the lack of this spirit that accounts for much of our present unfortunate anarchic thought and action, and in Swinburne's works it is hard to find any great effort to praise authority of any kind, but, like his prototype Blake, he did find in children something akin to pure love and worship. Blake's "Songs of Innocence and Experience," I believe, will live and be loved by future generations as they are to-day, for the pure and tender grace and reverent love for children: so Swinburne's poems on children, most of them written during his later life, give us an insight into his character which shows him in higher and happier moods than in any other themes he dealt with. I have perhaps treated Swinburne unfairly by referring so constantly and fully to his teaching or philosophy of life as it appears to me to show in his earlier works. His hopelessness of anything to satisfy the soul after death, and even in later years he seems to have had difficulty with himself to admit the usefulness of Hope. His sonnet "Hope and Fear"—to be found in the "Tristram of Lyonesse" volume—concluded with the cold negative and still rebellious note, "Hope thou not much, and fear thou not at all." But Swinburne's spirit grew and developed and he was lifted at last to a purer atmosphere by the love of children and childhood. In them he seemed to find his highest satisfaction, his real inner self expanded with the wings of love in his enthusiasm and worship of the inno-

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cence and natural gaiety of youth. An extraordinary echo of the truth uttered 2,000 years ago by our Divine Teacher, "For of such is the kingdom of Heaven." The wild songs and stirring prophecies of the early days in "Songs before Sunrise" had no hint in them of what the real *sunrise* was to be in Swinburne's heart and soul, but his grand hymn to children entitled "Sunrise" unmistakably shows us that at last he found for his struggling fiery soul the most beautiful resting-place of peace.

C. OSCAR GRIDLEY.

JAPAN AND THE WAR

By GONNOSKE KOMAI, OF TOKIO.

PERHAPS, at this critical moment when England is involved in the World-War before us, it will be advisable just to spare a short interval sometimes in order to breathe fresh air, and try to divert our minds to something totally different from what you see around you! For this I now venture to write here some of the strange impressions and associations of mine from far-off Japan, your little Ally in the Extreme East, for I have had a great privilege of witnessing some warlike preparations at home and had actually proceeded to the front in the service of *The Times*, London, during the Russo-Japanese War.

In Japan and indeed throughout the East there is, we say, a woman hidden behind the scene in almost every line of our action! The moment you touch your honourable feet on the Eastern soil you will surely mark a striking contrast between the West and the East: and you will realize the truth expressed in our saying with regard to the woman. Indeed one can never be able to see a soldier, in our land, walking in the street, hand in hand with any woman. Nor is it seldom possible to come across any ordinary man trotting along the road, arm in arm, with the other sex! We believe there is a certain amount of truth in our proverbial saying that women are destined to be the Home Ministers while men enjoy the portfolios for Foreign Affairs. It seems to us it has been so ordained that women should look after the interior, the domestic affairs staying at home!

But here in the West the woman seems not only hidden behind the scene but is also on the stage! Certainly nothing is more pleasant than encountering the charming lady of the West and to discuss and exchange our ideas and views on things in general. In this particular respect there can never for a moment be any necessity for Geisha on this side of the globe!

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We, in Japan, like to take delight in any of our wives who is ever ready to send out her husband to the front to face the fearful odds or mighty aggressors, as for instance:

A QUIET JAPANESE WIFE.

"On to the front
Oh husband dear
To fight for our beloved land!
No cry from me shall wring your heart!
No tears of mine shall stay you!
Look! How our darling boy now sings
A warlike song to inspire you;
And marches on to cheer you!"

"Kogun funtoh kakomi wo yabutte kayeru,
Ippyaku ritei zeppeki no kan:
Waga ken sudeni kudake, waga uma taworu:
Shuhfuh hone wo uzumu kokyoh no yama!"

FAREWELL VERSE BY GENERAL SAIGO PRIOR TO HIS HARAKIRI, A.D. 1877

"With but a single troop
I pierced through the strict siege
Of our enemy (the Government Army)
And thus, after a severe fight, returned home.
Along the verge of an overhanging precipice,
Miles long!
My sword is already broken,
And my horse has fallen dead!
It is time for me also to go,
And leave the cool Autumn breeze on my native hills
To blow over my whitening bones!"

As you are well aware, Japan borrowed her ideographic characters from China centuries ago; and, after having completely assimilated them, she still studies ancient Chinese literature and philosophy. Indeed almost all our Classic ideas and thoughts, apart from those introduced through Buddhism, originated from the Chinese literature, just as those of Europe and America come from the Greek and Latin.

Although we can hardly express ourselves vocally with our own Chinese as taught in Japan by Japanese teachers, yet we can very well communicate

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with the Chinese by writing. I personally have had the happy experiences of this while in our long Manchurian campaign. All the great men of old Japan were deeply influenced by Chinese literature and philosophy, which were their greatest source of inspiration. As a matter of fact the way to the great Restoration in our country was paved by a celebrated Japanese writer in the Chinese language, who was at the same time a distinguished Chinese scholar and poet, namely the famous Rai Sanyo, whose work *Nihon Gwaisi*, or the External History of Japan, was, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a powerful and stimulating plea against the old Shogunate usurpation and in favour of the Imperial restoration!

Although we little Japs can express the milder feelings and affections of our every-day life with our shorter forms of poetry, peculiarly characteristic of the terseness and directness of our artistic expression, without the aid of the Chinese characters, we are obliged to resort to the latter whenever we desire to give forcible expression to the heroic spirit of revolt against tyranny or aggression, as for instance:

IN THE SHOGUN'S PRISON, BY TAKASUGI SINSAKU, ONE OF THE PIONEERS WHO PROCLAIMED THE MIKADO'S RESTORATION TO POWER, HALF A CENTURY AGO, IN JAPAN.

(Translation)

" Here I waste in Shogun's nets and snares;
A hundred troubles gnaw my breast.
I only know I have this single day;
I know not if a morrow will ever dawn!
The morning sun pierces the prison bars:
As I adore its rays I weep—vain tears.
The twilight crows cry on the roof;
I hear them, my heart breaks within:
Not that it breaks over a lying accusation,
Neither do I lament my shortened days!
But the foreign hand raised against my country—
Oh, how can we save the State? "

Or again I might translate the most favourite warlike song written by Rai Sanyo, who lived between 1780 and 1833, and inspired the whole Japanese generations ever since:

SLASHING HIS SKULL.

" Though out at elbow and with half bared legs,
Shabbily clad,

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The swords we bear on our loins
Are sharp enough to cut iron asunder!
If a man touches it
Down he goes;
If a horse approaches
It pierces him through!
At the age of eighteen
We hurry to join the " League of Youth."
Should the Northern Guest dare to invade us,
What shall we offer him?
Why, fire and bolt are the treats we'll bestow:
Should he be displeased with this our entertainment,
Then we will give him our dearest treasure—
Our precious swords, slashing his skull!"

As I sing the above in original Chinese I can hardly resist a great temptation for warlike shouts of " Banzai " for England! As she is involved in this World-War Japan is also bound to fight for her under the treaty of alliance. And I, as a Japanese subject, avail myself of this opportunity for offering myself to fight for her King and country. Let me join to cry with your Shakespeare:

"This England never did nor never shall
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror:
Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them!
Nought shall make us rue
If England to itself do rest but true!"

TO BRITANNIA

" Long after all the tender flowers have faded
And after the last sweet change of the crimson maple,
Coquetting with the declining Autumn sun,
The chaste and constant pine—Britannia,
Neglected through the gay luxuriant months,
Suddenly in the short Wintery day
Wins us, like a virtuous wife, to admiration
Of her lonely beauty,
Solitary, simple, unsurpassed!"

August 12, 1914.

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WAR NOTES:

FROM AN OCCASIONAL CONTRIBUTOR

IN the present war the sword is mightier than the pen. So far the conflict has not provoked any great prose or verse. The war correspondents have been singularly inept. Their stories have been less readable than the official bulletins, and have chiefly been devoted to descriptions of motor joy rides through Belgium, or complaints of having the discomfort of travelling eight instead of six in a railway compartment. Petty egotism may melt away before the onset of greater issues—perhaps not, for it is a hard skin to slough. The folk at home have shown a finer spirit. But one correspondent did get in a literary touch. From the seclusion of Amsterdam he had the leisure to pad out his wire with the following comment, "They feel like the king in the old legend, who, returning home after a campaign, took an oath to sacrifice the first person who came to meet him, —and was met by his favourite daughter." He was better acquainted, evidently, with Mr Stephen Phillips' "Iole" than Mrs Anna Bunston's "Jephthah's Daughter." He could not be expected to be familiar with the original Bible story.

The poets were caught unprepared. To give them time, *The Times* reprinted Mr Henry Newbolt's invocation, which was quoted widely as a new poem. The Laureate, who came along a few days later, did not benefit by the interval. His effort is something for hair-splitting experts to wrangle over; it did not stir the nation's heart. A friend remarked that his respect for Mr Bridges forbade his saying more than that his predecessor in office would have been equal to this untitled poem, from which we quote a couple of admonitory stanzas:

> "Thou careless, awake!
>   Thou peacemaker, fight!
> Stand, England, for honour,
>   And God guard the Right.
>
> "Much suffering shall cleanse thee,
>   But thou through the flood
> Shalt win to Salvation,
>   To Beauty through blood."

[The Editor does not necessarily associate himself with the opinions expressed by this or any other contributor.]

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Mr Maurice Hewlett made us sigh anew for "The Forest Lovers."

> "Fight since thou must; strike quick and fierce,
> So when this tyrant for too long
> Hath shook the blood out of his ears
> He may have learned the price of wrong.
>
> "Let him learn this, that the due grief
> Of his own vice he cannot ban
> By outrage of a highway thief;
> Let him remember the Corsican."

Didactic exhortation, denunciation, platitudinous phrases chopped out of leading articles, where they would have been better left and were more suitably used, grey matter all of it and no red, no clarion call, no war song of mighty hosts and long-drawn agony and dreadful triumph, no vision of Titanic happenings and of the ultimate world's regeneration. The nearest approach to actuality was made by Mr Fagan in the *Daily Telegraph*. He got out of the pulpit with the smoke of battle in his nostrils.

Yet we should be thankful in a negative fashion that our poets remained Wordsworthian and did not attempt realism in the modern manner by piling up crude and violent epithets and gory phrases, or by becoming incoherent and expressing their sense of a modern battle by a series of "Zip, ping, boom" ejaculations. In the face of reality recent extravagances have dropped out of sight, with their perpetrators gone to their own place—oblivion.

From the war poetry and all art will benefit enormously. It brings a breath of cleansing and regeneration. The air is too strong and vital for the excrescences that attach themselves to an idle, luxurious civilization. We are too serious now for literary tricks, however diverting they may be in jaded hours of peace. But something more formidable than mountebank frivolling withers away before the blast from the east. The war means more than military fighting,—it is the end of "kraft" in literature as well as diplomacy. Not alone has the Kaiser succumbed to the influences of Nietzsche. Many of our younger writers, particularly among those who have aspired to literary dictatorship and to be regarded as bold, modernist poets, have been the preachers of debased "ideals." Fed on Nietzsche and his like, they have assumed, sincerely or as a pose, a contempt for morality and honesty in word and deed. Their gospel has been ruthlessness, egoism, anti-Christianity, a Machiavellian disregard of honour, a violent and unscrupulous assertion of self-sufficiency. The "new poetry" has been full of this

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gospel, crudely expressed very often as though the ideas were but poorly assimilated, blending brutality with sordidness and an overweening self-righteousness and a covert inclination to obscenity. The "eternal verities" had become as much a cliche as the phrase. A mouthpiece of the cult recently "manifested," "Forget God, forget heaven and hell, forget everything but yourself"—misguided, irresolute husk-fed self. Whether cant or sincerity, this debasing gospel with the intellectual, physical and commercial unmorality associated with it, will be drastically purged away. The medicine is severe, but we have no fear of its destroying the body along with the pimples. The newer poetry will breathe the aspirations of a regenerated world, and for Teutonic dishonesty and materialism the mysticism of Russia. Better a Tolstoy than a Nietzsche.

CRITICISM OF ORIGINAL VERSE

A New Feature

WE have received so many requests for criticism of the poems submitted to us that we have decided to introduce a page, or pages, devoted to the interests of readers who require this service. Experience has shown us how widespread is the desire for enlightenment and direction, among young people more especially, on matters relating to poetic art; and it is this demand which we now propose to supply. It is obvious that such a service, involving careful and expert attention, cannot be rendered gratuitously, however anxious we are to be of assistance, but fees are fixed as low as possible considering the nature of the service offered, and authoritative detailed literary criticism will be given on the following conditions:

1. The Editor cannot enter into correspondence concerning the poems criticized.
2. Copies should be kept, as we cannot be responsible for the possible loss of MSS. Every effort will, however, be made to return these when stamped addressed envelopes are enclosed.
3. All work submitted must be certified as original.
4. Poems may be either typed or hand-written, but must in no case exceed 500 lines.

The following charges apply to members of the Poetry Society, non-members 10°/₀ extra.

	£	s.	d.
For Criticism of one long or six short poems (short ones not to exceed 24 lines)	0	10	6
For any number of Short Poems up to twenty	1	1	0
For Single Poems not exceeding 24 lines	0	2	6

All MSS. must be addressed to THE POETRY REVIEW, 16 Featherstone Buildings, Holborn, W.C., and marked "Criticism."

The two best poems submitted each month will be printed in the POETRY REVIEW, and in addition a premium of half-a-guinea each will be awarded to the authors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Although the Editor is unable to publish any letters this month, he hopes to be able to include some communications of more than passing interest next month, and letters for publication or use as occasional notes will receive consideration.

K.B. (London).—We agree with your protest, but it is not our policy to give publicity to the pernicious polemics and personalities of a puerile publication. The precious couplet you quote lamenting the waste of chastity justifies Mr Noyes' remarks, and with the other examples you give affords an illuminating indication of the sincerity of the "criticism" of the blameless Mrs Willcox who writes better verse to better purpose. Your summary of "a flatulent and malicious bid for notoriety" is a sufficient dismissal of this pseudo-smartness.

Notices of October meetings and autumn and winter arrangements should be sent in by the 15th inst.

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The British Empire Shakespeare Society

(Founded by Miss Morritt in 1901.)

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THE B.E.S.S. exists for the purpose of making Shakespeare a vital force of the English-speaking race. Public Dramatic Readings are given in London by well-known actors. Throughout the country and in the colonies these Readings are given by the local members of each Branch, but unlike the usual method adopted by Societies previously to 1901, one of the principal rules of the B.E.S.S. is that all Branches should admit the Press free and the Public at a small charge to at least one meeting a year. Essay and Elocution Competitions, open to members in all parts of the world, are held annually. To prepare members for public Dramatic Readings and Costume Recitals, Reading Circles have been instituted in connexion with all the centres. Membership of one centre implies membership of the Society throughout the Empire. The Annual General Performances are held in the early autumn and the casts are representative of the whole Society. The Annual Subscription for Members is 5s., for Privileged Members 10s., the entrance fee in both cases being 5s. Privileged Members are entitled to front seats at all the Society's Meetings.

LONDON.—(Assistant General Secretary, Mr Hesketh Pearson, 14 Abbey Gardens, St John's Wood, N.W.).—As the dramatic reading of "Rhesus" by Euripides (translated by Professor Gilbert Murray) was the first to be given by Hon. Professional Members of the B.E.S.S. under the direction of Mr Acton Bond, of a play other than Shakespeare's, the full cast is here recorded in the Society's Gazette: Hector, Mr Franklin Dyall; Aeneas, Mr Howard Rose; Dolon, Mr H. A. Saintsbury; Paris, Mr Henry Hargreaves; Rhesus, Mr James Berry; A Thracian, Mr Hesketh Pearson; Odysseus, Mr Frank Cellier; Diomedes, Mr J. Henry Twyford; A Shepherd, Mr George Skillan; The Goddess Athena, Miss Evelyn Hope; The Muse of the Mountains, Mrs Percy Dearmer; Leader of Chorus, Mr Acton Bond; 1st Chorus, Mr Howard Rose; 2nd Chorus, Mr George Owen; 3rd Chorus, Mr J. Leslie Frith; 4th Chorus, Mr J. Henry Twyford; Stage Directions, Miss Margaret Everritt.

Annual Essay Competition: The following are the awards by Lord Howard de Walden of the Society's Essay Competition:

Senior:—Miss G. A. Russell (Bristol), 1; Miss Margaret McFarlane (Glasgow), Miss Emily Shore (Worthing), Miss Irene Van Raalte (Ealing), Mr Andrew Kerr (Glasgow), highly commended; Mr Horace Sequeira (Enfield), Miss Stewart Wright (Glasgow), Mrs C. P. F. Ferrier (Glasgow), commended.

Junior:—Master Ray Jacobs (London), 1; Master Francis Holmes (Edinburgh), Miss Marjorie Lehmann (London), highly commended.

Festival Week: The cast of "Romeo and Juliet," which will be given at Cheltenham during the Festival Week on Monday and Tuesday evenings and Wednesday afternoon, October 19, 20 and 21, includes the following: Mr H. I. Rainger (Cheltenham), Escalus; Mr Eric Lester (London), Paris; Mr Douglas Cross (Cheltenham), Montague; Mr W. Banks (Cheltenham), Capulet; Mr George Holloway (Bristol), Romeo; Mr H. Urwick (Worcestershire), Mercutio; Mr H. O. Barnett (Cheltenham), Benvolio; Mr L. Urwick (Worcestershire), Tybalt; Mr J. K. Boddy (London), Friar Lawrence; Mr P. Clauss (Cheltenham), Sampson; Mr R. B. Harding (Cheltenham), Gregory; Mr R. W. Lutley (Weston-super-Mare), Peter; Mr Berkeley Hollyer (Worcester), Abraham; Mr T.

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Hannam Clark (Cheltenham), Apothecary; Miss Dorothie Pidcock (Stratford-on-Avon) and Miss J. Vivian Rees (Cardiff), Juliet; Mrs H. Urwick (Worcestershire) and Mrs Jameson (Leamington), Nurse; Mrs Carey (Norwood), Lady Capulet.

The cast of "The Taming of the Shrew," which will be given on Thursday and Friday evenings and Saturday afternoon, October 22, 23 and 24, is as follows: Mr Harold Wilkes (Derby), Christopher Sly; Mr R. W. Lutley (Weston-super-Mare), a Lord; Mr Percy Wilde (Weston-super-Mare), 1st Huntsman; Mr R. B. Harding (Cheltenham,) 2nd Huntsman; Mr Berkeley Hollyer (Worcester), Servant; Mr J. K. Boddy (London), Baptista; Mr J. Stark Browne (Ealing), Vincentio; Mr P. L. Eyre (Chelsea) and Mr G. R. Spragg (Worcestershire), Petruchio; Mr H. Sequeira (London), Gremio; Mr Eric Lester (London), Hortensio; Mr R. W. Lutley (Weston-super-Mare), Tranio; Mr G. R. Spragg (Worcestershire) Biondello; Mr Frank Macey (London), a Pedant; Miss C. Holmes and Miss Gibbons (Cheltenham), Katharina; Miss G. Cashman (London), Curtis; Miss Vica Hayne (London), Bianca.

The following Cheltenham members will appear in both plays as Ladies-in-Waiting or Pages: Mrs Bell Haworth, the Misses Russell, Dudgeon, M. Rogers Harrison, Schuster, Pruen, Hardy, Lidderdale, Gordon Smith, Welch, Cates, Pottinger, Noyes, Griffiths, Delmar Williamson.

The 1914 Annual Report of the B.E.S.S. has been issued. It contains general information with regard to the POETRY REVIEW and Poetry Society. Members who have not received their copies should inform the Assistant General Secretary.

WORCESTERSHIRE.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss G. M. Southwell, The College, Worcester).—On July 23, members of this branch were entertained at a Garden Party given by the President of the Branch, Hon. Mary Pakington, at Waresley Court. Over a hundred ladies and gentlemen were present. Tea was served in the gardens, where an orchestral band played selections. Scenes from "Othello," arranged by Miss Walker, were performed by the members, the characters being taken by Miss Gertrude Walker (Desdemona), Mr G. R. Spragg (Othello), Mr W. Wainwright (Iago), Miss Helen Smith (Emilia), and Mr George Brodie (Cassio). The popular scene between Helen and Modus in "The Hunchback" was played by Mrs Eeles and Mr H. R. Frevillier. Morris dances by some of the girls were unfortunately interrupted by the rain, and the party spent the rest of the evening indoors. Many of the members entered for a "quotation" competition, in which they had to place a number of Shakespearean quotations. Miss Danks and Miss Southwell were the prize-winners in the senior competition, and Winnie Bennett and Winnie Teague in the junior. Mr G. R. Spragg voiced the thanks of the company to Miss Pakington for her hospitality.

THE ENTRANCE

A STAR will drop down from the sky,
Gentle maiden,—when you die,
And through the sacred passage left
Your path to Heaven will be cleft.

ARTHUR THRUSH.

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THE "DIABOLIC" IN POETRY

IT is, of course, quite possible that in the process of human thought, the long-standing idea of a definite antagonism between good and evil, of two pitched camps of Right and Wrong, may gradually fade into the conception that what we call "Evil" is but an undeveloped state of the human soul; in brief, that the term itself is unscientific. Meanwhile, we have by no means risen as yet to the height of this conception, though Robert Browning has written:

> "The evil is null, is naught, is silence implying sound; . . .
> On the earth the broken arcs, in the heaven a perfect round."

Further, until a question, apparently incapable of definite proof, is proved for ever, it is quite admissible to contend that the old idea of "Quality," or an antagonism of two forces, is in its way as purely scientific as the more modern conception. Swedenborg, indeed, has told us that such an antagonism is necessary to maintain the balance of the universe. Apart then from the writings of Browning, it may be taken that poetry has concerned itself throughout the ages with an eternal warfare between God and Devil. But in this conflict, whose stake is the soul of man, the poets have for the most part given expression to the personality of the Diabolic in two quite opposite directions. There is on the one side the grand figure of the rebel Angel; and on the other, a lower, but perhaps more practical and effective Malice, whose business it is to sneer all high intention and nobility of action out of existence. On the one hand we are presented with Milton's Satan, and on the other with Goethe's Mephistopheles. Both these conceptions, if they are intended to excite merely our abhorrence, must be pronounced partial failures. For while on the one hand no one can read the "Paradise Lost" without an instinctive admiration for the character of "the adversary of God and man"; so unconquerable is he, so magnificent in defiance; so on the other hand the fiend of Goethe has about him the appearance of a good fellow, he has humour, and regards life at the worst as a jest. It will be sufficient to recall for the purpose of illustration the following lines from the epic of "The Fall":

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"He, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower; his form had not yet lost
All her original brightness, nor appeared
Less than Archangel ruined, and th' excess
Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-risen
Looks through the horizonal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or, from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone
Above them all th' Archangel: but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge."

And if such is his semblance, of equal grandeur is his speech:

"Farewell happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors, hail,
Infernal world! And thou, profoundest Hell,
Receive thy new possessor—one who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater?"

If then Milton's object was, as he declared, to "justify the ways of God to men," it can hardly be denied that to set opposite the Divine Power so heroic and dauntless a figure was partially to defeat his grand general design. And more than this, Satan as a matter of fact appeals irresistibly to one of the deepest instincts of mankind, the admiration of the strong spirit in adversity, of the mind which remains dauntless in all difficulty, and which, however it may sin, still scorns to stoop.

So on the other hand, though we are well aware that Mephistopheles is compassing not only the ruin of Faust, but also that of Margaret; though he shows himself in the most fiendish sense pitiless and cold, there is

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about him always a kind of gay, rakish air, a feeling throughout the drama that at his most devilish, he is at least diabolically amusing, and the very best of company. Here the same criticism may be made that was applied to the Satan; that this vermilion-habited companion of Faust appeals in his way not only to the cynic, but also to the more general instinct in all of us, which seeks to be amused, and will laugh first, though the devil may laugh last. Probably the most truly diabolic sentence ever written by man is that in which Mephistopheles, in answer to Faust's upbraidings over the ruin and madness of Margaret, replies: "She is not the first." Yet even here, one shall notice a profane impulse in the audience to laughter, though these few words are the very master-stroke of malice, the very pith and marrow of the diabolic.

The Lucifer of Marlowe in "Dr Faustus" is a figure in the Miltonic strain, and one cannot but feel that Milton had studied this powerful but chaotic drama. In one passage, certainly, the thought of the dramatist is reproduced by the epic poet, for to Marlowe is due the fine conception that the mind is its own place. But if Milton was to some extent beholden to the Elizabethan for the lines in which he drew his rebel archangel, one cannot help feeling that the other, the sneering devil of Goethe, owed not a little to the villain of the Othello tragedy. For the attitude diabolic is the same. Iago, like Mephistopheles, is totally incapable of any feeling whatsoever. I quoted just now the phrase: "She is not the first"; now, when Othello is at the crisis of his agony of doubt, and has in fact fallen in a fit of epilepsy, Iago, the author of all this madness, bending over him, says: "What, general, have you hurt your head?" This stroke is by no means so fine intellectually as that of Mephistopheles, but the note struck is the same, that of a superhuman callousness. This entire incapacity even to comprehend either the depth or the height of human suffering might even be regarded as stupidity, were we not made well aware in both cases of the extreme cunning and intellectual ability of these arch-betrayers. So, too, Iago is perpetually called an "honest" fellow, the term "honest" being, I fancy, akin to "good natured" in a sense. Iago deceives by a rough uncouth manner, and is in that unlike the insinuating devil of Goethe, but he, too, is always ready with a song and also passes for a ready boon-companion and, to use a vulgarism, "a good sort."

It has always seemed to me that to play Iago as a sinister, tortuous Italian was a mistake made by most actors. The whole outward bearing

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and port of this monster is a kind of unmannered downrightness, which —and the touch is a most subtle one—even to this day deceives more than refined and cultured villainy. Have we not all met men who, though at heart false and base, yet continue to make a brave show by an almost brutal frankness which passes for the straightforward. Points of similarity can be multiplied, but perhaps one outstanding likeness between the two fiends is their attitude towards women. Just as Mephistopheles takes it for granted that jewels will overcome the maidenhood of Margaret, so Iago cannot conceive that any woman can follow a man as Desdemona did her soldier lover except from the motive of the basest lust. It will be noted, too, that both of them generalize, for Mephistopheles will have it that all women can be caught by the bait of glittering stones, and Iago refers Othello to the well-known behaviour of women:

> "In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks
> They dare not show their husbands; their best conscience
> Is not to leave it undone, but keep it unknown."

We have then, roughly speaking, two distinct types of fiend drawn by the poets; the one grandly rebellious, but extorting admiration, the other foully clever, but extorting the laughter that should not be. It was left for Byron to draw a most convincing diabolic figure in "The Vision of Judgment," and here the poet combines the grand austerity of the rebel angel with a very real sense of superhuman satire. This devil is thus described:

> "But bringing up the rear of this bright host
> A spirit of a different aspect waved
> His wings like thunder-clouds above some coast
> Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks is paved;
> His brow was like the deep when tempest-tossed
> Fierce and unfathomable thoughts engraved
> Eternal wrath on his immortal face,
> And *where* he gazed, a gloom pervaded space."

but we also read:

> "Satan replied, 'To me the matter is
> Indifferent in a personal point of view;

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I can have fifty better souls than this
With far less trouble than we have gone through
Already; and I merely argued this
Late Majesty of Britain's case with you
Upon a point of form: you may dispose
Of him, I've kings enough below, God knows.' "

Probably the great poets have made no grander successes of imagination than in their portrayal of "The Diabolic."

THE EDITOR.

In this our second war number, we have the privilege of printing a patriotic poem by Florence Earle Coates, who has been described by the best authority as "the leading living poet of the United States." Mrs Coates was among the Americans delayed in England by the outbreak of war, and on the eve of her departure she called on us with this contribution as an expression of her admiration and feeling for Great Britain, and appreciation of the kindness she had received when over here. We believe this poem to be the first on the war by an American writer of eminence to be published in this country. We have also the gratification of publishing a series of representative views on the War and Poetry. Mr John Drinkwater's virile, beautiful work will be well-known to all readers; among the younger writers he splendidly maintains the high standard, dignity and spiritual significance of English poetry: Mr Darrell Figgis, as becomes an ardent idealist, is a most devoted advocate of the claims of the visionary poets; Mr John Gurdon, whose sensitive and classical work has obtained wide recognition, was recently awarded the gold medal of the Poets' Club by Lord Dunsany: Mr Ernest Rhys, the most cultured, yet unpedantic, of bookmen, has given us the best of all literatures in Everyman's Library, and ransacked all the treasure-houses of poetry for his most judicious anthologies, and it is most fitting to include Mr Lloyd George as a contributor to these opinions on the war against materialism by adding some equally pertinent sentences from the eloquent speech at Queen's Hall.

The war has not caused the entire suspension of the issue of new poetry; the publications of the month have not been numerous, but they include Mr Gilbert Thomas's third volume, "The Voice of Peace" (Chapman and Hall) and Mr Israel Zangwill's "Plaster Saints" (Heinemann).

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BRITANNIA

I AM calling together my sons—
The children my love gave birth,
I am arming them
As the swift sand runs,
And sending them with their battle guns,
To prove their manhood's worth.

I should have, God knows, less power
To stay them by pleadings poor
Than the mother who tried
In woodland bower
To hold from knighthood—
His rightful dower—
Her boy, Sir Peredur!

For they know full well, as he knew,
How base is the touch of fear
When tyrannous wrong
Would right subdue;
And they to me
And themselves are true
When danger draweth near.

Oh, strong with the love I gave,
Their souls have the strength I give,
Who have taught my sons
To be pure and brave,
Nor to fly the chance of a hero's grave,
Where, deathless, heroes live!

FLORENCE EARLE COATES.

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POETRY AND THE WAR

THE POETRY THAT WILL SURVIVE

MR H. G. WELLS, the sentimental man of science, has declared that this war will undoubtedly mean the end of all war, and the abolition of Maximilien Kraft, the Armament Man; so it seems due to a poet to suggest that it may mean the very reverse of this, and that we can already see in England at this present moment the beginning of a military junkerdom, less showy but not less ruthless than the Potsdam ensample, as the first fruits of hostilities. (Information, for instance, is not being withheld because the Germans may thereby suddenly discover what battles they have fought and where they have fought them; but simply because it is rank impertinence for civilians to inquire about the military man's job.) And if this process continues along the road on which it has begun it is not difficult to see the effect it will have on the nobler spirit of man, that is expressed in, and nurtured by, poetry at its highest. Brass-poetry will abound, but to the credit of men be it said that they become easily tired of brass-poetry. Moreover, brass-poetry, being the only form of poetry that has ever been known to pay, is generally written with Guineas glittering before the eye.

A century ago, in the last great European war, the situation was different. Communication was slow, with the result that the nerves of the whole country were not jangled by the previous day's (or previous week's, since there is a War Chief), fighting; and further, the war then was, or had devolved from, an issue of ideas and ideals. The result was that the spiritual concerns of men were in a state of challenge, and there were no gory news with which to fob off that interest. As a consequence, Wordsworth and Shelley are to-day a force among men, even as Wellington is a memory of a man with a beaked nose who won the Battle of Waterloo. The situation now is different. The course of events will not now lead to a revival of ideals in the old way; indeed, a strong reactionary spirit will probably be the first result of the present war.

Yet, even in the midst of false interests, and even by reason of them,

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poetry may become what it has not been for many a year; that is a spiritual challenge and a stubborn fighting force, the unacknowledged legislation of the world, and a vision the brighter because its seers have been driven into rebellion. Brass-poetry will diminish because of the intolerable tedium of its note: its honoured place in the leader-columns is already helping to ensure that result. Drawing-room poetry will be smitten to extinction; and with it should expire the toying with Greek mythology and old stories that are only meant for the titivation of the idle.

Poetry as a hobby will probably pass, with none to deplore the passing; and those who hold that poetry should be concerned with the highest issues of the spirit of man striving through time, those who believe that where there is no vision the people perish and who seek for that vision in poetry, who believe poetry to be therefore a spiritual exercise each instant of which is of priceless and eternal value, whose song is at once a sword and a banner and a burning vision, who know no friends and enemies save the friends and enemies of the thing whereof they sing—these will be driven to strength because they have been driven into rebellion. Perhaps, however, things may not take this course. Yet it would be very splendid if they would.

DARRELL FIGGIS.

THE POETIC KATHARSIS

WAR is often the subject matter of poetry, and indeed of the greatest poetry, but is less frequently the immediate and direct inspiration. Not without reason were the Muses called the daughters of Memory, and the great war-poems of the world are monuments to bygone heroisms. The Iliad, the Æneid, the Sagas, Shakespearean drama, the ballads of our own country and others from the Chanson de Roland to the songs now sung round Servian camp-fires, all celebrate the glory of the past. I do not overlook the shining exceptions to this rule, such as the songs of Tyrtaeus and Alcaeus, or, to come down to later times, Körner. But these men were soldiers first and poets afterwards, or at all events the sword was as welcome and familiar to them as the pen. They did not " sit at home at ease " and exhort other people to go and fight.

And this may partly explain perhaps why the war has not evoked so far any very vital poetry, if we except Mr Kipling's and perhaps one or two others. To write " of old, unhappy, far off things and battles long ago " is

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or may be a glorious task, but when our countrymen are facing wounds and disease and death it does not feel very satisfying to stay behind and turn it into rhyme. I fancy this is at the bottom of the ineffectiveness of much of our patriotic verse since the war began. The authors felt they would rather be serving their country than talking about it.

Of one thing I am quite convinced. The war will purge the spirit of song of folly and eccentricity, not to speak of more serious blemishes. There will be a " Katharsis " of the morbid secretions so much in evidence of late, and especially of those epicene perversions which are a disgrace to human nature. It is but just to say that this reproach has not been incurred by literature alone, but by the other Arts as well; nor have certain phases of our social life been beyond it. War has no place for *Les fleurs du Mal*.

But " the high Pierian flower " of noble poetry need never wither in the wind of war. Why should we allow the Germans, those apostles of culture, to drive us out into the wilderness? To abandon poetry in this hour of stress is to justify the Philistine in his opinion of it as an idle toy, a luxury for emotional bon-vivants without any true value or importance. Now is the time to prove the faith that is in us, to stick to our Society and see it through the hard times. By so doing we shall show ourselves true sons and daughters of the land which Shakespeare loved.

JOHN GURDON.

THE EFFECT NOW AND LATER

THE immediate effect of the war upon poetry will be—indeed is—to increase the already heavy weight of bad work through which the relatively small volume of excellent work has to win its way. It cannot be said too often that a poet, to be worthy of that high name, must not only have the heightened emotional activity which is the impulse to poetry, but must also subject that activity to the strictest intellectual discipline and refine it through the most patiently fostered instinct for language before he can hope to achieve a durable art. At the present time a great number of people are, very naturally, experiencing an unwonted pressure in their emotions, and, having little or nothing of the faculty of creating, of giving intelligible shape to chaos, they make an unwelcome addition to the lumber of versedom. There is suddenly an accession in the impulse to poetry without any corresponding accession to the art of poetry. Fortunately there is among all this

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effervescence a little fine work from the poets themselves to keep us in patience.

It would seem that upon the duration of the war will depend the more permanent influence that it may have upon healthy poetic energy. Should the struggle be a long one, the mind and spirit of Europe will be drained and exhausted, when poetry, as all the arts, will suffer a temporary impoverishment in common with the whole of western civilization. But should it be short, as from any reasons I am hopeful enough to believe it will be, it will inflict but a brief, though terribly severe, physical shock upon Europe; it will search us cruelly but it will not shatter us. And from even so grim a physical shock Europe will recover quickly, and, greatly tried, will, we may trust, have attained to something of greater character through suffering endured. And then the poets will bring to their work an added authority and—although I believe contemporary poetry already to have achieved much that will be memorable—a yet finer conscience, while counterfeit verse will less readily find its measure of even momentary approval.

JOHN DRINKWATER.

THE TESTAMENT OF WAR

SINCE the French Revolution there has been no life-and-death struggle at the very gate of our domain that can be ranged with the present European war of deliverance. It has been my good fortune to spend two nights lately with a veteran of English poetry, who saw the German armies return after the Dano-German War when Schleswig-Holstein was lost to the Danes in 1864, and who has seen three generations of poets and soldiers rise and go their way. Considering this new war, as a great spectator might, he spoke sadly of his intellectual debt to the German poets, which Carlyle helped him to incur, and then he sighed, half-humorously, over the furred coat he wore, bought in Germany fifty years ago. It served to recall Heine's saying about " German truth, German shirts," and his allusion—lately quoted in *The Times*—to the renaissance of the Bersekers and the breaking of the cathedrals with Thor's hammer.

But from the spectacle of Germany, recoiling from Liberty, my host turned to repeat Byron's " Childe Harold " lines—

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"Yet, freedom, yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
Streams like the thunder-storm against the wind;"

and ended by speculating on the poetic suicide of a race that gave up the ideals of Schiller and Goethe.

The same evening we looked over an unpublished notebook of Shelley's and read out a passage upon War the destroyer of reason and wisdom and the humanities—a passage to start questions interesting to everybody that cares for poetry and the things that give it new life. For Byron and Shelley can witness the power kindled by the Revolution that inspired their romanticism, and we know very well what has happened to some of the comfortable versemen of a later day. So it appears that War can both destroy and create.

* * * *

On the way back to London from the southern highlands where the veteran lives I read Mr Lloyd George's speech, the most eloquent thing of its kind the war has yet produced, and towards the close came on the characteristic fable of the sheltered valley and the mountain-tops. There, no doubt, was the answer to one of the questions about the effect on the imagination of living too long in clover. Indeed, a page might be added from a curious romance book about Death and Judgment and the Descent to Hell, written by a fellow-countryman of Mr Lloyd George and translated by the author of *Lavengro*, George Borrow. The book I mean is *The Sleeping Bard*, and this is a somewhat condensed paraphrase of the text.

"She is my darling," said Lucifer, . . . "EASE is her name, and she has damned more men than all my other demons together, and very few souls would any of you betray without her. ***For in war, in danger, or hunger, or sickness***, who would value money, or tobacco, or pride's pomposity—or think of welcoming wantonness or sloth; or be distracted by hypocrisy or inconsiderateness? No, no! Men are too wideawake, then, and not one of the infernal flies will buz during one of those great storms. But *Ease*, smooth *Ease*—she is the nurse of you all: in her calm shadow and in her teeming bosom ye are all bred."

The Celtic orator's trumpet was blown against the City of Ease, in his call for Welsh recruits; and it happened that the day before his speech was given I saw, at the top of High Holborn, the traffic held up by a troop of recruits in common clothes, marching behind two pipers in khaki—possibly a Scotch contingent. Among the bystanders was a well-known

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Dantean, who had no doubt come from the British Museum. "That is a heartening thing to see!" he said as they passed. Yes, truly: such things Dante saw, and they helped him to his poetry, and in such things may lie the beginning of our new poetry.

> ..." I saw, or I did seem
> To see, that tyrant Lord his revels keep
> The leader of the cruel hunt to them,
> Chasing the wolf and wolf-cubs up the steep
>
> Ascent, that from the Pisan is the screen
> Of Lucca: with him Gualandi came,
> Sismondi, and Lanfranchi, bloodhounds lean."

ERNEST RHYS.

THE FIGHT AGAINST MATERIALISM

GOD made man in his own image—high of purpose in the region of the Spirit. German civilization would re-create him in the image of a Diesler machine—precise, accurate, powerful, with no room for the soul to operate. That is the higher civilization. The new philosophy of Germany is to destroy Christianity. Sickly sentimentalism about sacrifice for others—poor pap for German digestion. We will have a new diet. We will force it on the world. It will be made in Germany. A diet of blood and iron. What remains? Treaties have gone; the honour of nations gone; iberty gone. What is left? Germany—Germany is left—Deutschland übe Alles. That is all that is left.

What We Shall Gain

The people will gain more by this struggle in all lands than they comprehend at the present moment. It is true they will be rid of the menace to their freedom. But that is not all. There is something infinitely greater and more enduring which is emerging already out of this great conflict: a new patriotism, richer, nobler, more exalted than the old. I see a new recognition amongst all classes, high and low, shedding themselves of selfishness; a new recognition that the honour of a country does not depend merely on the maintenance of its glory in the stricken field, but in protecting its homes from distress as well. It is a new patriotism, it is bringing a

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new outlook for all classes. A great flood of luxury and of sloth which had submerged the land is receding, and a new Britain is appearing. We can see for the first time the fundamental things that matter in life and that have been obscured from our vision by the tropical growth of prosperity. We have been living in a sheltered valley for generations. We have been too comfortable, too indulgent, many, perhaps, too selfish. And the stern hand of fate has scourged us to an elevation where we can see the great everlasting things that matter for a nation, the great peaks of honour we had forgotten—duty and patriotism, clad in glittering white; the great pinnacle of sacrifice pointing like a rugged finger to Heaven. We shall descend into the valleys again, but as long as the men and women of this generation last they will carry in their hearts the image of these great mountain peaks, whose fingers are unshaken though Europe rock and sway in the convulsions of a great war.

D. LLOYD GEORGE.

[Reproduced by special permission from the Chancellor's Queen's Hall speech.]

THE FIGHT FOR PEACE

GO forth as brave crusaders go
To meet the old barbarian foe;
Barbarian, though in culture's name
They wield the blade of endless shame.

Go not with lust of martial show;
With more than patriots' ardour glow;
Burn with the intenser nobler good—
Yea, fight for peace and brotherhood.

Fight that your arms may be laid down,
Not for the gold but the olive crown,
Till war is beaten to the dust.
Go, armed for peace, the nobler trust.

Go forth as brave crusaders go
To meet the old barbarian foe;
Barbarian, though in culture's name
They wield the blade of endless shame.

F. J. POPHAM.

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A SONG OF THE SOLDIERS

WHAT of the faith and fire within us
Men who march away
Ere the barn-cocks say
Night is growing gray,
To hazards whence no tears can win us;
What of the faith and fire within us
Men who march away?

Is it a purblind prank, O think you,
Friend with the musing eye
Who watch us stepping by,
With doubt and dolorous sigh?
Can much pondering so hoodwink you!
Is it a purblind prank, O think you,
Friend with the musing eye?

Nay. We see well what we are doing,
Though some may not see—
Dalliers as they be!—
England's need are we;
Her distress would set us rueing:
Nay. We see well what we are doing,
Though some may not see!

In our heart of hearts believing
Victory crowns the just,
And that braggarts must
Surely bite the dust,
March we to the field ungrieving,
In our heart of hearts believing
Victory crowns the just.

Hence the faith and fire within us
Men who march away
Ere the barn-cocks say
Night is growing gray,
To hazards whence no tears can win us;
Hence the faith and fire within us
Men who march away.

THOMAS HARDY.

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TO THE MUSE*

DIM Splendour in the door-way of the Years,
Enshrined within a hallowed heart of tears,
Speed Thou me on adown the vague distress
Of a lost joy, a vanished loveliness,
And deafening, ringing corridors of Time
Still echoing with a music more sublime,
And still, with every vista-length unrolled,
Of vision haunted and dream-gate of gold;
Where white wings flash and wheel in circling flight
To whelm anon in seas as black as night,
And—mingling with the voices of the foam
And siren-songs re-iterate of Home—
To plead withal beneath the midnight-stars,
When that too fond behind my prison-bars,
When that too faint I re-implore in pain:
Enough—enough—the lyre is mute again.

To-day I chanced upon a more high hill,
Where that the breezes charioted a-chill
Mid shy enchantments of the sheen and shade
And covert-cloisters of the beechen-glade;
And Titan-shafts shot up erect and bold,
Or stood grotesque and twisted from of old
Attendant on the bounty of the Spring
For choric robes of so green burgeoning,
As I upon the largesse of the skies
For panoply of Poesie's emprise,
Mid seething silences, that slept around
Dream-murmurous of intermittent sound
And ministrant of that entrancing strain
Went fluting through the fare-ways of the brain,
Till all my being blossomed like the rose
And fell an instant on supreme repose.

* In pursuance of Mr Gilbert Thomas's theme in our September issue.

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'Twas ever thus. In solitude—a child—
I came upon Thee in the desert wild,
And fell before Thee on the shining sod
And knew Thee all of Beauty, all of God;
And how the Splendour I had left behind
Went with me still encompassing and kind,
Up-springing from some secret source within,
Some altar-place as yet unstained of sin,
Interpreting inalienable loss
In language of the Cup, the Crown, the Cross,
And some high passion of the Pilgrim-Way
Predestined to a dream beyond To-day;
An exile path; and neither short nor long,
Sufficing Thee for sacrifice and song.

Far have I travelled since the crucial hour
That made of me, O dread and sovran Power
The nursling of Thine all-maternal breast
Deep-brooding o'er a world of wild unrest;
And sojourning mid many a sight and sound
And soul and city set the wide world round,
Full many a sacred solitude have trod
Of the grim city and the mountain-sod;
Still moving on, with feet devoid of sound
Between two worlds inextricably bound,
To draw the song-draught from the murmurous stream
That slips adown the cloud-capped Hills of Dream,
From some bright Mansion of the Morning Star
Touched with the tears and tragedies that are
Of this our mortal life;—a transient breath
'Twixt twin beatitudes of Birth and Death.

E. M. HOLDEN.

THE TALISMAN

WHAT is Fortune, what is Fame?
Futile gold and phantom name,
Riches buried in a cave,
Glory written on a grave.

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What is Friendship? Something deep
That the heart can spend and keep:
Wealth that greatens while we give,
Praise that heartens us to live.

Come, my friend, and let us prove
Life's true talisman is love!
By this charm we shall elude
Poverty and solitude.

HENRY VAN DYKE.

The Hague, August, 1914.

MONA LISA

FAIR lady of the faint illusive smile
And occult mystery of remembered bliss,
Was it not thine, love's ecstacy, the while
Thy soul drank deeply of love's rapturous kiss?
And what hath Life to give more sweet than this?
What goodlier service can the hours beguile?
What dearer memories that no heart would miss
Can with like joy our spirits reconcile?

Dost thou remember—nay, canst thou forget—
Thy loves of old, thy lovers ever true,
Whose kisses thy caresses fondly met
As Love's impassioned fire burst forth anew?
Know, lady fair, thy lovers love thee yet,
And with thy praises stil the Muses woo.

SAMUEL WADDINGTON.

THE Editor would be glad to hear from readers able to assist in organizing a POETRY REVIEW Matinée on behalf of the Red Cross Society funds.

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The Poets and Poetry of To-day

For article descriptive of this new feature see THE POETRY REVIEW for July.

No. 2

ALICE MEYNELL

THE THRUSH BEFORE DAWN

A voice peals in this end of night
  A phrase of notes resembling stars,
Single and spiritual notes of light.
  What call they at my window-bars?
The South, the past, the day to be,
An ancient infelicity.

Darkling, deliberate, what sings
  This wonderful one, alone, at peace?
What wilder things than song, what things
  Sweeter than youth, clearer than Greece,
Dearer than Italy, untold
Delight, and freshness centuries old?

And first first-loves, a multitude,
  The exaltation of their pain;
Ancestral childhood long renewed;
  And midnights of invisible rain;
And gardens, gardens, night and day,
Gardens and childhood all the way.

What Middle Ages passionate,
  O passionate voice! What distant bells
Lodged in the hills, what palace state
  Illyrian! For it speaks, it tells,
Without desire, without dismay,
Some morrow, and some yesterday.

All—natural things! But more—whence came
  This yet remoter mystery?
How do these starry notes proclaim
  A graver still divinity?
This hope, this sanctity of fear?
O innocent throat! O human ear!

¶ Recently published by *The Athenæum*, and described as "the greatest poem inspired by a bird since Shelley's 'Skylark.' Its beauty is flawless and the transcendent splendour of the last stanza, so great and yet so simply expressed, shows unmistakably its author's genius."

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VIEWS AND REVIEWS

WE wish to explain a misunderstanding in connexion with Mr W. G. Hole's " Prayer before War " which appeared in our last issue. Owing to the dislocation of things in general, and in particular to an error in the telephoning of a telegram which escaped notice when the confirmation came to hand, the version of this impressive poem, published in THE POETRY REVIEW, contained several stanzas which are included in a poem on the same subject by Mr Hole which is appearing in this month's issue of the *Dublin Review.* To the many readers of THE POETRY REVIEW who are interested in the technique of poetry, and in the struggle to secure for what in common parlance we call " inspiration," the nearest possible approach to perfect expression, a comparison of the two versions will be found as instructive as it is interesting.

WATTS-DUNTON TABLE TALK

MR HENRY J. BARKER, the author of several volumes of verse and the collator of examples of school children's humour which set a fashion, sends us an account of "An Afternoon with Mr Watts-Dunton," typical of many such interviews at the "Pines." It was on Saturday, April 1, 1911, that I had my first "afternoon tea and chat" with Watts-Dunton at the "Pines," Putney; and I am able to reproduce all that was said because I committed it to paper directly afterwards. We sat in a cosy little room on the walls of which were hung pictures by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Almost immediately, a dumb-waiter was wheeled in by the maid, who, after serving us, promptly vanished. At my host's request, I sat quite close to him on the sofa, as, he said, he was very hard of hearing. He began by saying that he was glad to meet a kindred spirit, one who was an admirer of Swinburne and, scarcely less important, one practically interested in gipsy manners and customs. He then said some very kind things respecting my MS. poem addressed to his friend, concluding by suggesting to me a certain alteration. I amused him very much by the promptitude and rapidity with which I there and then made the emendation. He tittered, and said that it was quite refreshing to come across such Yorkshire directness. He next spoke of his Romany books, prose and poetical. He was pleased when I told him that Rhona Boswell appealed to me strongly and always reminded me of the bewitching, buxom Tess of the D'Urbervilles. He said that he and Thomas Hardy were the best of friends, and he styled the novel a " long prose poem." He

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was also good enough to express the hope that my own gipsy heroine would prove as lovable as Rhona.

Speaking of his life-long friend Swinburne, he told me that the poet always wrote in a certain room upstairs and that after he had completed a dozen lines or so he would come down for his friend's comment on them. Swinburne would read the lines aloud, turning the words over on his tongue as if he were tasting and relishing his own music. "Swinburne," said my host to me emphatically, "Swinburne is the most musical poet that England has ever produced." In particular, as regards his Greek drama, "Atalanta in Calydon," he considered that the lyrics therein contained were so exquisitely chaste and musical that he could not conceive their charm being enhanced by the chanting of a chorus of women tripping round the altar of Dionysus. It was the clearly articulated *words* you wanted to hear; *they* constituted the music.

Speaking of that strange and wayward genius, George Borrow, he told me that he knew him more intimately perhaps than any other man did. Often did they take a stroll together over Wimbledon Common, now in pleasant converse, and now chatting with one or other of the gipsies who pitched their tents there in those days. Borrow would invariably call in at an old coaching hostelry called the "Baldfaced Stag"—now a private house—situate near Kingston Vale. He and Borrow sometimes visited, too, the pure breed of East Anglican gipsies; but, he said, they had now mostly migrated to America and elsewhere. We spoke of Monckton Milnes, afterwards Lord Houghton, the Mæcenas of his time. Watts-Dunton said that he was a man whom everybody wanted to know, whilst he himself knew everybody worth knowing. He had visited the "Pines," and it was he who introduced Watts-Dunton to Tennyson, and through Tennyson to Browning. On the occasion of the marriage of his son (the present Marquess of Crewe), he invited Swinburne and his friend to the wedding, an invitation they accepted. He was very pleased to learn from me that one of my books was inscribed to Lord Crewe, as also that his lordship had materially assisted me in founding the present Society of Yorkshiremen in London. On my saying that certain lines in his poem on the Stormy Petrel quite haunted me and that I often found myself murmuring them over, he said that those very lines I quoted to him had cost him infinite labour in the composing. In America, he said, the poem had a remarkable vogue and was included in all the best anthologies. He added that in composing his sonnets his chief exercise or difficulty was in selecting the right line-ending word for his purpose; however, when that was obtained, the whole of its available rhymes at once appeared before his mental vision like a constellation. (He twiddled his fingers in the air to illustrate this.) He further said that he did not agree

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with "inversions," and that I should not find a single one in the whole of his poetical works. On my venturing to say that Swinburne, like most other of our poets, made free use of them, he said that that was only true respecting his pieces written before middle life; in later life, he rarely indulged in them.

SONGS AND SONNETS FOR ENGLAND IN WAR TIME

MR JOHN LANE has published a collection of lyrics by various authors (45), inspired by the great war. We cannot do better than quote and emphasize the introduction. Perhaps at no time has poetry been in greater daily use; it has evidently been recognized during the last few weeks as an essential part of a daily newspaper's contents.

"In the stress of a nation's peril some of its greatest songs are born. In the stress of a nation's peril the poet at last comes into his own again, and with clarion call he rouses the sleeping soul of the Empire. Prophet he is, champion and consoler.

"If in these later times the poet has been neglected, now in our infinite need, in our pride and our sorrow, he is here to strengthen, comfort and inspire. The poet is vindicated.

"What can so nobly uplift the hearts of a people facing war with its unspeakable agony as music and poetry? The sound of martial music steals men's hearts before battle. The sound of martial words inspires human souls to do and to endure. God, His poetry, and His music are the Holy Trinity of war. Not always the greatest songs that have sent men on to victory. Sometimes it has been a modest verse that has found refuge in the heart of the soldier ready for the ultimate sacrifice, cheered on his way by the lilt of a humble song. Who else, indeed, can take the place of a poet?

"As Mr William Watson has most nobly said:

'Empires dissolve and peoples disappear:
Song passes not away.
Captains and conquerors leave a little dust,
And kings a dubious legend of their reign;
The swords of Cæsars, they are less than rust:
The poet doth remain.'"

OXFORD GARLANDS

WE welcome this rival series to the *7d.* novels with its revival of an old title. Cloth-bound, the garlands of grouped poems will find their way into many pockets, becoming more inseparable companions than any other "sevenpennys." That such a series is feasible is a practical indication of the interest in and use of fine poetry,

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and if the two volumes before us are an earnest of a lengthy series, we give the enterprise a warm welcome.

Detailed notice is superfluous, although it is the fashion to make every anthology the text for carping criticism of the compiler, or his selection, or his too rigid plan, or the absence of one. We might complain that the "religious poems" are very incomplete; instead, we are glad to have the compact connected selections, which will bring the poetry of aspiration and consolation to many eager readers to whom poetry is not merely an artistic hobby. The older poets are well represented, and in addition we have several modern ones, notably the Laureate, whose simple and devout pieces have been overlooked by his ardent young friends, for whom there is no place for God or religion or morality in poetry. Happily Mr Bridges is too old-fashioned to "forget Heaven and Hell"; probably he would sooner forget the Anglo-Saxon verse-makers.

The volume of sonnets is a most agreeable pocket companion. The 118 examples given include many that have been described as "perfect," such as J. Blanco White's "Night," declared by Coleridge to be the finest and most grandly conceived sonnet in our language; Sir Aubrey de Vere's "The Right Use of Prayer," considered by Wordsworth to be "among the most perfect of our age"; Mrs Meynell's "Renouncement," which Rossetti held was "one of three finest sonnets ever written by woman"; Swinburne's finest sonnet, dedicating Tristram of Lyonesse to Mr Watts-Dunton; and Watts-Dunton's own sonnet "To Coleridge," which Meredith described as "pure amber—a piece of descriptive analogy that fits the poet wonderfully."

SEA SONGS AND WAR SONGS

THE best anthologies for the present time are these two volumes published by the Clarendon Press—"Sea Songs and Ballads," with an introduction by Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge, and "War Songs," with an introduction by General Sir Ian Hamilton. In each case Mr Christopher Stone has made a delightful and exhaustive collection, which, however, practically represents a forgotten and unused literature. With a thoroughness that would encourage the Futurist, the old sailor's and soldier's songs have been discarded. How the change has come about with regard to the former is described by Admiral Bridge in his most interesting introduction, while Sir Ian Hamilton's review of war and regimental songs has provided a mine of information to recent paragraph writers. Mention should be made of the penny selection of famous patriotic songs recently published by Mr Erskine MacDonald.

A MINOR VEIN. Life, Love and Death. By Lucy Scott Bower. (Paris.)

THE verses in this volume have a genuine grace and a real charm. They are not very original nor very profound, as the author admits by her title, "In a Minor Vein," yet they all deal with the great themes of Life, Love and Death in a fitting and a serious spirit. If a more minute care and a stricter criticism had been applied in certain places we feel the result would have repaid the trouble. The following verses show something of the author's manner:

On my downy couch I am lying
  And watch the houses razed away
  Mountains dissolve with the passing day
They say it is I who am dying!

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All the might of history past
Bound up with joy and sorrow great,
I watched ticked off by the hand of fate
And crumble and crumble fast.

All who care for meditative poetry should certainly place this volume on their shelves.

OFFSPRINGS OF IDLENESS. By R. S. F. Laidlaw. (Erskine Macdonald. 1914. 1s. net.)

THIS is a small modest book of verse and is sold at an appropriately low price. All the poems are short and, as the author hints in his title, do not appear as the outcome of much labour. Mr Laidlaw has a graceful fancy and a certain gift of expression but, if he desires a place of remembrance, he must treat his muse with greater seriousness. The following verse about " Daisies " is typical:

Peeping a single eye in modesty,
And that is joy;
Trying to charm the great sun in the sky
And making love to sunbeams nearer by,
Such daisy joy!

CRITICISM OF POETRY

To the Editor of The Poetry Review.

Sir,—It is high time that criticism of all poetry should be abandoned. At present, it seems an absolute farce. Not one book of verse in a thousand is diligently read through; it is opened at random, carelessly skipped, an extract is published, and the reviewer, who has dozens of other books to pass judgment on, delivers a scant, *ex cathedra* verdict on what an author may have taken many years to write. These matured thoughts of time are disposed of in a few hastily written and often purposeless remarks.

As a rule, a column of a newspaper or weekly is devoted to these haphazard criticisms of half a dozen new books of verse. A long-winded novel, a verbose biography, a trite collection of futile remembrances, are all honoured with at least a page or two, whilst the poet has a few lines.

It seems to me that this sort of criticism can serve no possible useful purpose. It neither benefits the author nor is any reliable guide to lovers of the divine art. And amongst the many needless abortive paragraphs that fill the newspaper columns, these so-called criticisms of poetry rank amongst the worst of them.

Very often the reviewer does not busy himself at all with the subject on hand, instead, he airs his own opinions about poetry generally, losing himself in a wonderful mist of commonplaces about poetic ideals, according to his acute and rare imagination.

Sometimes the presumed mental and spiritual nature of the author of the book is dwelt on to the entire exclusion of its contents. Amongst a collection of reviews

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of my " One Hundred and Five Sonnets," published not very long ago, there were several of these idiotic banalities.

A critic of a new volume of verse, to my mind, should approach and pursue his task with judgment, care and with all the acumen which nature, I trust, has endowed him. The book ought to be read and digested at least twice. If its contents are weak, immature and only thin echoes of what has been said a thousand times, at least, then consign it to the oblivion it courts and deserves; on the other hand, if the critic should be attracted by *one* or two poems, whose originality and beauty are almost beyond praise, then the book ought to be thoroughly reviewed, its merits and demerits descanted on, its vices and virtues adjudged fairly and honestly. However, as I do not believe any critic will conform to my hints, which I offer with a meek heart, it may be best that all criticisms of verse be abolished.

Perhaps the new feature in THE POETRY REVIEW may serve all ends and purposes, and I shall be on the *qui vive* to note and enjoy the exceeding lustrous poetic gems which I am sure to meet in a magazine devoted to the exalted art.

Yours faithfully,
ISIDORE G. ASCHER.

[We deeply regret to hear at the moment of going to press, of the death of Mr Ascher, which took place on September 19. Mr Ascher was a Canadian barrister who had lived for many years in this country. He was a contributor to many periodicals and the author of several novels and volumes of verse, and was particularly devoted to the sonnet form, on which he was an authority. The discussion of poetical matters strongly appealed to him, and we shall miss his genial, devoted collaboration.—EDITOR.]

THE POETRY SOCIETY IN WAR TIME

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—I saw your notice in THE POETRY REVIEW appealing to all members of the Society to do what they could to assist the Poetry Society to continue its work in spite of the difficulties created by the present situation. I hesitated to write for some time, knowing that what I could afford to offer was so insignificant, but then it seemed to me that if every one who had the welfare of poetry and therefore of the Poetry Society at heart, were to double their subscription, much might be done; whereas if each one hangs back through not being able to give according to his desire, the result will be nil. I therefore send the enclosed P.O. as an extra subscription to the REVIEW, and wishing it continued success. I remain,

Yours faithfully,
MARGARET PEART
(M. Revell).

Tottenham, N.
Sept. 19, 1914.

[In the hope that Miss Peart's example and point of view will be widely followed and appreciated, we have pleasure in publishing the above letter. At the same time we would like to express our gratification at the many expressions of good will and the importance of poetry at the period which have reached us. As one correspondent writes:

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"One earnestly hopes your interesting reviews will not suffer unduly during these troubled times, when we need more than ever a sense of eternity in the midst of time."—EDITOR.]

THE GOLDEN BOOK OF SONNETS

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—In the interesting review of Mr W. Robertson's anthology entitled "The Golden Book of English Sonnets," which appeared in your issue for August, I notice that it is stated that Sir Philip Sidney is represented by only two sonnets. Would you, in justice to Mr Robertson, kindly allow me to point out that this is a mistake, as there are four sonnets by Sidney in the collection. Edmund Spenser is represented by the same number, as also are Philip Bourke Marston, Edward Cracroft Lefroy, Eugene Lee-Hamilton, and Mr William Watson.

Yours faithfully,
SAMUEL WADDINGTON.

15 *Cambridge Street,*
Hyde Park, W.

AN EXPOSITION OF MYSTIC LITERATURE WANTED

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—Might I be permitted to suggest that perhaps the greatest service to truth which could be rendered in the literary world to-day would be such an exposition of ancient and modern "mystic" poetry and prose as would trace the demonic force, scope and persistence of its underlying motive—a revolt against what is commonly known as the revelation of God contained in Holy Writ: a criticism that would show these cunning mixtures, which savours so saltly of truth, purity and love, in "goblets of radiance" to be but the cup of that ancient Enchanter whose harvest increases with the years.

Perhaps, however, the cumulative manifestation of demonic pride, wrath, despair and malevolence which is contained in these writings might prove too overwhelming for the human heart to contemplate.

I may add that for example, of the Gospel of the Underworld we need not seek the Futurists, almost any anthology will suffice.

I am, Yours faithfully,
H. C. BENNETT.

Spanish Town, Jamaica.
August 31.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE FUTURIST

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—Louvain, Malines, Rheims! How our Futurist friends must rejoice. We have found a redoubtable ally in the German army! Beat the big drum in joyful acclamation! You thought the Futurists were vain and silly windbags when they demanded the destruction of European art treasures, the rejection of all the great work of the past. You did not think such drastic practical steps would be taken by German culture to give effect to their policy, the success of which deserves another blast of triumph!

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Don't you feel very humiliated by this speedy, effective application of the first principle of the Futurist platform? Louvain, Malines, Rheims foreshadow the collapse of the immortals!

Yours, &c.,

AN ENGLISH FUTURIST.

POETRY AND THE WAR

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—Poetry lovers should be grateful to you for your timely war notes in the September POETRY REVIEW. The war will save us from the whirlpool and will bring us back to the realities of life and drive the mists away from the hills of vision. With German culture—as exemplified in recent weeks—will die the arrant nonsense that has passed for "high-browed" culture over here, the growing disrespect for all things sacred to simple folk, the disdain of religion and morality by those inoculated with the Nietzsche virus. The precious doctrine of "Forget God, forget heaven and hell, forget the past," the pernicious sneers at the value of chastity and the covert incentives to its opposite will be consigned with other rubbish to the eternal dustheap, never to be resurrected by the most zealous "muckrakers," in our time. Converted by the new spirit, the intellectual anarchists will gladly wear the white sheets and proclaim themselves to be the most sincere and virtuous of the orthodox and regenerate.

Yours, etc.,

London, W.C. J. C. KNIGHT.

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF VERSE-CRAFT, A LITERARY GUIDE-POST

THE young aspirant to the joys of poetry—joys only to be gained by intimate study of the greater poets—often stops on their very threshold; stops short and turns back, from sheer inability to "win in." For here are more than the Eleusinian mysteries; for ever veiled to the casual comer, but radiantly revealed to the initiate, the elect. He would fain be of their company, but there is none to show him the way: the secret rites of fellowship, the freemasonry of the Muse, are barred to him by his own ignorance. That is why he craves, above all things, enlightenment: a guide-post and a guide. Many questions leap to his lips directly there is hope of an answer; and the first of these is nearly always—What is poetry, and how may I enter into its kingdom? How, if not as poet then as student, may I learn its worth and make it mine?

In this REVIEW we have seen, again and again, how many and how eager are the hands which knock at the gate, but find in their own ignorance a bolt and bar. Young hands chiefly; unskilled therefore, because untaught, but often with a rich potential skill which time and training would reveal. We have seen in our time raw recruits to the army of the Muse develop a fire and power in fighting her battles undreamed of when they enlisted; we have seen the knowledge beget the power. Have we seen the growth of Poetry? Not, of course, where it did not exist in embryo from the first; but where the seed needed fostering care before it could bring forth fruit we have noted, as a result of that care, a surprising harvest. That is why we think our readers will welcome this new feature of the REVIEW: detailed, expert, individual criticism of all poems submitted, on the terms and conditions set forth below.

For the further encouragement of latent poetic talent we are offering two prizes of HALF-A-GUINEA each month for the two best poems sent in. If of adequate merit they

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will be printed here; and the criticism of the other entries will, it is hoped, prove genuinely instructive to those writers who find the science underlying the first principles of verse-craft a baffling mystery.

Without some such initiation, let it be clearly understood, Poetry will for ever refuse to yield up her ultimate secrets. She will remain, to all but the select few who "lisp in numbers," a veiled and hidden shrine; a peak from which the clouds are never lifted. Only by keeping her laws may we become citizens of her country, or even dwellers in its hinterland; and if we would keep them, obviously, we must learn them first. Having done so we shall see as with new eyes, hear as with new ears, the wonders she has in store for us: witcheries of manifold music, glories of many-coloured light. We shall voyage on the seas which Keats and Spenser sailed; soar with Shelley's skylark to hold fellowship with his cloud; hear Wordsworth's stockdove hold converse with his daisy, and Burns's field-mouse rustle away from his plough. For by learning we grow to love, and by love to understand, the poets who are our teachers; till the whole enchanted kingdom of their art lies plain before us, revealed by the law which is its light. To explain the beauty and meaning of that law, so far as a lifelong student of its mysteries may, will be the aim of the series of articles here begun.

CRITICISMS AND CORRESPONDENCE

G. Chester. You certainly have a good idea of poetic form. But you must pay strict attention to punctuation; and in this metre ("Renunciation") all lines should be rhymed. Verse 2 is the strongest; and "renounced" would be better than the word you substitute in the last line of verse 3. Do you know Christina Rossetti's *Three Nuns*? The spirit of it is just what you need to get into this.

Lines. The first of these is trite, and the whole set of verses distinctly inferior to the "Renunciation." The brackets in the last line are superfluous, and obscure the sense. Phrases like that in lines 1 and 2 must not be split up. Verses 2 and 3 are better; though line 1 of the former would be strengthened by omitting the phrase which recalls "Abide with me." In the last line I should write "the" for "that." End with an exclamation point. If these are first efforts, they are decidedly promising, in spite of their crudities, which practice will cure.

1. The Editor cannot enter into correspondence concerning the poems criticized.
2. Copies should be kept, as we cannot be responsible for the possible loss of MSS. Every effort will, however, be made to return these when stamped addressed envelopes are enclosed.
3. All work submitted must be certified as original.
4. Poems may be either typed or hand-written, but must in no case exceed 500 lines.

The following charges apply to members of the Poetry Society, non-members 10% extra.

	£	s.	d.
For Criticism of one long or six short poems (short ones not to exceed 24 lines).	0	10	6
For any number of Short Poems up to twenty	1	1	0
For Single Poems not exceeding 24 lines	0	2	6

All MSS. must be addressed to The Poetry Review, 16 Featherstone Buildings, Holborn, W.C., and marked "Criticism."

The two best poems submitted each month will be printed in THE POETRY REVIEW, and in addition a premium of half-a-guinea each will be awarded to the authors.

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THE POETICAL GAZETTE

HAMPSTEAD CENTRE

Meetings will be resumed on Tuesday, October 6, at 150 Finchley Road, N.W., at 8 o'clock. The following programme has been arranged for the autumn session. *October* 6, Members select their own poems; *October* 20, Robert Browning; *November* 3, Drayton's *Nymphidia*, *The Goblin Market* (C. Rossetti) and poems relating to Fairies, Witches, etc.; *November* 17, Original poems by members or unknown poets; *December* 1, *Prometheus Unbound*; *December* 15, Poems relating to animals.

Information respecting this Centre may be obtained from Mrs L. Tilley (Hon. Secretary), 193 Camden Road, N.W.

PUTNEY

The first autumn meeting was held at 10 Carlton Road, on September 14, when "Patriotic Poems" were read by Mrs Bishop ("The Fleet," Tennyson), Mrs Green ("The Country Needs You," H. Begbie), Miss Mathias ("Tubal Cain," C. Mackay), Miss Brooks ("England, my England," Henley), Mrs Noel ("In time of War," A. Noyes), Captain Noel ("The Troubles of the World," sonnet, by Wm. Watson, and "Henry V's Address to his Nobles"). Mrs Basil Gill read Gilbert Thomas's "Quest of the Muse." The next meeting will be at 10 Carlton Road, on Monday, October 12.

On Monday, October 26, at 5.15 p.m., at Northiam, Upper Richmond Road, the subject will be "Flowers in Poetry," and Mrs Bishop will give an address. Members are asked to read.

Kensington.—The Council has decided not to hold any meetings during October.

A fine tribute to the use of poetry is mentioned in a letter from the front which tells how an officer of the Hampshires kept up the spirits of his men in the trenches by reading Scott's "Marmion" to them. We have heard the cultured snob dismiss the great Sir Walter as "no poet, of course, just a writer of stories in verse," but we think he would have sacrificed his cherished reputation as a writer of decadent doggerel to have written something that could have been put to such a use as has been made of Scott's splendid piece of battle poetry. Of course, the Hampshire captain may be regarded as a man of no taste and without any authority to select Scott or any other poet for reading under any circumstances, but we believe that he put poetry to the supreme test and his choice was better than any priggish selection of the superior individual. Scott has been used under similar circumstances before; Captain Adam Ferguson, to encourage his men in the lines at Torres Vedras, read to them the battle verses of the sixth canto of "The Lady of the Lake," and the soldiers shouted for the brave poetry while the canons roared overhead. And we all remember the story of Wolfe reciting Gray's "Elegy," when in the night time dropping down the river to the capture of Quebec. Yet the poetaster says such men can know nothing about poetry! For our part we believe it will continue to be the companion, inspirer, consoler of all sorts and conditions of men in all circumstances and emergencies.

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The British Empire Shakespeare Society

(Founded by Miss Morritt in 1901.)

COUNCIL.

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HON. GENERAL DIRECTOR:
Mr ACTON BOND (*Hon. General Secretary*), 8 Clifton Hill, London, N.W. *Phone:* 6775 Hampstead.

THE B.E.S.S. exists for the purpose of making Shakespeare a vital force of the English-speaking race. Public Dramatic Readings are given in London by well-known actors. Throughout the country and in the colonies these Readings are given by the local members of each Branch, but unlike the usual method adopted by Societies previously to 1901, one of the principal rules of the B.E.S.S. is that all Branches should admit the Press free and the Public at a small charge to at least one meeting a year. Essay and Elocution Competitions, open to members in all parts of the world, are held annually. To prepare members for public Dramatic Readings and Costume Recitals, Reading Circles have been instituted in connexion with all the centres. Membership of one centre implies membership of the Society throughout the Empire. The Annual General Performances are held in the early autumn and the casts are representative of the whole Society. The Annual Subscription for Members is 5s., for Privileged Members 10s., the entrance fee in both cases being 5s. Privileged Members are entitled to front seats at all the Society's Meetings.

LONDON.—(Assistant General Secretary, Mr Hesketh Pearson, 14 Abbey Gardens, N.W.).—Postponement of the Festival Week. As many members of the B.E.S.S. have joined their Territorial regiments, and a large number of eligible age enlisted for active service at the front, the following letter has been sent to all those concerned with the Annual Festival:

"In consequence of the continuance of the war and the difficulty of foretelling an early termination, the Annual Performances will not take place during the week of October 19. This decision, which you have no doubt anticipated, was held over as long as possible, but we are all agreed that there is now no question as to its necessity. The Executive Committee will meet when the war is over to consider the possibility of holding the Annual Festival week at a date which is likely to prove successful."

The official report for 1914 has been issued to members and branches. In a note the President (H. H. Princess Marie Louise of Schleswig-Holstein) says: In consequence of my absence from England this year, I was only able to be present at the annual distribution of prizes at the Haymarket Theatre, when an interesting lecture was given by Mr Ashton-Jonson on "Shakespeare and Music," with Sir Herbert Tree in the chair—the speakers including Mr H. B. Irving and Mr Henry Arthur Jones. I am pleased to know that the first festival week of the Society, which took place at Weston-super-Mare, proved highly successful. For the first time, a lady acted as Judge of the Elocution Competition, at the Haymarket Theatre in the beginning of July. Lady Tree, who undertook this responsibility, has now become a patroness of the Society. This year we had a record entry, and the work was admitted by press and public to be of an unusually high standard. Again Lord Howard de Walden has judged the Essay Competition. I was glad to welcome Mr Henry Arthur Jones as one of our Vice-Presidents to fill the vacancy on the Council caused by the death of Professor Dowden. The most important meeting of the year was the lecture given by Dr George Brandes at the Garrick Theatre, with Mr Arthur Bourchier in the chair—the vote of thanks to the lecturer being proposed by Lord Howard de Walden and Sir Herbert Tree. To my keen regret, I was unable to be present, but it gave me much satisfaction to know that

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the theatre was filled with a great representative gathering of enthusiastic Shakespeareans. This year's annual Conference took place at St James's Theatre (kindly lent by Sir George Alexander) and, in addition to the transaction of other important business, I was gratified to learn that the delegates unanimously passed a resolution to raise the tribute. This additional tribute will help us to make good our annual deficit in connexion with the publication of the Report, and to pay our way without anxiety.

Her Highness, owing to stress of work in connexion with the war, found it necessary to curtail the Presidential note.

The Director's note states: The official gazette of the Society, The Poetry Review, now publishes month by month full particulars of our varied activities. This year's Report (1914) therefore omits the usual detailed description of the fixtures in the centres, but the tabulated list of meetings, somewhat enlarged, is retained. Members who are not already subscribers to The Poetry Review will help the work of the B.E.S.S. and at the same time keep in touch with contemporary poetry and verse if they support, and induce their friends to support, a journal of considerable influence in the literary world. Her Highness, the President, has promised a special prize for the best Recital of one of Shakespeare's Sonnets. The general work of the Society has largely increased in all centres, and it is satisfactory to note that the important city of Dublin, since the election of the new president, has become one of the most active branches. A new overseas branch will shortly be formed at Trinidad. To stimulate the friendly rivalry of Reading Circle members throughout the kingdom, an Acting Competition will be inaugurated next year.

£20 FOR A WAR POEM

Our Chicago contemporary, *Poetry*, a magazine of verse, announces a prize of £20 for the best poem based on the present European situation. While all poems national and patriotic in spirit will be considered, the editors of *Poetry* believe that a poem in the interest of peace will express the aim of the highest civilization. Poems must be received not later than October 15 and the prize-winning poem will be published in the November number. Other poems of a high grade of excellence entered in the contest will be purchased and published by *Poetry*. All MSS. submitted must be type-written, signed with a pseudonym and accompanied by a sealed envelope enclosing the name and address of the poet and the pseudonym used, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return postage. The judges of the contest will consist of the editorial and advisory committees of *Poetry*. MSS. are to be addressed to *Poetry*, 543 Cass Street, Chicago, War-Poem Contest Committee.

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ORIGINALITY IN POETRY:

A COMMENT ON CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM.

"ORIGINALITY" is the bane of lesser minds; it is the obsession of the truly "minor"; to the great poet the question does not even present itself. It is no healthy symptom in any age of literature when its critics cry aloud and persistently to its poets "Be original!" "He has something of his own" was the saying of a critic of our time, who once monopolized almost all the literary journals of the day. He was alluding to the verse of the late Mr Ernest Dowson. Possibly Mr Dowson had "something of his own"; the pity was that he did not keep it entirely to himself. As an answer to, or possibly an echo of this late incessant demand, a certain school of poets has appeared who by this intolerable itch for originality confess themselves weaklings. They will eliminate a line or whole passage of their verse, because after all "it is too like Milton," or "recalls Shelley too strongly." They need, as a matter of fact, be under no such misgiving, but they feel it "due to themselves" and to their genius that no charge of imitation shall be levelled against their verse. It need hardly be said that, broadly speaking, it is a good instinct to strike out for oneself, either in thought or in metre, but to be a slave of originality is of all slaveries the worst. So far as the school of writers to whom we have alluded is concerned, the effect is chiefly metrical, and produces on the reader a sense of sheer irritation. Feeling themselves niggard of thought, and poor in passion, they expend their whole effort of innovation on the technique of their art. They will not be surprised into an echo; they will evade like many strategists the snares of perfection laid for them by the older masters. The most extreme and disastrous instance of this determination not to follow, but at any cost to break away, is seen perhaps in the work of Walt Whitman, a true poet in essence, but bitten mad by a rabies of the unconventional. But the great spacious laws, and spacious enough because they are great, revenge themselves in the case of this poet in no un-

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certain manner. For his condemnation as an artist lies not so much in the fact that where he most strays from tradition he is most ineffective, but that where he is at times noble and sincerely grand, there inevitably he comes into tone with his great precursors. This is not a question of any descent to rhyme on his part, but of ascent to a stately and ordered utterance.

The "physician of an iron age," the master-imagination of modern Europe speaks here with no uncertain voice. Goethe has said boldly "What you assimilate is yours," and in that brief saying lies the whole vexed question of originality. At first sight, it might appear merely an invitation to poetic plunder, an easy act of spoliation. It is, of course, the very antithesis of this. For, and here is the gist of the whole matter, it presupposes the power to assimilate. This is a far more difficult, a far more testing demand on a new writer than to ask him merely to invent. If he cannot, in his own later-born talent, truly assimilate a former grandeur, he stands pitilessly unveiled in the mere attempt, and rightly earns the name of "imitator." Assimilation implies mastery. So some of the most beautiful and noble verse of a later age has been first inspired by an elder art; but the more modern singer, has, while nobly imitating, unconsciously thrown into a borrowed form his own new personality. Hence, such an experiment seems either palpably dead, or takes on the surprise of a fresh and living loveliness. The main point is that in this case a reverent imitation has become an unconscious self-revelation.

It has been the habit of the chief poets of the world, for the most part, not to eschew with cowardice a previous sublimity, but bravely to embrace it, conscious that they can love with it, and are too naturally strong to be overwhelmed even by the strong. So Virgil has been accused by the ignorant of "copying" Homer, and Milton of "copying" Virgil and the Greeks. It might be said truly enough, that but for Greek and Latin models, the severe perfection of the "Paradise Regained" or "Samson" could never have been achieved; and if any further argument were wanting, this would in itself suffice to prove that the great poet is never afraid of reproducing, because he can never fail to reproduce himself. So in the realm of drama, Mr Shaw would be "original" or nothing; while Shakespeare, deliberately and of choice, takes extant stories or well-known history and both fuses and kindles them by force of his unconscious might. Shakespeare never "invented"; he took what was ready to his hand as material

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for his prodigal energies. But in the present day if a dramatic writer on the one hand, or a lyric poet on the other, takes his text from the past, he is at once assailed by " those who know " as one who lacks " invention " and is not " creative."

The poetry of Tennyson may be appropriately adduced, if it were at all necessary; for the sway that has been and is still exercised by this poet's verse is undoubtedly due to a loving and diligent study of those who preceded him, more especially of Virgil. His verse has always a sweetness that is distilled, a melody that is recaptured. It is not on that account to be the less, but rather the more, admired. The final passage of one of his best poems, " Love and Duty," has the very pause, colouring and movement of the great Mantuan, but it is, in spite of this, or rather because of this, a noble passage of English poetry. It is always the singer, who doubts of himself, who is uneasily but perpetually conscious of a lack of living power, who strikes out wildly for some unguessed shore, and is overwhelmed in the effort.

THE EDITOR.

WORK AND WAR

HOW beautiful were the days of work,
When the hands were the bow and the violin holding;
When in far-shining pages they did not shirk
To tell the high thoughts; when they were moulding
The wonder-images; noble to praise
Were the lovely work-days.

Kindly were then all the deeds,
The ploughing and building and weaving;
We provided for all our needs;
To feats were we cleaving.
Another night cursed I, and will curse, the black warring race;
To-night, O for those days!

EMILIA S. LORIMER.

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THE SEARCHLIGHTS*

Political morality differs from individual morality, because there is no power above the State.—General von Bernhardi.

SHADOW by shadow, stripped for fight
The lean black cruisers search the sea.
Night-long their level shafts of light
Revolve, and find no enemy.
Only they know each leaping wave
May hide the lightning, and their grave.

And in the land they guard so well
Is there no silent watch to keep?
An age is dying, and the bell
Rings midnight on a vaster deep.
But over all its waves, once more,
The searchlights move, from shore to shore.

And captains that we thought were dead,
And dreamers that we thought were dumb,
And voices that we thought were fled,
Arise, and call us, and we come;
And "search in thine own soul," they cry;
"For there, too, lurks thine enemy."

Search for the foe in thine own soul,
The sloth, the intellectual pride;
The trivial mockery of the goal
For which our fathers lived and died;
The lawless dreams, the cynic Art,
That rend thy nobler self apart.

Not far, not far into the night,
These level swords of light can pierce;
Yet for her faith does England fight,
Her faith in this our universe,
Believing Truth and Justice draw
From founts of everlasting law;

* Mr Noyes' contribution to our symposium on the significance of the war.

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The law that rules the stars, our stay,
  Our compass through the world's wide sea,
The one sure light, the one sure way,
  The one firm base of Liberty;
The one firm road that men have trod
Through Chaos to the throne of God.

Therefore a Power above the State,
  The unconquerable Power returns.
The fire, the fire that made her great
  Once more upon her altar burns,
Once more, redeemed and healed and whole,
She moves to the Eternal Goal.

ALFRED NOYES.

HYMN BEFORE DAWN

THROUGH the clear stories of Heaven
  Tremble a myriad lights,
A radiant choir that whispers:
  " The heaven is night's:
But the night is God's,
  His hour of doubt,
Our vigil of constancy! "

Deep in the chapels of Heaven,
  Visible and invisible
Wheel the Faithful Seven!
  Hearken to Jupiter,
Bishop empyreal, shout:
  " The heaven is night's;
But the night is God's,
  His hour of doubt,
Our nocturns of loyalty! "

Lo! The altar of Heaven!
  Its shadows are fading,
Melting to roseate haze,
Nimbed with Gold that is singing:
  " The heaven is ours
Since the heaven is day's;

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But the day is God's,
His hour of hope,
Our lauds of faith:
The day is God's,
Life-bringing,
Heart of His clemency!"

RICHARD BUTLER GLAENZER.

ON THE MOSS: WAR TIME

LOUDLY, like the plash of blood
In murder's ears that seek to close
At night in thickets tenanted
By the fear of God,
Drip the berries of the guelder rose—
More than with September red.
And the rowans in the wood
Are as ravaged maidenhood,
Swaying, swaying, overhead.

Through the rain upon the moss,
Evening on disorient wings
Falls from out disgodded skies,
Falls as one who comes across
An end of all the holier things.
What was wealth to poor men's eyes,
Day's last gold, has gone to dross.
Darkness has a voice of loss
Lonelier than owl-cries.

In the peat pots looking down,
One wet star on the black water
Seems to watch if aught may swim—
Watch if aught may drown.
And whether as with eyes of slaughter
Or of tears, red and dim,
Her rays put forth, may not be known,
But by them a dead face is shown—
Christ's, as they murdered him.

JOHN HELSTON.

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THE GIFT OF THE INDIAN PRINCES

OF all the gifts the Motherland has claimed
  In this immortal moment of re-birth
Among the chosen may be justly named
  The diadem of India's hidden worth.

Across the battlefields across the seas,
  O'er desert and o'er everlasting snow;
This tale of how the Princes left their ease,
  Adown the centuries shall flame and glow.

Forgetting ancient feuds of creed and caste,
  Forgetting peace of home and pride of race;
Our golden brothers blow the herald blast
  Of unity, they claim their chosen place.

Beside the men who fight for freedom's crown,
  For mercy and the sacred name of God;
Not theirs the lust of conquest nor renown,
  They come as kindred of one weeping sod.

Perchance they never knew the Motherland
  Until this hour of ecstasy and pain
Made her uplift a solemn outraged hand,
  Made her pour forth her loyal sons like rain.

Upon the menaced leagues of stricken soil
  That Prussia's despot deemed an easy prey,
Only a Might divine such power could foil,
  When six to one the Allies kept at bay.

Those iron wolves driven with a fiery breath
  Amongst the freemen and the forest glades,
By creatures mad with lust of power and death,
  Men who speared Pity naked on their blades.

The Indian Princes watched awhile, then blew
  Their bugle of allegiance loud and long,

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From our resolve and from our tears they drew
 The deathless music of their battle song.

The love of freedom and the love of truth
 Has called the golden Orient to our side,
She gives her treasure and her valiant youth,
 The largesse of her wealth she scatters wide.

She bares a mystic lotus to the West,
 A heart whose hidden treasure we behold
With wonder, and there echoes in our breast
 A song of brotherhood unknown of old.

From burning Cooch-Behar from white Kashmir,
 With camel bells the pride of India comes,
Stately and slim, the hosts of Bikanir
 Advance to throbbing of victorious drums.

They have left palaces and tender hearts,
 To succour truth and love in distant lands,
They give without reserve, we too shall play our parts
 And place our honour in their outstretched hands.

They come, the Princes of the peacock throne,
 With turbans white as their eternal snows,
Down the long ages let this cry be blown,
 When England calls the heart of India glows.

BEATRICE IRWIN.

Mr Francis Grierson, the poet and art critic who has been described by Mr Arnold Bennett as "the most enigmatical personality of our times," says that out of the war a new order of ideas will spring up. "Freak art and freak music will die out for want of fresh recruits. Paris has been the hotbed of all sorts of eccentricisms in the name of art"—Mr Grierson has been living in New York lately, and is probably unaware how much London has been affected by the madness—"but the war will render them unfashionable. It will kill what I have called 'blue china poetry.'" Of London he adds, after declaring that there will be a return of philosophical thought to the fundamental verities, "London has wallowed in tears and temperaments until the decadence has become unconscious and mechanical. Nothing short of a war like this could have produced any striking result." From the decadent, the mountebank tricks, the sly epicene beguilements of recent days, the war will deliver us.

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A PEACE POET ON WAR

BY S. GERTRUDE FORD

PATRIOTISM and peace seldom go hand-in-hand in poetry: your patriotic poet is usually a Tyrtaeus cheering his country's armies to battle, or extolling their exploits when the war is over. Even Mr William Watson was once accused by the *Quarterly* of being a bellicose bard, who had " caught the journalistic knack of blushing for his country " and " spoiling for a fight." But if anyone is disposed to accept that verdict he, or she, must have forgotten such examples of the poet's work as are given below. They prove conclusively that to be a peace poet is not to be the poetic champion of " peace at any price "; and that the loftiest type of patriotism may co-exist with a full sense of the unparalleled calamity of war.

Take " The World in Armour " and " The True Imperialism " as illustrations. One of these laments the horror of " war that sits smiling, with the eyes of Cain," in nations nominally at peace; the other bids England conquer herself before dreaming of material conquests, won on alien territory:

> " Your savage deserts howling near,
> Your wastes of ignorance, vice and shame:
> Is there no room for victories here,
> No field for deeds of fame?
>
> " Arise and conquer while ye can
> The foe that in your midst resides,
> And build within the mind of Man
> The Empire that abides."

Of course, this only applies to wars of aggression and adventure. The war for honour's sake has no keener champion than William Watson; war, that is, on behalf of smaller nationalities oppressed by great neighbours with bullying proclivities. Every one remembers the noble Armenian sonnets, which blazed like lightning set to music in their unfeigned passion for the cause of that sorely-persecuted people; the storm of shattering indignation, or scathing contempt, which they flashed on the powerless

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Powers, and the idle fleets and armies, the indifferent or inactive Senates, and the peoples who also stood passive—till the "Purple East" had done its work. There is perhaps no more striking instance of the power of poetry in recent times than the reception of the "Purple East" when it first appeared as a shilling booklet in 1895. The first edition was exhausted, I believe, in a few days; the message which was the burden of the poems spread like the proverbial wildfire; the poems themselves "caught on" with instancy of appeal. The book woke England up, in fine, as it was meant to do. No war on behalf of Armenia's oppressed population followed; but the English people had proved themselves still capable of responding to a great poet's trumpet call. With the right or wrong of the foreign policy of that day, of course, we are not here concerned; nor do we offer any opinion on it. What does concern us is that poetry, urging a nation to sacrifice and appealing to it in the name of honour, found its audience and had its reward.

Earlier than this, the poet had been called to account for what a *Bookman* reviewer styled work of a temper "strangely bloodthirsty." The phrase specially referred to a sonnet in the Soudanese series; a sequence of which this is a typical specimen. I omit the first two lines only:

> "There are who tell me with a shuddering eye
> That War's red cup is Satan's chosen drink.
> Who shall gainsay them? Verily I do think
> War is as dreadful almost, and well-nigh
> As ghastly, as this terrible peace whereby
> We sit for ever on the crater's brink,
> And feed the wind with phrases, while we know
> That just beneath us yawns the precipice
> O'er which a gossamer bridge of words we throw,
> Yet cannot choose but hear from the abyss
> The sulphurous gloom's unfathomable hiss
> And simmering lava's subterranean flow."

Not the language of a "peace at any price" poet, this! Its tone and temper are in tune with martial music.

But at the time of the South African war the poet's inherent love for the Angel of the Olive-Branch blossomed and bore fruit. In "For England," the little book which to some of us always seems to contain the purest gold of his genius, patriotism and peace join hands. Who does not feel the wail of the lovely "Lamentation" echo in his own heart in these days of doubt and suspense, when hopes and fears follow hard on each other's heels?

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"And foresight of how long the end yet tarries
To no man born of woman hath he given,
Who marshals all His flashing legionaries
Nightly upon the silent field of heaven."

It is surely the true attitude of the poet towards war which this book, even more than others from the same pen, evinces throughout: shrinking from an infliction of its horrors, and disallowing them for any but the most inevitable necessity; except (note the exception!) in honour's name and for duty's sake. Even then—how the true poet, the one who is seer as well as singer, yearns for a more excellent way! For poetry is vision, imagination, insight: it sees as by a lightning-flash what others see dimly and confusedly, and utters what it sees in a voice as compelling, as "immediate" (to use one of the catch-words of criticism), as the ensuing thunder. Therefore the born poet, given a true sense of his mission and its responsibilities, will never be dazzled by the "pomp and circumstance" of war into blindness to its havoc and horror. He will lament its wanton waste of life and the power of life; its vandal destruction, in one red hour, of the work of the arts nourished through centuries of peace. And therefore he will demand that no claim less inevitable than duty's or necessity's shall supersede, in any age or land, the call and claim of peace; sacred and supreme till Honour's voice conflicts with hers. Then, by all means, let us "strike, and firmly, and one stroke"; the one that needs no other because it cuts clean, goes home, and so by war ends war. But no poet of true insight will bear the thought of that "intolerable cure" for any disease but dishonour; or the tyranny whose air freedom cannot breathe, and live.

This feeling towards war will, in all times, generate its loftiest poetry; and it has been William Watson's feeling, evidently and consistently, throughout his poetic career. Perhaps the ringing challenge of the lines *On Being Called a Pro-Boer* express his patriotism at its highest. The poetry of polemics, or of self-defence against personal attack, has few nobler passages: Shelley's *Lines to a Critic*, for instance, leave us cold by comparison:

"Friend, call me what you will; no jot care I,
I that shall stand for England till I die.
England! the England that rejoiced to see
Hellas unbound, Italy one and free;
The England that had tears for Poland's doom,
And in her heart for all the world made room;

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The England from whose side I have not swerved,
The immortal England whom I too have served,
Accounting her all living lands above
In justice, and in mercy, and in love."

So with the recent *Times* sonnet in defiance of the war lord "on such easy terms with heaven"; so with the great quatrain on *Harvest*, crystallizing the tragedy of the conquered "little peoples" into four perfect lines. It is always the same harp; tuned to a different key, and uttering songs of many moods, but with the one high note heard through all and in all. *Peace and War* reflects a mood of pessimism; so does the loftier beauty of *The World in Armour*, with its remarkable prophecy of "the world-war's world-wide fire" which rages to-day. But often the call is a clarion's, the rhythm a marching army's; soldier's music, showing that high hazards bravely faced are better a thousand times than unillustrious ease. And his sympathy with other nations is demonstrated with equal clearness: witness the great sonnet to America in the *Purple East* series, and that to France—"immortal and indomitable France"—in the *Odes and Other Poems*, now included in the *Collected Works*. But for England, above all lands, his passion burns with a starry clearness never eclipsed; the passion of a patriot poet who values his country's honour even more than her peace. For to peace he says, as the old cavalier poet to his mistress:

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not Honour more."

When the Marquis di San Giuliano, the brilliant and widely cultured Italian Foreign Minister, lay dying last month he emerged from a state of coma and surprised the watching doctors and relatives by asking his Under-Secretary—not for the latest news of the war, out of which he had striven to keep his country, not for information concerning the position and preparations of Italy, but to recite some couplets of Dante's "Paradise." The Secretary, who recited the poem until the Minister had heard enough, explained that every night after midnight, when tired from the fatiguing work of the day, the Marquis used to call him to his room and ask him to recite poetry to refresh his memory, and to prepare him for rest.

**"Had I a tongue in eloquence as rich
As is the colouring in fancy's loom,
'Twere all too poor to utter the least part
Of that enchantment."**

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HOW LONDON SCHOOL BOYS FIND EXPRESSION IN VERSE

FOR some time I have worked on an interesting little experiment in an attempt to find whether it were possible for the boys of an L.C.C. school to find expression in verse. Our medium has been a class magazine. Its contents are the compositions of the boys, except for a few notes of my own and a poem of merit, which they are expected to learn.

The class has been under my care for three years During that time each boy has bought and established for himself a small library. To the houses of Stead and Collins and Brodie I owe much for their penny publications.

The experiment began with an attempt to stop the reading of such literature which I might call the "detective and cowboy story." We entered into an agreement. They would bring me their pennies, I would buy their books, and they would cease to read their much cherished detective plots. Furthermore I was to confiscate any such found in their possession.

Eagerly did they look forward to these books. It was not long before some brought two and three pennies for additional books for their brothers and sisters. It was, indeed, encouraging. Their homes had been touched by these lads' enthusiasm.

No giants or fairies of any repute missed us. The travels of Ulysses became far more entrancing than the working out of a detective plot; the search for the Golden Fleece more exciting than the search for the miser's gold; the actions of Roland and Oliver far grander and on a nobler plane than any the cowboy could act.

In conjunction with this we seriously turned to the realms of poetry. Gradually, as we had done with the reading, did we journey from the land of fairies and giants to the knights and their chivalry unto the real and heroic. It was not enough that I should read them "Alice in Wonderland" or the "Water Babies." They must have me print the poetry contained therein that they might learn it.

For two years we carried on this plan. As each new writer was introduced surely did they unearth some photograph of him. This we carefully framed until now we have a miniature portrait gallery upon our walls. No longer

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were the " nasty " stories (as they came to call them) read. They had come to appreciate the beauty of words. So they turned to produce some lines of their own.

Our magazine was to be only a small production of some eight or ten pages. Their imaginations could run riot on any subject they pleased, but they must be obedient to the laws of good verse and there must be beauty in the lines.

There are many interesting problems in connexion with the teaching of English. But the one that mattered here was, could the boy define for himself the inference that in verse there is a vital connexion between sound and meaning? Could he place on paper words that would convey his thoughts in a manner beautiful to the reader? I was fully cognizant of the difficulties in their way, mainly those of language and experience. I must let the results speak as to the manner they overcame those obstacles.

It was remarkable how greatly the child's immediate environment acted upon his productions. He soon found it meant certain failure if he were insincere to his own thoughts, his own experience and environment.

The topics naturally were many and varied. But in all cases the poetry produced sprang from a sincere and deep interest in the subject. One lad, deeply interested in his nature lessons, produced these lines which he called " Fairy Gold ":

Midst their leaves, so fair and green
Water-lilies float serene;
When their silver cups unfold
They are filled with fairy gold.

In the shadows you can see
Little cowslips dance with glee;
When their yellow cups unfold
They are filled with fairy gold.

On the commons free and wild,
Lives the gorse, as if exiled;
When their little boats unfold,
They are filled with fairy gold.

It is no small crime I am committing when I give away the secret of the following verses. The youthful writer came to me one morning and handed me his paper. " Excuse me, Sir," he said, " but sister annoyed me, so I thought I would tease her and make up some real poetry about her. But

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I do not think you ought to print it, for she would not like it." And there is more than boyish cleverness in it. The lines have a true ring.

Robin sits there, in an old-fashioned chair,
Mary she sits in no other;
Each steals a quiet glance
At the other by chance,
More shyly than sister and brother.

The fire burns low, as without any glow,
Both bend together to mend it,
When tender hands meet.
Their soft touch is so sweet,
They seem in no hurry to mend it.

Robin sits there, in an old-fashioned chair,
Mary she sits in no other;
For between me and you,
Robin's chair will hold two,
Though it wouldn't hold sister and brother.

Often a boy's imagination would be moved as I read them some story. We were reading the " Treasure Island." On my table one day I found a paper on which was written the following:

He was a grim old pirate,
Who sailed the Northern Sea;
His name was Pete the Irate,
Fierce and bold in face was he.

He had a fault, 'twas drinking,
A fault that he ne'er stopped;
One night as he was drinking,
He drank and then he dropped.

" I've lived on the sea, my boys,
I've captured many a boat,
I've filled my fill with the joys
Of the sea, since I was afloat."

I am not so sure that this lad did not see something wonderful in Long John Silver's rum song.

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Another taking Hereward for his hero wrote:

Then again he did sail and ride,
   And came once more to the Fen;
And the birds of the Fen they cried,
   "The Wake has come home again."
And then he travelled fast to Bourne
   In spite of Norman French
He soon had cleared his native town
   Of all the rascally French.

It is rarely that one gets the purely descriptive. Now and again one will come across poems beginning in this style:

In our garden by the wall
Grow some roses white and tall;
Near them, drooping down and dead,
Are some others small and red.

But the following is of much merit for a boy of ten. There is thought in it. His words convey feeling:

The sky is one great stretch of grey,
   The earth looks dead and dreary,
The raindrops fall the whole day long,
   And every flower seems weary.

Next morn the sun arose to sight,
The once sad world was shining bright,
The flowers gave forth some fragrant smells
The trees did shake like great church bells.

The following is interesting:

The sun is out,
   The sky is clear;
Come fish for trout,
   Or hunt the deer.

We sat by pines,
   We ran about,

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And threew our lines
To catch the trout.

. . . .

Then afterwards
We chas'd the deer,
Across the fords
By a big weir.

It is surprising how difficult it is for a boy to get any real "go" in his lines when he attempts such as the above.

These are but a few specimens. I claim no further merit than is due to them. They are but compositions of boys of ten and eleven years of age. I am fully cognizant of their failings, but I am also aware of much merit. Often a boy has come to me for guidance when in difficulties with metre or when his own vocabulary has failed to supply him with the word necessary to round off his simple rhymes. But in all cases the boys were the originators of their poems. They have taken an infinite delight in the production of their magazine. And the labours have not been in vain.

Many of their lines are bold and beautiful. They bear the imprint of culture and thought. For myself I am satisfied that this small experiment has borne fruit. I can but hope that it will produce even greater results in the future.

GEO. AYLES.

THE PASSING OF FORCE

WITH dread and ruthless strength the crested wave
Swoops with an eagle flight upon the shore,
Still, passive to the fierce attack and roar
Of fiendish glee. With forehead pale and grave,
Silent with heedful care, steadfast and brave,
The Allies stand, and nobly shall restore
Mild Culture's humble sway. Fear nor deplore
The foaming pride. Let mighty whirlwinds rave;

Still stand the rocks though battered by the storm
And shaken by the fury of the strife,
While, beaten, ebbs the Ocean reft of life.
Thus fore the might of Honour's lofty form,
With broken crest defeated Force shall go,
Maimed, shattered by its own remorseless blow.

DAVID J. DARLOW.

O

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THE CONSTRUCTION OF POETIC PLAYS

UNDRAMATIC DRAMA

ALL the good that can be said of a play, the obviously undramatic character of which is excused by its not being intended for the stage, may be said of Miss Bunston's "Jephthah's Daughter." (Erskine Macdonald, 2s. 6d. net). The question arises, however, whether the dramatic was the form best adapted for Miss Bunston's purpose. Although it is a truism that a poetical conception can be expressed in one form only—the form, that is, determined by its essential character—it is by no means necessary that the dramatic form should be used only when stage representation is contemplated. It may be very effectively employed, for instance, when the author desires, as his main object, to reflect an idea from the angles of various minds. The interaction of ideas, indeed, is often as truly dramatic as the clash of wills. But the instinct of the stage is necessary to ensure the success of even a literary play. It is a great mistake to suppose that the common ability to see oneself playing an imaginary part implies the possession of this instinct, or that its strength depends on the vividness with which one does so see oneself. Such a power reveals rather the actor than the dramatist—a fact which explains why so many plays too frequently contain only one more or less living character, all the rest being subordinated not to the laws of their own being, because they have no distinct being, but to the requirements of the hero.

The story of Jephthah's daughter, as it stands, does not lend itself to dramatic treatment. It has for its motive the quality of all qualities least dramatically promising: absolute submission to an outside will. No rebellious voice, no agonized questioning of the justice of things, is allowed to make itself heard, and it would appear that this is the very feature of the story which appeals most strongly to Miss Bunston. Humanly speaking, the incident as related in Judges is incomplete. What we read there can only be regarded as a magnificent piece of special pleading. It recognizes no human particulars beyond those which emphasize the significance and beauty of the state of mind held up as an example. It is impossible, however, to accept the scriptural Jephthah as a complete human being, or to believe that his daughter was not something more than simple goodness appropriately personified. Miss Bunston realizes the necessity of human-

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izing the story, and invents various characters to provide motive and justify such action as her conception of it involves. She omits, however, to re-create either Jephthah or his daughter: an act of justice necessary not only to the protagonists themselves, but to ensure the humanity of the other characters. True, Jephthah reveals a promising vein of truculent self-assertion in an early scene, and we note as a possible factor in the anticipated development that his weak point is vanity. But nothing further is heard of these qualities, nor do his later speeches confirm us in the belief that he ever really possessed them. There is nothing human in his submission to what he so easily accepts as the inevitable. He is, indeed, a very depressing person. He does not even achieve the petulant explosiveness of a Job. At the same time, from an entirely sympathetic point of view, there is something impressive in this massive, melancholy, Miltonic submissiveness. But it is a kind of thing which becomes tiresome, and Jephthah's is no exception. His daughter, in a more striking degree still, is merely a mood personified. She is, as a woman, far too good to live, and we watch, almost with indifference, her sacrifice of what we cannot help feeling she did not much value. Nothing merely human could possibly have lived in the air breathed by these two abstractions. Their passion of submission is so strong that all the other characters are subjugated by it. Ithamar, indeed, the daughter's betrothed, resigns himself with such intolerable philosophy to his loss that we turn with relief to the little vixen, Taphath, who does her best to be wicked, and to her fellow conspirator, that beast Obal. Alas, their villainies are not even frustrated. Having nothing whatever to do with the development of the plot, they merely fizzle out.

It is possible that all its inherent difficulties might have been overcome, and the story, which contains some fine moments and the material for more than one great situation, completely re-humanized. It would be a gallant adventure to attempt to create a world in which Jephthah and his daughter should move naturally and without loss of dignity; to key up all the necessarily related human passions, dreams and rebellions, which are omitted from the Bible narrative, to such a pitch of intensity that the catastrophe should win our shuddering approval. But the greater the dramatist, the less likely would he be to go out of his way to look for difficulties.

So far I have been dealing with "Jephthah's Daughter" as a play merely. It would have made a fine narrative poem, and one cannot help regretting that Miss Bunston did not choose that form. It would have suited both her powers and the subject better, and the gain as a work of art would have been great. From beginning to end it might have been in the same key. There would have been no occasion to invent characters whose part in the play

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was merely that of passive discordance. The whole incident, too, is so largely simple that such slight action as is involved would have lent itself well to description, and have provided fine material for Miss Bunston's undoubted gifts in this direction. It is quite certain that with her powers of reflection, her use of imagery that gains in subtlety on a second reading, she would have made a very fine thing of it. As it is, the work gains by being read as a poem, or a series of poems, with dramatic devices to facilitate the telling of the story.

The speeches put into the mouth of Adriel deserve particular attention. As far as this character's part in the play is concerned, he shares the general ineffectiveness, but his kindly wisdom is the result of wide experience and a close observation of men and things. He is consistent throughout. His background is a life which he has really lived himself, and if he is somewhat given to generalizing not too profoundly, no matter. "Our lawgivers," he says.

"have told us how to live
But of our dying they have told us nought.
Perhaps they held it such a simple thing
That it should need no law, seeing that birth
Is not more general."

The comparison, in his next speech, of death with a small door in a dark high wall surrounding a secret garden of unsuspected beauty, is the kind of thing which, once read, is never forgotten. In fact, the whole of the first part of the fifth act, in which this speech occurs, is of surpassing beauty. . . . It opens on the early dawn of the day appointed for the sacrifice. The air on the green hill-top is dewy clear; the distant mountains of Midian lift their splintered peaks into a cloudless sky. Mahlah enters. Perhaps her opening words are too innocent, too joyously irresponsible, but of this in a poem we are not so critical. She finds Adriel already there. The old priest is heavy with grief, for Mahlah has always been as a daughter to him. They talk; their speeches are very beautiful. Adriel can only think of the terrible fate awaiting Mahlah in a few hours' time. She, however, is not only resigned, but happy. There is no room for hesitation or doubt in her mind. "The time is very near," she says.

"I watched the sun arise. I could not think
He never would arise again for me.
Indeed, he seemed to speak and say 'Rejoice!
To that glad world I leave, whose glory bursts
Behind me into thine each time the gates
Of morn and evening open unto me,

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> That world that hardly can contain its bliss
> Thou shalt be brought.' "

She implores Adriel not to turn her from her task, and Adriel replies out of the bitterness of his heart, blindly disapproving of what he could not prevent:

> " I have no word to speak. The air is thick
> With evil passion, cowardice and lust,
> Ambition and revenge. A desert storm
> Is not so blinding to the bodily eye
> As is the dust of men's conflicting wills
> To insight of the soul."

Mr Roland Hill's sumptuously got-up "Christopher Columbus," (Routledge. 3s. 6d. net), although it frankly acknowledges stage representation to be its *raison d'être*, must, as a drama, be classed with "Jephthah's Daughter." Mr Hill, like Miss Bunston, possesses a vivid sense of "situation," but none whatever of action. He would seem to be under the impression that good drama demands that the characters should *tell* the audience all about themselves, their motives and their actions. This, of course is just what they should not do. I can only recommend would-be dramatists, to whom this point may not be quite obvious, to note, when next they watch a good play, how seldom a character is directly self-explanatory; and further, that when the exigencies of the stage demand, as they sometimes do, that a character should provide some information about himself, or the plot, the whole action seems for the moment to be thrown out of gear and performers and audience to experience a sense of discomfort.

Mr Hill's method has been to take each incident in the life of his hero, which stands out because of its picturesqueness or significance, and to work it up into a situation—a method which adds greatly to the ordinary difficulties involved in writing a play, the hero of which is a well-known historical character. Such a play can only be made a convincing picture of life by the power of the story in which the chronicled incidents are set. In other words, the invented incidents must appeal as vividly and convincingly to the audience as those which are already known to them. It follows, therefore, that to ensure a proportionate human appeal, the great historical situations, if good drama is to be the result and not spectacle merely, must be under, rather than over, developed. Instead of a play Mr Hill has given us a series of *tableaux vivants*. His invented characters, which are supposed to breathe the same air and to be proportionately of the same stature as Columbus, are but shadows of shadows; while the story is a

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Lilliputian affair through which his Gulliver has to move with the greatest circumspection lest he might damage the properties.

His speeches, like Miss Bunston's, are leisurely ornate descriptions, carefully and conscientiously comprehensive of particulars, in connexion with which the possible effect on the audience receives not the slightest consideration. However great the beauty of their expression, and this frequently is not inconsiderable, one soon realizes that they are all made by the author. Nor do I find that Mr Hill possesses the saving grace of humour. Dramatists frequently make use of a crowd not only to obtain a little comic relief, but also to give humorous or grim expression to a spectator's point of view. This crowd—this multiple man in the street—is practically all that remains to us of the old chorus, and very useful it is on occasion. But imagine the kind of crowd a member of which could deliver himself as follows, and yet escape destruction. We are standing in the street at the beginning of the scene which presents the triumphal entry of Columbus, and we hear an honest fellow say: " It is prodigious and yet melancholy to think that this boastful foreigner should return with successful discovery of a new world, to be fairly loaded with honours by the King and Queen! " (By the by, is not " fairly," as used, a flower of late nineteenth century slang: as who should say, " a fair treat "?). Mr Hill has given us a graphic series of pictures illustrating the life of Columbus, and a certain soothing pleasure is to be derived from a perusal of his melodious but rather monotonous verse. Drama, however, he has not achieved.

WILLIAM GIMBLETT HOLE.

POEMS. By Rita Francis Mosscockle. (Elkin Mathews, 1914.)

THIS volume is pleasant to read because of its homely simplicity. That some of its contents have already met with acceptance is shown by the fact that many of the poems herein have been published before. It is always straightforward, there is nothing new in its thought, nor has it any original beauty. But those—and there are many such—who like a coherent expression of their own thoughts, should appreciate these poems. The author is sincere and orthodoxly religious, but her longer and more ambitious poems, such as " The Golden Quest " and " Follow Me " will not satisfy those who have thought deeply or felt much. She has a cultivated taste, and sufficient metrical skill to tell tender and pathetic stories in attractive verses, as can be seen in such poems as " The Children Slept " and " Mattie in the Cloisters." Several of her verses have been set to music, and should make acceptable songs.

" The Voice of Spring," from which we quote a verse, contains some of her best work.

> " A voice more sweet than all earth's many voices,
> Rings out o'er woodland dales and hills away—
> Thrilling the pregnant soil and waking sleepers,—
> With the fair herald of spring's newborn day.

A. H. J.

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THE POETICAL GAZETTE

A New Poet Dramatist—War Poems—Centenary of the "Star-Spangled Banner"—The Month's Publishing—Criticism of Verse—The Treasurer's Appeal—Correspondence—Reports and Announcements, etc.

The war has delayed the introduction in Germany of a new poet-dramatist who is acclaimed as worthy to rank with Ibsen, Bjornson and Strindberg. Already famous in Scandinavian countries, Johann Sigurjonsonn, who "unites realistic portrayal of character and circumstance with poetic vision and diction," has already had his most successful drama "Bjoerg-Ejvind" played at the Court Theatre, Munich, and it was about to be staged in Hamburg, Bremen, Cologne, Essen and Vienna. We have not space for an analysis of a remarkable play, but we may quote the conclusions of an eminent French critic in justification of our reference to the new Icelandic poet who has so deeply impressed all other European countries. "There is no obscure symbolism, no fog of fantasy, no scandalous thesis, not even a new theory of art, nothing but poetry. Not the poetry of words, charming and fallacious, not of rhythm nor of dazzling imagery making us forget our miseries . . . but the sublime creative poetry which makes beings of flesh and blood like ourselves."

America finds our "preoccupation with turgid and dogmatic war poems one of the most remarkable features of the war." The output has been severely handled. Perhaps the New York *Evening Post* offers the most interesting comment when it points out that "the greatest poems have been written about little wars. The 'Iliad' was written around a siege carried on by a handful of barbarian chieftains against a city of the second class. The battle of Chevy Chase was a border skirmish following upon a cattle stealing expedition. . . . Little wars or else big wars in anticipation or retrospect—these are the rich soil for the poet. A great war in the actual, the fate of an empire truly at stake, may make poets out of the common crowd but subdues the poet to the level of the common crowd. . . . The poetry on which modern wars are fought is the poetry of the music-hall and the cabaret. Men go to their death on doggerel. That is why I consider the Poet Laureate's verses fully as good as any that England has produced in the moment of crisis," and he proceeds to pay them the unexpected compliment of declaring that "they come so close to the swing of doggerel that we can easily imagine English soldiers going to their death to the lilt of them in the face of the German hosts." How shocked some of Mr Bridges's perfervid admirers will be at the suggestion that his secular hymn may share that crowning glory and immortal honour with "It's a long, long way to Tipperary."

A correspondent sends us some interesting details of the picturesque and appealing commemoration of the centenary of "The Star-Spangled Banner" which are particularly pertinent at this moment. The national hymn of the United States had in

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part a London origin. It was born in the throes of battle, and the incidents which it describes were seen by its author; in the effort to secure the exchange of a friend who was a prisoner on a British ship he happened to be, during the memorable night of the bombardment of Fort McHenry, on the deck of the "Minden," in a position from which the attack was vividly revealed in all its details. Francis Scott Key's imagination was fired by the striking episode; and part of the poem was written on the deck of the "Minden," and finished as soon as Key landed. It was published in the Baltimore *American* nine days later, September 21, 1814. Although not in one sense the National anthem, the "Star-Spangled Banner" has received special attention at the hands both of the army and the navy, and it has become dear to a host of Americans.

Mr Key adapted his song to an English air written to accompany "To Anacreon in Heaven" and sung at important meetings of the Anacreontic Society at a tavern in the Strand, London. The music was written by an Englishman, John Stafford Smith, and was published in his *Fifth Book of Canzonets, Catches and Glees*, about 1780. The tune cannot be sung, as the Austrian and English national hymns can be sung, by a great multitude with ease of memory and ease of voice; it belongs rather with the French "Marseillaise," though the tune lacks the bugle-like qualities of that stirring air. The criticism often made that Americans do not know their own National anthem has a basis of fact; but the fact finds its explanation in the nature of the music. The army regulations prohibit the playing of the "Star-Spangled Banner" as a part of a medley. One of the humiliations of Americans abroad is the playing by the great bands of "Yankee Doodle" after the Russian and Austrian hymns. The regulations also provide that when the President and Vice-President are formally received the bands shall play the "Star-Spangled Banner"; and that whenever it is played at a military station or at any place where persons belonging to the military service are present in uniform, all officers and enlisted men shall stand at attention. At every military post or station while the flag is being lowered the band is required to play the "Star-Spangled Banner." The principal speaker at the centenary in Baltimore was Mr Bryan, the Secretary of State.

Anthologies of war poems are as numerous almost as the war poems themselves. We noticed four of the more distinctive collections last month. Each of them had a *raison d'être*, and the Sea Songs and Battle Poems had a general and permanent application and use. In the same category may be placed the volume of *Patriotic Poems* in the Oxford Garlands (Oxford University Press, 7d.). It contains much that is familiar, much that, although written long ago, is immortal and as pertinent to our present needs, and to a fine exaltation of spirit and to the honour of our country and those who maintain its great traditions of steadfastness and heroism, as anything written in our time. We do not need to create a new patriotic poetry unless we are less brave, less noble, less high-minded, less English than in the days of Shakespeare and Milton or even of Tennyson and Swinburne. How pertinent to present events and needs are the great poets who wrote of great deeds and great aspirations before their present detractors came upon the scene is indicated in Mr E. V. Lucas's anthology *Remember Louvain* (Methuen, 1s.) in which we find poems by Wordsworth appearing under such titles as "Cambrai and Le Cateau" and "General Leman."

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In spite of its topical subjectiveness, Mr Lucas's collection is (as one would expect) the most judicious and literary of all such anthologies, although, perhaps, the cheapest and most comprehensive collection, and one based on a definite scheme, is Mr Gordon S. Maxwell's *War Songs of Britain* (Brodie & Co., 6d. net). Mr Maxwell has cast his net wide in collating these songs of the army, the navy and the territorials, and his catch is not altogether a common one. His mesh has been so small that several glaring misprints have been retained. A large proportion of copyright pieces, including an egregious new version of the "National Anthem" is the feature of *The Country's Call* (Macmillan, 2d.). Illness may be responsible for Mrs Nesbit's selection being very stereotyped, sadly unrepresentative of her wide literary tastes and discrimination. We would have expected from her an anthology of a definite character and unique interest instead of this inadequate volume poorly presented (Goschen, 1s.). Mr A. E. Manning Foster has included a number of copyright pieces, some less familiar than "Thou Careless Awake" and "The Vigil," in his war anthology with the not altogether applicable title of *Lord God of Battles* (Cope & Fenwick, 1s.). With individual pamphlets of war poems we have not space to deal. War funds may have benefited from their sale to a sympathetic and indiscriminating public, but poetry has not gained.

The month's publishing includes Mr W. Forbes Grey's work on *The Poets Laureate of England* (Pitman, 7s. 6d. net), a new drama, *The Post Office*, by Rabindranath Tagore (Macmillan, 2s. 6d. net), a new edition of G. K. Chesterton's poems *The Wild Knight* (Dent, 5s. net), and John Masefield's new volume, *Philip the King* (Heinemann, 3s. 6d. net), which contains the most permanent of the season's war poems. "August 1914" does not curse the Kaiser or flaunt our righteousness; restrained, vivid and sincere, it will be read when most of the partisan poems are forgotten. Of this and the other volumes we shall have more to say next month.

The war has shown that the serpent can change his skin and the leopard his spots. The "new poetry" has become "moral" again; the "art for art's sake" crank pledges his faith to patriotic verse and advocates poetry with a purpose; the futurist, shocked by practical demonstrations of his "principles" (*sic*), hastily forgets his gospel; the poetaster who despised Tennyson becomes enthusiastic over naval songs of doubtful poetic value; patriotism of the jingo type has become the refuge of the converted "Universalist"; the German Chancellor's contempt for a "scrap of paper" which obstructed German interests has outraged the sentiments of those to whom other awkward "scraps" of paper had never before appeared precious. Our correspondents last month and the previous month have been justified by events. The literary expert also has been transformed by the war. One such gentleman, who did yeoman service for his friends, and who naïvely interrupted a glowing eulogy of the Laureate as the rival of Caedmon, Shakespeare, Milton, Herrick and other twentieth-century neglected poets to inquire what another medical man could know about poetry, and how he dared have any dealings with it, has become a military expert and is instructing us how to prepare for home defence and how to carry rifles.

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FIRST PRINCIPLES OF VERSE-CRAFT: A LITERARY GUIDE-POST —CHOICE OF METRE

LAST month, it will be remembered, we referred to the great and growing desire among young people for enlightenment in the mysteries of poetic art. They read the poets as the Ethiopian read the Scriptures, who, when Philip put to him the plain question, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" replied promptly, "How can I, unless some man should guide me?" It is precisely that need of guidance which these articles are designed to supply, partly by initiation into the science of verse-craft (for a science it is, as well as an art); and partly by the explanation of those technical difficulties which are as pitfalls in the path of the young artist.

To begin with, what is the first preliminary of a poem still unwritten, existing only as a conception in the poet's mind? Undoubtedly, the choice of a body to suit its soul; of a form, a metre, that will express it rather than disguise. The choice of an appropriate metre is half the battle in poetry: the poem sings itself spontaneously to the right tune, when the right inspiration has prompted it. Sometimes tune and thought come together, inextricably interwoven as cloud and lightning; and then a flash of genius, a lyric masterpiece, may well result. Failing that felicity, the form which fits the thought as the glove the hand must be sought, and sought diligently; else the poem, however striking in ideas or in the language vocalizing them, will inevitably fall short of perfection. Would not Browning's *In a Year* have been a fine and moving lyric, with poetry to match its psychology, but for the curious jog-trot and see-saw of its metre? And can we imagine Milton's great sonnet on the Piedmontese massacres, or Wordsworth's on British freedom in the "Liberty and Independence" series, cast in any other form?

This brings us to poetry's immediate need, in the present national and international crisis, of thoughts not only well conceived, but appropriately expressed: thoughts terse and trenchant in utterance as true in substance. For this purpose the sonnet or short lyric (and by "short" we mean one complete in two or three stanzas) is unrivalled. The loftiest ode, being not only lofty but lengthy, cannot hit home like the blade which is short as it is bright; the flash of a rapier, outdoing the cannon's heavy fire by the sheer brevity of its brilliance. It cuts clean, drives straight, like a well-flown arrow, and like it finds the mark; always supposing, of course, that the hand of a poet wields it. Mr William Watson's "For England" volume is a superb example of what the sonnet, the two or three-verse lyric, and the four-line epigram can be in time of war. No longer poems could have done the work so well.

We shall be happy to criticize the efforts of verse-students, and to advise them as to the best means of applying and perfecting any poetic gifts they may possess, on the terms and under the conditions given below. For their further encouragement we are offering two prizes of *half a guinea* each month for the two best poems received. If of adequate merit, these will be printed here; and the criticism of the other entries will, it is hoped, prove instructive to that large circle of verse-students who find the technique of poetry a maze without a clue. By knowledge, and by knowledge alone, may we hope to win the way to her interior fastnesses; that hidden bower of the Muse which guards a rose for our delight. Study and practice, work and waiting, will reveal

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it to the predestined discoverer, who will never be baffled by its preliminary thorns. Is not the goal, here as elsewhere, the brighter for the toils and hazards of the race?

CRITICISMS AND CORRESPONDENCE

For conditions see page 140 (September) and 169 (October).

ANTOINETTE. In this set of six there is little to criticize. You are evidently a practised versifier; but occasionally your thought could be worked up to a more effective climax; notably in No. III. Omit the quotation-marks in I; also the italics in IV (verse 1). In the latter poem I should insert "that" after "poet," and avoid the colloquial abbreviation by writing "spirit-signal granted you." In V, substitute "Still they baffle, still benumb" and "Harshly these with you have dealt," for lines 1 and 2, verse 5. No. VI is effective magazine verse, with an excellent climax. You are no tyro in the wooing of the Muse!

ANON. Admirably simple and touching. You strike the true lyric note, especially in the child poems. Persevere.

G. CHESTER. Metrically correct; but you must watch your syntax. In line 2, verse 1, of "The Gift of Love" there is an error of this kind, and in lines 12 and 13 of the other lyric. This second poem excels the first in freshness and vigour, and it ends well. But you should choose a less hackneyed theme; this one has been written to death. Study Francis Thompson's *From the Night of Forebeing* and William Watson's *Vita Nuova*—two perfect modern models of this type of poem. I like the ideas in "The Gift of Love."

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW

SIR,—Permit me to state that by the institution of your new "Criticisms" section you have, in my opinion—which I know to be shared by many lovers of poetry—incorporated in THE POETRY REVIEW a feature of the greatest value.

There are too many mere followers of the Muse whose ignorance of the laws of versification leads them to imagine that the art is easily mastered; and who, with the supreme confidence begot only of ignorance, spoil what would otherwise be passable verse, by flagrant disregard of its most essential laws.

There are others, again, who have at least progressed so far as to gauge, more or less accurately, the measure of their own ignorance; and who have thereby realized the vastness and difficulties of the field of study to be traversed before even the outer fortifications of the Muse's elusive citadel can be captured.

Many of these besiegers are unable to devote the necessary time for equipping themselves sufficiently to push an attack, and consequently hang back discouraged in the face of so many difficulties, feeling the lack of adequate authority to guide and instruct them in their progress.

It is, not infrequently, the very ones whose emotions are often of the strongest that are so supersensitive as to "funk" submitting their efforts to the average Press criticism (itself so ably criticized in the letter on this subject in the October number of the REVIEW, by the late Mr Ascher).

Unfortunately there are few, if any, entirely satisfactory works on the technique of

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versification suitable for the beginner—who stands most in need of them. Even a work such as Brewer's *Art of Versification and the Technicalities of Poetry* necessarily falls far short of all the student requires and *The King's English*, a work of 360 pages, with seventy pages devoted to "Punctuation," will probably require considerably more study than many a novice can afford.

Just as, in the case of the exact sciences, nothing in the way of literature assists the student's progress as much as his lecture courses and practical demonstrations, with their incidental individual instruction, so in the case of poetry nothing will assist the beginners as much as will the competent criticism of their own work, whereby their individual errors and weaknesses will be pointed out, explained and corrected, while their strong points and promising tendencies will also receive deserving attention.

The value of this procedure—for which no amount of individual study could be adequately substituted—will be, to the student of versification, far in excess of the nominal charge imposed by The Poetry Review Criticisms Department, as must, obviously, be also the extra amount of work entailed thereby.

I, therefore, desire to express my sincere and grateful appreciation of your new departure, which I earnestly trust will meet with the support and success it most assuredly deserves.

Yours faithfully,
Douglas S. Spens Steuart.

POETRY AND THE WAR.

To the Editor of The Poetry Review.

Sir,—I am neither pure nor brave, nor a Christian nor a Neitzschean; I am certainly a rather bewildered man amid all this talk of Right and Wrong, of Christ and Neitzsche—which poets seem, to me, to be suffering severely at the hands of many interpreters. I take it we shall find more virtue for the present in turning the other fellow's flank than in turning the other cheek, and that if junkerism is to be put down on this occasion it will have to be put down by force. I have seen a deal of recent verse which may possibly help in that direction, very little which seems to have merit in any other. I fancy the effect of the war on poetry, when peace does come, will be for a long time largely chaotic in its nature.

Yours,
John Helston.

23 Henderson Road,
Wandsworth Common.

An examination in "The Art of Speaking Verse" (teachers, adults and pupils' sections) will be conducted by Dr H. H. Hulbert at the University of London, S. Kensington, on December 12, at 3 p.m. The conditions published in The Poetry Review, October, 1913, will apply. Attention is also drawn to Dr Hulbert's pronouncement on "The Science and Practice of Eurythmics" published in our issue of January last. Entries should be sent to The Secretary, The Poetry Society, as early as possible. Examinees will be taken in the order of entry.

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THE TREASURER'S APPEAL

Miss Peart's letter has been a stimulus to members, a number of whom have followed her excellent example. We hope to hear from others with whom an interest in poetry is not a mere philandering, to whom poetry is something more than an idle literary exercise or the expression of crude and egotistical emotions, and a foolish vanity. Those to whom poetry in these days of gloom is more than ever before an interpreter and consoler, "redeeming from decay the visitations of the divinity in man," amid the preoccupations of war keeping alive the love of the simple, fundamental things of life and lighting the otherwise obscure road, will desire that our fellowship should be maintained and strengthened, and that the Society should continue "to nourish the love of poetry in the heart of man." Very apposite is a letter received from Mr Douglas S. S. Steuart, B.Sc., F.R.Met.S., F.G.S., M.I.M.E., A.I.M.M., etc., who says:

"I have read with much pleasure the very excellent suggestion made, and acted upon by Miss Peart, in the October number of The Poetry Review; that the subscribers to The Poetry Review should double the annual subscription of 6s.—truly a small enough contribution for such a publication.

"Might this not be supplemented (to the mutual advantage of the Society and its members) by those members who do not possess all the back numbers of The Poetry Review now purchasing same? Believing that this might be of some assistance I have pleasure in enclosing you my cheque in payment for Volumes *One to Three* inclusive; and I shall be glad if you will accept the balance as my share towards meeting the financial strain on the Society resulting from the war.

"Although the times are so strenuous, for many of us, that we may individually be unable to render such assistance as we would wish; it is precisely in these circumstances, that we can demonstrate the practical utility of acting on the assumption that 'every little helps.' Indeed, it is surely no less than the *duty* of every lover of Poetry to loyally and cheerfully do his or her share (however small); and thus accomplish collectively, what could not be effected individually, for The Poetry Review and the Society and 'see it through' its time of stress, in the same manner as the Empire has—one may almost say—come forward to a man—in the support of the interests and principles of the Nation.

"I venture to write this letter, in the hopes that it may, perhaps, serve to remind those who have not yet responded to your appeal, that there is no finer quality in mankind than that of 'Loyalty,' be it for a cause or for an individual; and that it is only in times of stress and strain, such as the present, that its genuineness, in the case of those who habitually profess it, is conclusively put to the test.

"Therefore, let us 'roll up,' 'quick and lively' and so preclude all possibility of our Society running short of the necessary ammunition."

We commend this letter to members and readers at home and abroad, and trust that by the renewal and increase of donations and subscriptions to the Society and the Review they will relieve the management of anxiety with regard to the future.

Special donations, irrespective of, or in addition to, ordinary subscription dues, have

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been received from Lady Glenconner, Sir F. Macmillan, Mr C. D. Mackellar, (£5) Mrs Horniman, Mr D. J. Darlow, Mr S. L. Lloyd, Mr D. S. S. Steuart and Mr Alfred Williams.

The Poetic Drama Committee has considered it desirable to postpone the production of " The Rhesus " until after Christmas.

PUTNEY

The first October Putney meeting had a vivid topical interest. With admirable promptitude Mrs Noel seized the opportunity of having an address from Mlle Coppin, the Belgian poetess, now a distressed refugee. A large attendance of members and friends was greatly interested in Mlle Coppin's graphic and vivacious account of how the war broke over Belgium and her personal experiences. She told much that could not be learned from the newspapers, describing the point of view of the people who had suffered. " I believe we have been too prosperous, too fond of pleasure," she said, " we are being purged and in our adversity we have found our nationality. If ever England, France and Russia make a new Belgium, we shall be more simple and hard-working." The sad lot of the lace makers of Bruges; the fierce resistance of Liége and Dinant; the fury of the civil guard at being disarmed and not allowed to fight; the systematic looting of the Germans " who, after the war, will know all about Flemish art "; individual deeds of heroism; the veil of horrors which shrouded the brave little country and which was only pierced by the sight of the cliffs of England, were touched upon in turn most vividly. At the end of the causerie, Mlle A. Wright read several of Mlle Coppin's poems, and a vote of thanks was proposed by Mrs G. Noel in a graceful French speech. The large sum of £10 15s. 0d. was collected in aid of a special Belgian fund.

We are requested to state that as the state of her health prevents her going out during the winter, Mlle Coppin has arranged to give individual and class lessons at her private address (124 Ledbury Road, Bayswater) in the French (and Belgian) language, literature and history, and also in speaking and reading. The personal lessons may be elementary or in preparation for the University, Civil Service, etc. The class lessons are for four or five students together. Mlle Coppin particularly wishes to have a class of young people for Belgian literature, which is most interesting and little known, and a subject which will probably be taken up eagerly.

The first November meeting at Putney (November 9) will be held at 10 Carlton Road, at 5.15 p.m. Lady Margaret Sackville will contribute a causerie.

On Monday, November 23, at 14 Carlton Road, the subject will be " Love Poems Addressed to Definite Subjects," and Miss Bowie will give an address. Members are asked to read.

SHORTLANDS

The centre has had two successful meetings, and opens the autumn session auspiciously with the addition of four new members, bringing up the total number of members to twenty-nine.

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At the first meeting on September 30, War Poems relating to the present conflict and Nature Studies were read. On October 14 the first two books of "Paradise Lost" followed by a selection from Poets of the Restoration Period.

The programme for the remainder of the session will consist of:

October 28. "Women Poets."
November 11. "Hamlet."
November 25. "Duty and Conscience."
December 9. "Victorian Poets."

HAMPSTEAD

The first meeting of the autumn session was held on Tuesday, October 6. There was a large attendance.

The subjects for November 3 will be Drayton's *Nymphidia*, *The Goblin Market* (Christina Rossetti) and poems relating to Fairies, Witches, etc.

On November 17, Original Poems by members or unknown poets will be read. Information respecting the work of this Centre may be obtained from Mrs L. Tilly (Hon. Secretary), 193 Camden Road, N.W.

THE BRITISH EMPIRE SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY'S GAZETTE

[All communications to the Hon. Director, Mr Acton Bond, 8 Clifton Hill, London, N.W.]

The war has stopped a large number of our public fixtures, but in all parts of the Kingdom a considerable amount of work is being done in the Reading Circles. Indeed, from Reports received at Headquarters, members gladly attend circle meetings as a welcome relief in this time of tension.

The sixth volume of the B.E.S.S. Shakespeare—"Twelfth Night"—edited by Lord Howard de Walden and Mr Acton Bond, has now been issued. The other plays of this popular edition, already published by Routledge & Sons at 6d., are: "As You Like It"; "The Winter's Tale"; "A Midsummer Night's Dream"; "Hamlet" and "The Merchant of Venice."

A Meeting was held on Saturday, October 24, at Passmore Edwards Settlement to arrange for a series of costume performances in aid of the War Fund. Mr Acton Bond presided. Representatives of all the London Reading Circles were present, as well as members of the Chelsea Branch. Particulars will be announced in next month's Gazette.

Glasgow Branch.—(Hon. Secretary, Mrs Wyper, 6 Burnbank Gardens).—A joint meeting of the reading circles was held on October 5, 8 p.m., at 6 Burnbank Gardens. The programme commenced with patriotic Shakespearean quotations for "the men and the moment," as:

The Territorials: "Ye stand like greyhounds in the slip. Straining upon the Start."

Women of Britain: "My purse, my person, my extreme means lie unlocked to ye occasions."

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German Militarism: "We teach but bloody instructions which being taught return to plague the inventor."

The second item was a Shakespearean romance (a medley), an amusing competition answered with the different titles of the plays. The successful competitors were Mrs Hall, Mrs Cairns MacLachlan, Miss A. Watson and Miss Fletcher.

The session opened formally with concert and recitations on October 19 in the Grand Hotel, Charing Cross.

Kensington Afternoon Circle.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss Lettice Fox, 19 Hornton Street).—"A Comedy of Errors" was the play chosen to be read at the first meeting of the season, which took place on Thursday, October 15. This circle meets in the afternoon every fortnight.

Kensington Evening Circle.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss Ada Mocatta, 108 Iverna Court).—The first autumn meeting took place on Thursday evening, October 8. "The Winter's Tale" was commenced, the B.E.S.S. edition being used. A large number of members attended. This circle meets every fortnight.

St John's Wood Circle.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss G. Cashman, 65 Belsize Park Gardens).—This circle made a successful start of the autumn season on Monday afternoon, September 21. The second meeting took place on October 5. "Henry V" was the first play to be studied. Excellent attendances are recorded.

Uxbridge.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss Stevens, Coniston Lodge).—The first meeting of the autumn season took place on Friday afternoon, October 30. The play, "Hamlet," was read under the direction of Mr Acton Bond.

POETRY IN SCHOOL BOOKS.

"We entirely agree with the manifesto of the Poetry Society. . . . *By far the best way, in our opinion, to inculcate the love of poetry is to get children to learn it by heart,* not forcing it upon those who have no inclination, but rather encouraging all who show appreciation. But here, again, arises the difficulty of choosing the pieces. Anyone looking back on the school-books of half a century ago will find thousands of extracts from authors now so obscure that their names have a most unfamiliar sound. And in the school-books of to-day there is a tendency to insert works by very minor poets who happen for the moment to be before the public. *Poetry should never be inserted in a school-book until it has stood the test of at least twenty-five years of criticism.*"—*Country Life.*

The editorial and publishing offices of The Poetry Review have been removed to 16 Featherstone Buildings, Holborn, London, W.C. The Editor can be seen by appointment only. He is glad to consider MSS., but cannot be responsible for their safe custody or return. To ensure the latter in case of rejection, correspondents should enclose stamped addressed envelopes.

Arrangements have been made for the provision of a library for the use of members and for sectional meetings.

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THE POETRY REVIEW IN 1915

WITH the next issue THE POETRY REVIEW will assume a new format and will be enlarged to ninety-six pages. The price will be raised to one shilling. Members of The Poetry Society will receive the REVIEW as hitherto.

During 1915 (owing to the war) THE POETRY REVIEW will be issued bi-monthly, the January number being dated "January-February." The annual postal subscription therefore will remain as at present, 6s. 6d.

A feature will be made of poetic drama. With the increased number of pages it is hoped to include in each issue a complete new play. This arrangement will have many advantages. It will make each number of remarkable value, new poetic drama of approved merit (or even "unedited" and unselected plays) not hitherto being obtainable for one shilling. The writers, too, will be assured of a considerable group of readers, of far wider circulation and general recognition than are forthcoming for independently issued poetic plays in volume form.

POETIC DRAMA READING CIRCLES

Moreover, in connexion with this development, we urge the formation of Poetic Drama Circles among members of The Poetry Society for the part-reading of these plays on the lines of the British Empire Shakespeare Society's readings, one play to be taken each month, preference being given to the play in the current issue of THE POETRY REVIEW. Every member of the Poetic Drama Reading Circle would thus have a copy at hand. A list of other suitable plays will be given in THE POETRY REVIEW or supplied direct to the Circles. The public dramatic production of these plays is not advocated, but where such performances are desired and found to be feasible the Editor and Director will be pleased to advise and co-operate, and Mr Acton Bond also places his highly experienced and inestimable services at the disposal of the local organizers.

Existing members of the Poetry Society in every town and district are invited to take in hand the formation of these Poetic Drama Circles. The existing rules and regulations of The Poetry Society will apply, no additional subscription being necessary. These Circles are intended to facilitate the formation of local groups of members; their organization will be less onerous and they may make a more popular appeal than the more

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elaborate and general Centre, and they may encourage the growth of ordinary Centres.

The Centres of the Poetry Society may devote (at the discretion of the local management) a special or ordinary meeting to the reading of the current play, no further organization of Poetic Drama Circles being required in such cases, unless it is considered desirable to form a subsidiary Poetic Drama Reading Circle as an addition to the Centre and with the same subscription, which would, of course, include the regular supply of THE POETRY REVIEW.

How justifiable have been our experiments with the publishing of poetic drama in THE POETRY REVIEW, and with what high praise the work we have presented has been received by the most competent critics, are indicated by the following extracts from a lengthy reference to Mr W. G. Hole's "The Master" (April and May, 1913) in the *Nation* (New York):

> This little two-act play by W. G. Hole, who has already won a conspicuous place among modern poets and dramatists with his *Queen Elizabeth* and *The Chained Titan*, is a work of singular power and beauty, remarkable not only for the dignity and spiritual insight with which it treats a subject of great delicacy, but for compactness of construction, tenseness of dramatic situation, and felicity of literary description. Bold in conception and development, unflinching and logical in demonstration, it is absolutely free from mere emotional sensationalism. . . . It is a veritable tragedy, unsuitable indeed for the theatre, except before a very special audience, but in all technical respects capable of effective reproduction in action. . . . Its pre-eminent distinction is to be found in its trenchant exposition of the irreconcilable differences between the creed and practice of a dominant ecclesiasticism and the essence of the Christian faith as taught by its Founder. It proposes a problem, but, unlike most problems, it does not shrink from giving the answer. What, it asks, would happen if Christ came on earth again to-day, as He came before? And the reply is that He would again be crucified if the Church were his judge. The scene, to be sure, is allotted to the seventeenth century, but the moral, in its application, is clearly intended to be contemporary. . . . The moral of the parable is clear enough. Whatever variety of opinion may be possible concerning its validity and justice, there can be no questioning of the literary, imaginative and dramatic power with which it is conveyed and illustrated.

During 1915 a premium of two guineas will be offered in each issue for the best poem or poems (not exceeding four) received from members of THE POETRY SOCIETY or registered subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW.

The poetic drama in our January-February number (ready January 1) will be a three-act play, "The State Supreme," by Mr B. L. Bowhay. In this issue the Editor will review Mr Thomas Hardy's latest book of poems, and current poetical tendencies, as exemplified in recent volumes, will be dealt with by Mr James Mackereth. An article based on Mr Forbes Gray's fascinating history of the Poets Laureate, crowded out of this number, will appear in January.

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POETRY—THE LIVING SPEECH

WHY THE INVENTION OF NEW FORMS FAILS

By CONSTANCE SKINNER.

A MOMENT'S consideration of this subject is not amiss in this day when we see so many laudable efforts to re-establish Poetry as a popular art. By " popular " here is conveyed its original and deeper meaning; " of the people," intrinsically of the people and not merely liked by a majority. On both sides of the Atlantic in the last five years there has been a great quickening interest in the subject of Poetry. Periodicals devoted wholly to verse and the discussion of it have appeared, and a number of volumes of verse issued, and a fair measure of reputation, at least, has come to several young men and women who have proved that they have a few new things to say, or a few new ways in which to say the old and eternal things.

It is not surprising that, with so many enthusiastic persons speaking at once, some discord is heard. There seems to be, with many, a confused sense of what constitutes Poetry. The elder poets and their readers show distrust of the new voices, because much that is said is not true as the standards of highest Art proclaim truth; and because there is, with the new writers, frequently a wilful disregard of Form, that is to say, a contempt for it. On their part the new writers accuse their elders of lethargy, of formalism and so forth, and lay the often just charge that they do not bring a fair poetic judgment, but prejudice, to their consideration of the new methods and ideas. For the most part the champions of the new styles of *vers libre* are guilty of the sin with which they charge the devotees of the sonnet and rhymed Ode: they are making a stumbling-block of Form, so that to write something which shall break all established canons of Form becomes the chief object in view, rather than to express veraciously and harmoniously an idea which is worthy of expression and therefore must compel its way into literature through the conviction of feeling. Art is based on Truth, the Ideal which transcends actualities and which must dominate them, and so demands the service of reverence. It cannot be properly used to draw attention to a poet, or to a theory of any nature whatever, or to a manner of writing. When such subversion is attempted Art is no longer in the question, nor is Poetry.

Words are the servants of Ideas; unless the master they serve is noble nothing of value is accomplished, nothing permanent. The Form is of little consequence when the spirit is not sufficiently pure and definite to dictate

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it. The effort of the Free-Versists, as they say, is to evolve (invent would be the better word) new forms "to fit the spirit of the age we live in" so that Poetry may again become living speech. They complain that one cannot write sonnets about aeroplanes; and that bridge construction, electric railways and wheat elevators cannot be adequately treated in iambic pentameters. Hence these lines from a leading Futurist.

> "Climb to our airships,
> Throw up your sons like rubber balls,
> No, higher! Oh, higher! and send
> The shout of your rage and your love!
> Salute us in volleys of praise and of death,
> For life is becoming
> A Vertigo."

And, in the new mystic vein,

"In the morning the old man brought his heart in his hands and said, eat, my child. But I shoved my head against his knees and swallowed tears and spittle. . . . Father, why dost thou not answer? Is my scream grown weak?"

And another sings (?) desiring to create new imagery:

> "My thoughts are like black snails
> Crawling on a dank wall,
> Thus they cling to you,
> Beautiful, unwholesome.
> Oh rot, rot! My soul, rot!"

Such "thoughts" are not more appropriately expressed in *vers libre* (which form we are told they demand) than they would be in sonnets or madrigals. They would still be "rot, rot, my soul, rot" in any form. They are not genuine ideas, and therefore cannot be translated into "living speech." In the commercial and social world of realism men may utter lies to each other; but in art "living speech" will not express what is not true.

New forms that shall be valuable will not be discovered (they can never be invented or made to order) until the spirit of the poet makes demand for higher and more vital subjects and for nobler, vaster feeling, and, in response, he perceives Beauty more exquisitely and understandingly. Art is always *sane:* necessarily so, since *proportion* is essential to its expression.

Poetry deals properly with the effects of objects, rather than with the objects themselves. The modern Realist's revolt at the inevitable symbolism of the natural world is not always successful. Witness a recent "poem" about a railway bridge in which the poet, a Free-Versist, has attempted to reproduce the physical mechanical appearance of the structure, giving to

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every separate steel fraction its name and function. The result gives no picture, does not convey the impression of a bridge, but is simply a confusion, a tabulation of iron-workers' phrases. As one critic wrote after reading it, he himself felt like (quoting) "Sixteen 'nuts' on the 'bolt.'" *

Art is governed by laws of Eternity, not of fashion and time. The stone hammer, the dreadnought, the aeroplane—and soon the star-trolly—are transient actualities and cannot dictate to Poetry, which is immortal. The aspiration of man—which drives him to discover the Pole, to shape the hammer, to invent airships and climb the clouds in them, to succour the helpless and to found a Republic on the doctrine of love for mankind—this is always, in all ages, speaking living speech and inspiring poets to express it in all the forms of verse. This same spirit of man is the inspiration of Poetry.

When we study the development of Form we come upon a simple and fundamentally important fact which illuminates every point of the discussion—namely that what the Iconoclasts call "set forms" appear when man has *learned to think coherently*, to *shape his emotions and aspirations into comprehensive ideas*, to *relate his feelings* and *complete his thoughts*. Intellect is a factor. Principle or truth is perceived and law emanates from it, producing the full harmony of sound and feeling and idea without the aid of instrumental accompaniment. Before the "set forms," the Bards had their day. Theirs was true *vers libre*, the spontaneous utterance of feeling. Intellectuality, generally speaking, played a small part in bardic song; and of learning there was none. The spoken lines were usually in broken metre; and the idea, which was an emotional rather than an intellectual conception, was completed by the accompanying instrumental theme. The primal and essential qualities in Poetry, as in all Art, are passion and aspiration; and inevitably this passion and aspiration must be aroused by and for a *truth*. From their own sensitive ability to reflect imaginatively the passion and aspiration of elemental Nature (including man's nature) the wandering Bards sang, and became the voices of their inarticulate tribesmen. Through the spiritual progress of tribes into nations, bardic song progressed into the many "academic" forms of verse—which can never be outworn so long as law, harmony endures. There is a place for the Bard also; with or without his harp. If the Free-Versists, dropping their affectations and mechanisms, will aid in giving us back the pure bardic song, they will do a service to Beauty and to the hearts of men.

It has been said here that Form arrives with completed thought; it is the spirit (or idea) and the form which comprise the "living speech."

* "Nuts" being a favourite American slang, indicating wits gone wild; and "bolt" quoted as we speak of a mad horse on the bolt.

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That Poetry is still living speech is proved continuously in the spontaneous public utterances of great men. They constantly show us that Miltonic and Shakespearean blank verse is not artificially used as Epic Form, but that the Anglo-Saxon mind, in particular, when profoundly moved by a lofty theme, naturally seeks to phrase its thoughts in this Form. Shakespeare was a great poet not because he spoke a different tongue from other men, but because he was master of their natural speech; he articulated for the stammerers. The iambic pentameter is perhaps native speech for all Aryans when they have reached a point in their individual and national development where they can think and desire in terms of universality. It is when the universal and impersonal note is sounded in consciousness that we find the American and the British patriot shaping his thoughts into the living speech of epic verse. Those portions of Lincoln's Gettysburg address which most appeal to the emotions can be divided easily into verse, though not into perfect pentameters. As a whole, it seeks the form of an ode. However well the student knows that address, he will know it better in spirit and letter when he has worked it out in scansion. The beauty of its euphony comes more intelligently to the ear.

> "Four score |and sev|en years|ago|
> Our fath|ers brought forth|upon|this con|tinent|
> A new Na|tión|conceived|in lib|erty|
> And ded|icat|ed to|the prop|osit|ion
> That all|men are|creat|ed e|qual.|
>
> . . . .
>
> "That from|these hon|oured dead|
> We take|increased|devo|tion to|that cause|
> For which|they gave|the last|full meas|ure of |devot|ion."

Arrange the lines as one pleases, the sound and march are always in the heroic rhythm. Lincoln's address before the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois, January 27, 1837, and his Thanksgiving Proclamation October 3, 1863, contain passages most interesting to study from this standpoint. In short, wherever the argument regarding facts or physical actualities ceases, and the theme mounts into the metaphysical realm of national principles and national faith and duty, the rhythm sings more clearly and sweeps into the favourite epic form.

President Wilson has given us several examples of this form in his utterances, notably in his last speech in the South, relative to the Latin Republics, and in his address at the Navy Yard over the bodies of those slain at Vera Cruz. Here again we see that it is in those moments when argument and discussion and the enunciation of specific forms of political doctrine are

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put by, and when the pure heart of the theme rules that the utterance forsakes prose for verse. For instance in the first words regarding the dead as the President took the list of names from the Secretary of the Navy, the names of those—

"Who gave|not on|ly all|they were|
But all|they hoped|to be,"|

and the peroration—

". . . As I stand|and look|at you|to-day|
And think|of these spir|its that|have gone|from us,|
I know|that the road|is clear|er for|the fut|ure.
These boys|have shown|us the way|, and it|is eas|ier
To walk|on it|because|they have gone|before|
And shown|us how.|May God|grant to all|of us|
That vis|ion|of pat|riot|ic ser|vice
Which here|in solem|nity|and grief|and pride|
Is borne|in upon our hearts|and con|sciences."|

It is not claimed that the perfect form comes freely to the lips of statesmen, whose hourly contemplation is given more to the concrete facts of life than to the beauties of poesy. The point of interest is the tendency of the larger emotions and the nobler convictions to attempt the iambic pentameter when seeking expression. The Form is not therefore a classical tradition, a dead academic husk and a shackle, as certain of the ultra-moderns aver. It is the natural mode of utterance of noble thought, a native and vital form of our speech.

The public man at present who seems to have a remarkable command of this form is Sir Edward Carson. There are sustained passages in his speeches which maintain the perfect form throughout, broken only occasionally by an extra foot in a line. In a recent address, after dealing in detail with the economic and sociological fatalities of the Home Rule Bill as he sees them, he closed with a nobly impassioned passage of rhetoric in pure pentameter, of which these lines are the climax:

"God give|us men|at a time|like this!|
Men of|great hearts,|strong minds,|true faith|and wil|ling hands.|
Men whom|the lust|of of|fice does|not kill,|
Men whom|the spoils|of of|fice can|not buy,|
Men who|possess|opin|ions and|a will,|
Men who|love hon|our, men|who can|not lie,|
God give|us men!"|

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In comparing his natural verse with Lincoln's, it is interesting to note that the same ideal, viz., the *preservation of union,* even by the sword if must be, is the inspiring idea of his utterances.

In the same feeling and purpose as the President's Vera Cruz address are the following lines by an American poet—worthy, both because of the character of his mind and the beauty of his verse, of a high place among our Immortals—William Vaughan Moody. They show the perfect marriage of Form and Idea; and perform the poet's true function, namely, to speak for the inarticulate:

"Lies! lies! It cannot be! The wars we wage
Are noble, and our battles still are won
By justice for us, ere we lift the gage.
We have not sold our loftiest heritage.
The proud Republic hath not stooped to cheat
And scramble in the market-place of war;
Her forehead weareth yet its solemn star.

. . . .

"We are our father's sons; let those who lead us know!
'Twas only yesterday sick Cuba's cry
Came up the tropic wind, 'Now help us for we die!'
. . . . . Oh by the sweet blood and young
Shed on the awful hill slope at San Juan,
By the unforgotten names of eager boys
Who might have tasted girls' love and been stung
With the old mystic joys
And starry griefs, now the spring nights come on,
But that the heart of youth is generous—
We charge you, ye who lead us,
Breath on their chivalry no hint of stain!
Turn not their new-world victories to gain!
One least leaf plucked for chaffer from the bays
Of their dear praise,
One jot of their pure conquest put to hire,
The implacable Republic will require."

(From Ode in Time of Hesitation; Gloucester Moors and other Poems.)

True poetry—and, of course, there is no untrue Poetry—is an integral part

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of our lives in this fashion. It is living speech when there is conceived in the individual, the group, or the nation, an idea which is noble enough, vital enough, to be worthy to be given to mankind. Then the poet's song is one man's articulation for the millions who are dumb. It is the influence of this verity which inspires the statesman's noblest utterances to lift into the march of epic verse.

> " With mal|ice to|ward none: |with char|ity|
> For all: |with firm|ness in|the right|as God|
> Gives us|to see|the right,|—let us|strive on|
> To fin|ish the work|we are in,|
> To bind|up the Na|tión's|wounds;|
> To care|for him|who shall|have borne|the bat|tle
> And for|his wid|ow and|his or|phan:
> To do all
> Which may|achieve|and cher|ish
> A just|and last|ing peace|among|ourselves|
> And with|all Na|tions."

Lincoln gives utterance to some beautiful lines in other rhythms also, where his mood changes temporarily to the less austere, more peaceful and promiseful; as this—

> " The Fath|er of wat|ers again| goes unvexed|to the sea."|

But when the austere note is again sounded we hear the Epic once more. The noblest and *purest verse* passage of all proclaims the ideal of Union as the true weapon of liberation for all men from all slaveries.

> " The fi|ery trial|through which|we pass|
> Will light|us down|in hon|our or|dishon|our
> To the la|test gen|erat|ion. We|say we|
> Are for|the U|nion.|The world|will not|
> Forget|that we|say this.|We know|how to save|
> The U|nion. |The world|knows we|do know|
> How to|save it|. We, ev|en we|here hold|
> The pow'r|and bear|the respon|sibility.|
> In giv|ing free|dom to|the slave|we assure|
> Freedom|to the free.| . . .| . . .| . . .| We|
> Shall no|bly save|or mean|ly lose|the last|
> Best hope|of earth."|

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There are lines in Hamlet more difficult to scan than these: as "Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness" and "The fair Ophelia! Nymph in thy orisons," always read by Booth thus, "The fair|Ophe|lia. Nymph|in thy| o-ri|sons" and "The oppress|or's wrongs,|the proud|man's con|tume|ly."

The men, be they poets or statesmen, who come forward to articulate the highest ideals of a nation, or a race, are not troubled by a need for "new forms," because their utterances, being born of an inherent love of law, naturally seek conformation with law. When, on the other hand, "life is becoming a vertigo" and love is "beautiful, unwholesome," and all else is secondary to the egotism and introspection of a personalized materialism and sensationalism, the writer seeking expression for these things through poetry finds himself forbidden to express them, forbidden by art-form which is concrete manifestation of Law. The perfection of Form mercilessly shows up the tawdriness of the thought when the thought is unworthy of the form used. Hence the comparatively few great sonnets, the sonnet being of all forms the most severe. From this relentlessness of law the egotist revolts, gnashing his teeth. The man who desires to poetize his egotistic moods and transient sensations, to deify these above art-laws and moral cannons above the unselfed recognition of the universal (which is the inception of Art with the individual) must obey the laws of Form, which forbid him to enunciate worthless things, and so be silent till spiritual growth warrants him to speak—or he must institute "new forms."

The Imagists, who seem to have little in common with the Futurists, are doing a work which will be beneficial in its influence on the individual poetic mind, although it may not establish anything definitely its own in poetry. The Imagist finds an analogy in the diamond-cutter. The miniature picture (it is generally in miniature) is very sharply presented. It is a cameo, or a jewel, finely cut and polished. The vision is sharpened by study of this method, because it is a sharpened vision in the poet which is making use of it. It will make for clarity, intensity and brevity. Like the Japanese methods, whose child it seems to be, it deals exquisitely with small things—with cherryblooms in a vase, with a white fan on a green cloth, saffron rose-petals falling on a grey stone, and such tiny details of the sensuous world. Whether vaster views can be given by means of it remains to be demonstrated. It appears to err on the side of the sensuous; it would seem that its tendency, like the Futuristic, is materialistic; it is to esteem the physical and the sense-known for its own sake, though its own clarity and intensiveness may defeat this in time.

The new Ists have been likened to Whitman, but there is no likeness. Whitman, whenever he speaks substance, is pure Bard, with the lyric flow, the epic thunders and the mighty harp chords of Nature. To Nature he goes for *his* "new forms":

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"A word then, (for I will conquer it!)
A word final, superior to all,
Subtle, sent up—what is it?—I listen;
Are you whispering it, and have you been all the time you sea-waves?
Is that it from your liquid rims and wet sands?
Whereto answering, the sea
Delaying not, hurrying not,
Whispered me.

TOUT PASSE, TOUT CASSE...

(Proverbe Français).

"TOUT passe," disent-ils. Ils n'ont jamais aimé;
Car ils auraient connu cette joie éternelle,
Le souvenir des jours d'amour, tendre et fidèle,
L'immortel souvenir d'un bonheur innomé.

"Tout lasse," disent-ils. Ils n'ont jamais aimé.
Ils ne t'ont point connue, angoisse âpre et divine
D'écouter, dans la nuit, pour le pas qu'on devine,
Et de voir l'aube en voir poindre au ciel embrumé!

"Tout casse," disent-ils. Ils n'ont jamais aimé.
Ils n'ont point éprouvé l'imlassable indulgence
Qui nous fait pardonner la même amère offense,
Septante fois sept fois au pécheur bien-aimé!

"Tout passe," à fois! "Tout passe"! Ouvriez vous obimé
Jusqu'à la mort la fleur de l'amour véritable,
Qu'elle renait pour vous, glorieuse, ineffable:
"Tout lasse," disent-ils: ils n'ont jamais aimé.

MARGUERITE COPPIN.

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THE MAKERS OF WAR

[In many quarters there is a somewhat premature discussion as to what form our ultimate revenge upon the Kaiser and his War Lords should take.]

VENGEANCE is mine! . . . How then shall we repay them
  Who, with God's name upon their lips, have trod
God's truth beneath their feet and sought to slay them,
  As they have slain the innocent of God?

I will repay! . . . Oh, white and ever whiter
  Waxes the roaring furnace of our wrath.
Fain would we smite with his own arms the smiter—
  Yet ours be still, O God, the gentle path!

Not as the world wreaks vengeance would we wreak it.
  Not against them we crave an earthly sword.
Vengeance is Thine, and upon them we seek it—
  The awful vengeance of Thy mercy, Lord!

Thou gavest Paul the vision. In Thy pity
  Unfold for them His agony Who still,
Where'er Ambition raises a new city,
  Must die outside it on a lonely hill.

Give them one glimpse, however dim and fleeting
  Of those pale hands by them outstretched anew,
Of those clear eyes still, still again repeating—
  Forgive them, for they know not what they do!

Not with the anger of Jehovah rend them,
  But with a sword of vision from above.
Beneath the blade of Christ's own sorrow bend them;—
  For oh, what smites so fiercely as His love?

GILBERT THOMAS.

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THE CHOSEN OF NATIONS

THE murmurous earth at eventide
  Sings with the lilt of running waters—
So might some mother croon to sleep
  Her roving sons and blooming daughters—
And softly o'er the quivering air
  The silver-mantled night draws near.

And she too comes in such dark guise
  By paths too sharp for feet of other,
By tracks untrodden yet of man
  A patient, prayerful, human mother
Whose voice, less heard for words than sound,
  Is that of Faith whose way is found.

And still her eyes make constant search,
  More dimmed with hope than sad with Anguish,
To glimpse the right, the Promised Land
  ('Tis Love lets not those tired lids languish),
The purple glimmer of whose night
  Knows more than does our day of light.

Like Love whose love is quiet with Time
  Her hope is ever in the Past;
Like Faith she knows that this endures
  From change while Unity shall last
Joy linked to Pain, Hope bound to Fear,
  Fourfold in oneness as the year.

The desert sand like mountain snow
  Is rosied by the day-dawn's breath
And skies are reddened at the birth
  Of day as when the day has death,
And one supreme and constant light
  Illumes the orbs of noon and night.

So shall it be with her, the Queen,
  Acclaimed, downcast, enthroned, discrowned,

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Fulfilled of fervour for the Truth
And by the Truth's own shackles bound,
Not darkness hides the stars, but Day:
Faith hears what thing the night would say.

With what soft touch the hand of God
Has closed the buds and soothed to slumber;
With what swift hand He strews the sky
With stars that man may never number,
Life's death, Death's life, alone knows she
One grand, eternal Verity!

ALAN I. GROSS.

"A WHITE FLOWER IN MY GARDEN BLOOMED"

A WHITE flower in my garden bloomed—
It was my faith in you;
And whence it came I never guessed,
And when, I never knew;
Only the sunshine saw its birth—
Only the sun and dew.

You came along the path one day,—
So wanton was your air
My heart cried—though my lips were mute—
" Pray have a care!—a care! "
. . . When you had passed, the flower lay low,
And the green bough was bare.

And though you did not know a flower
Was trod beneath your feet,
The bough has never budded since
When spring and summer meet . . .
It was a fair flower while it lived,
And oh! it was so sweet!

ABBIE H. EVANS.

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SOME DRAMATIC CONSIDERATIONS

"PHILIP THE KING"—"PLASTER SAINTS"

WHETHER the play which gives its name to Mr Masefield's new collection of poems (Heinemann) is to be regarded as an elaborate "war poem" or not, the fact that for "Philip the King"—i.e. that Spanish Philip who dispatched an enormous expedition for the purpose, under God's blessing, of devastating and enslaving England—"William the Kaiser" can be so appropriately and hopefully substituted, detracts greatly, at the present time at least, from its value as a work of art. "Philip the King" is a poetical drama, or rather, perhaps, a monologue in dramatic form, all the characters introduced being merely extensions of Philip's personality, since it is really his own conscience which speaks to him in a dream through the mouths of the many faithful friends and declared or secret enemies whose lives he has so ruthlessly sacrificed to gain his ends.

The scene is laid in a dark cell in Philip's palace. News of the Armada's success has been long a-coming: so long, indeed, that his mind has begun to harbour sickening fears of disaster. But the messenger arrives at last, and how the obscure working of Philip's conscience robs the victory announced of all reality, and prepares him for the true news, which follows close on the heels of the false; and how he realizes that his life's work has been brought to naught, the reader will discover for himself.

In a recent number of The Poetry Review it was pointed out that, as a means of expression, the dramatic form may be used very profitably where stage representation is not contemplated. "Philip the King" confirms this statement. It would have been impossible to describe so vividly and with such a wealth of picturesque detail the imagined episode in a descriptive poem of double the length. But the test of the stage cannot be dispensed with altogether even in the case of a reading play. Thus although in such a play there may be moments when "A Voice" may be requisitioned with fine effect to utter a short warning, or to announce disaster, the device of "Voices" being made to recite long and complicated speeches, as at Mr Masefield's behest they do, rather disturbs us. Imagine the horrible multiple gramophone effect of a dozen supers, or even trained actors, all speaking the

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same lines in unison off stage! With no other device, however, could the idea of the play as it stands have been carried out, and the awkwardness is due rather to the limitation of the dramatic as a narrative form than to lack of stage instinct on the part of the author.

To add to the gallantry of his adventure, Mr Masefield has written his play in rhymed verse. Rhyme may be a source of either strength or weakness. In the hands of a vigorous craftsman it inspires felicities of fancy and phraseology, and intensifies the beauty of the whole poem: take, as an instance of this, Keats' "Endymion." When the poet is too easily satisfied the effect is quite otherwise. The character of the rhyme, too, must not only harmonize with the character of the poem, but it should also emphasize and intensify whatever that character may be. The character which Mr Masefield aims to preserve throughout his play is that of dignity, but his easy satisfaction with the first available rhyme lets him down repeatedly. In fact line after line getting away capitally with the adequate expression of a fine thought, refuses the fence of the rhyme, goes round weakly by the nearest gate, and tries to complete its business before the next rhyme-fence demanding negotiation—or evasion—is confronted. How the dignity of the verse suffers from such a method is proved by the following lines where terms of inappropriate endearment provide the means of "getting round."

Princess: ... You are good and *mild*.
Philip: Artists and kings do what they can *my child*,
Not what they would. It is not easy, *dear*,
Working with men, for men are only clay,
They crumble in the hand, or they betray
And time goes by, but no results *appear*—

This is scarcely kingly talk. The happy-go-lucky method of rhyming was admirably adapted to "The Everlasting Mercy," but it is painfully alien to the spirit of high seriousness which informs "Philip the King."

There are, it goes without saying, some very fine passages in the play. The whole thing read in the right mood is deeply impressive and of high imaginative value. It will not, however, add to Mr Masefield's reputation. One proof of its failure as a whole is the fact that it inspires the reader with contempt for Philip: this, surely, was not the author's intention. We like to recognize some approach to greatness, something of strength, even in a scoundrel if he happens to be the hero. But there is nothing great about Mr Masefield's Philip. He is not even worthy of his failure. If "Philip the King" is intended to allegorize present-day events we may be quite sure that William the Kaiser, whatever fate may be in store for him, will never snivel.

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MR JOHN MASEFIELD.

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Of the other poems contained in the book nearly all have already received deservedly high praise. The most beautiful, perhaps, and also perhaps, so far, Mr Masefield's highest achievement, is "August 1914." These lines, with their quiet dignity and rich restraint, are instinct with all the sweet and gentle melancholy of an Autumn evening landscape, and are as full, too, of pathetic human suggestion. And yet one cannot help protesting against the occurrence of a tinkered rhyme in the concluding verse. The beauty of this verse and its two predecessors, which I quote, will, I think, add point to my protest. The use of "brae," a dialect word, merely to provide a rhyme for "way," would be condemned in the merest tyro. It has about as much justification as could be urged for the use of "loch" for "lake" in similar circumstances, and the effect on the sensitive ear is something akin to that produced by hearing the Lessons read in a Gothic cathedral by a man who drops his h's.

All the unspoken worship of those lives
Spent in forgotten wars at other calls
Glimmers upon these fields where evening drives
Beauty like breath, so gently darkness falls.

Darkness that makes the meadows holier still,
The elm-trees sadden in the hedge, a sigh
Moves in the beech-clump on the haunted hill,
The rising planets deepen in the sky,

And silence broods like spirit on the brae,
A glimmering moon begins, the moonlight runs
Over the grasses of the ancient way
Rutted this morning by the passing guns.

From the literary dramatic point of view, with which alone we are interested, we find Mr Zangwill's "Plaster Saints" (Heinemann) disappointing. Possibly the present writer's recent perusal and enjoyment of a certain book called "Italian Fantasies" may partly account for this. We were prepared to find something original and startling in the conception and design of "Plaster Saints." It proves, however, to be nothing more than an ordinary problem play. We cannot help regarding just now with something of impatience, problem plays dealing, as so many of them do, with mean little episodes; which slobber over the consequences of sins committed with open eyes against the accepted social code, and recognize only a standard of life in which the virtues of self-restraint and manliness do not count. But there are problem plays and problem plays, and Mr Zangwill's

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is not one which concerns itself more with the sin than with the resultant problem. At the same time one cannot help wondering whether Mr Zangwill has not gone out of his way to worship strange gods—or Mr Shaw's! We think he would do well to leave to lesser men the dramatic exploitation of the dismal domestic difficulties experienced by reverend or other middle-aged philanderers.

The play, as a play, is well enough constructed, and the dialogue is distinctly clever and pleasing, but the characters are rather too obviously dominated by the exigencies of the plot. The social world, too, in which Mr Zangwill's characters move, is difficult to realize. To what religious sect, for instance, does the Rev. Dr Vaughan belong. Signs point to his being a dignitary of the Established Church, but, amongst other things, a certain hoped-for "call to London," which is referred to on occasion to provide a motive for some of his actions, is only consistent with his being a Nonconformist. A little attention to details of this sort would not have detracted from the "convincingness" of the play as a picture of modern life. The most perfunctory student of that subject could have told Mr Zangwill that the sons and daughters of country Nonconformist ministers do not, as a rule, intermarry with the sons and daughters of wealthy and explosive baronets. Possibly nothing of this strikes the spectator when the characters walk the stage—a rattling good acting play is often very poor stuff to read. "Plaster Saints" is far from being very poor stuff.

EVE REPENTANT AND OTHER POEMS. By Augustus H. Cook. (G. Bell & Sons, 1914. 2s. 6d. net.)

DR COOK has already published several volumes of verse, but we do not think that he would claim more for his poetry than that it has been an agreeable pastime in a busy life. His profession, as in the case of many famous doctors, gives to his work a humanity which makes a sympathetic appeal to the reader. Dr Cook's style is simple, his poetry is pleasant to read and easy to understand; in this volume there is no poem which directly concerns his profession, but he treats here the beauties of nature, and lets his mind dwell on themes that are familiar to the poetic muse, occasionally touching with real effectiveness a deeper note as in the poem on the sea called "The Seductress." The following verses from "The Wayfarer" represent his more usual attitude:

"The morning broke so gay with promised splendour
Of youth, and strength, and ecstasy of strife,
Perpetual song of birds that seemed to render
New joy to life.

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"A feast of flowers, whose odours I have sampled,
Garlands of friendship blossomed all the way;
Gardens of orchids, human feet ne'er trampled
To common clay."

In the poem "Death by Misadventure" he has the imagination to see a seriou tragedy in the event which most people have treated with pitying scorn or light-hearted ribaldry.

"Now! the moment's come at last,
Bitterness of death all past,
Round the curve the squadron comes,
Sounding like the beat of drums;
Deafening in my ears the call—
'Risk it now, or lose it all!'
So the winners take the straight,
Neck to neck with even gait,
Balanced in the scales of fate.

* * * * *

"Heedless of the trampling feet,
Where ten thousand voices greet,
Fierce she stands, and fearlessly
Shouts her woman's battle-cry;
Strives her tiny flag to wave,
Leaps to meet the approaching grave,
None to stay and naught to save!

"Now! the great steed rears amain,
Shrieking as in mortal pain;
Headlong race in vain to check,
Clasp the white arms round his neck;
So the bearers bear her home,
Heedless of her martyrdom;
Mourned by all, and praised by none,
Her last battle fought—and won."

THE SHADOW OF ÆTNA. By Louis Ledoux. (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1914. 3s. 6d. net.)

THIS volume shows that Mr Ledoux is an author worth consideration; and we are not surprised to note that he has already published two volumes of verse and one poetic drama. The verses here have a real poetic fancy, and their language is graceful and musical. The opening Masque, "Persephone," gives us special pleasure, and we feel sure that if it were staged in an artistic yet simple manner it would make a really beautiful spectacle, giving pleasure both to ear and eye.

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"Heart of a bird! Heart of a bird!
O the wild, white cranes are free;
But the heart of man is the song unheard
That the sea-winds sing to the sea.

* * * * *

"What have you more than I have had
From the winds and the sun and the sea?
Is the heart of a bird like a man's heart sad?
And crying ceaselessly?"

The remaining poems are all short, and not very ambitious, but there is a great variety in them, and there are many which should appeal to all who care for poetry. The volume does not attempt to make any deep impression, but when its pages are turned over by one who is in a mood for poetry, that mood will find a real satisfaction. The book is a very small one, and it contains no verses which show slovenly or careless work.

The following verses show something of the author's varying moods.

"Clasp her and hold her and love her,
Swift ere the splendour dies,
The blue grows black above her,
The earth in shadow lies."

"He cooks, he waits, he presses trousers well,
He cleans the windows and he serves the tea;

. . . but what he thinks of me
No prince of physiognomists could tell.
He looks beyond me when he serves the soup,
And has a kind of humour in his eye.
At times I almost dread Okada Mitsu;
And once when talking to a friendly group
Of Hiroshige and Hokusai,
I wondered if the creature knew jiu-jitsu."

"Under the laurel sleeping
White is her woodland pall,
Dead in the laurel's keeping
She whom the thrushes call.
Winds of the south are weeping;
Softly the blossoms fall."

There is nothing ultra-modern or topical about the book, but it has that touch of humanity, lacking which there can be no true art.

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THE DRYAD. By Clara Burdett Patterson. (Constable, 1914. 3s. 6d. net.)

THERE is a real grace and a distinct charm about *The Dryad*. The author is to be warmly congratulated in the difficult task which she has attempted, and which she has evidently carried to the end without weariness. We must admit that the poem is not very original, nor do we find in it many phrases which haunt the memory from their intense or strange beauty; it is true that here is a region quite remote from actual life, but we feel throughout a poetical atmosphere, and the form is well suited to the theme, which will be familiar and yet sympathetic to the literary connoisseur. Once again there is presented the poignant pathetic cry of the pagan world, which recognizes that its time is over; and we feel an anger against the youth's heartless desertion (although it may have been inevitable) of her who had taught him the meaning of love. Any narrative poem, even when it contains philosophy and reflection, must be read as a whole. The following quotations may perhaps bring some reader to the book, and some gratitude to the present reviewer.

"... ; for toward his buoyant youth she knew
Her own heart turned, and by her love was taught
To wait upon his love's full tide. There came
A weeping day whereon he sought the wild,
Summer was waning fitfully, her soul
Clashed into autumn by a mad caprice
To captivate the winter. Thus he roamed
In forest glades where every fern wept tears."

"... Beside him walked a maid
Of gracious mien, with golden hair and cheeks
Which bore the ruddy hue of youth and health
Not once he glanced up to that well-known tree,
Within whose branches first he learned to love.
His arm around the maid, he sang and laughed
As he had ne'er beheld the face of pain."

• • • • • • •

"O! voice of spring—O! promise of the future—
So shalt thou wake us in sleep's garden laid,
On that undying morn of resurrection,
Of which this earthly spring is but a shade.

"Sing happy hearts which love hath made united;
Joy casts her flowers before your feet to-day;
And all creation fills the spheres with music—
In pæans to the promise of the day."

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AS THE HEART SPEAKS AND OTHER POEMS. By May Belben. (Amersham, 1913. 2s. 6d. net.)

THERE is a certain interest in this volume, because the author is a real lover of nature, and has no artistic pose. But we do not find here either any of the actual beauty of words or of the music of metre.

The following verse is, however, out of the ordinary:

> " 'You are always picking flowers,' said a friend to me one day;
> 'Why not let the poor things live a little longer?'
> 'Well my friend," quoth I, 'I know that I can very truly say,
> I would rather, if I were myself a flower,
> That some hand should pluck me, love me, shorten life, than loveless stay!' "

THE STREET OF DREAMS. By W. K. Seymour. (London: John Wilson. 1914.)

THIS volume has a certain worth which inevitably belongs to real sincerity. The author takes the name of the first poem as the title to his volume, we are inclined to agree with his implied judgment on that poem. The following verse gives a good idea of the author's manner and matter.

> The sapphire houses gleam with stars,
> The doors are massy jets,
> The windows show through golden bars,
> Rose-warm and bright the emerald stars
> That on the stalls are set.

These on Swinburne show him in his more serious mood.

> Say, " He loved Beauty, and his life was spent
> In loving adoration of her face ";
> Say, " He knew sorrow, and her gusty place
> He trod until his spirit's last ascent."

Considering that he often lingers in the somewhat enervating realms of fancy rather than in actual life the severe attack on Baudelaire and Verlaine in a " Ballade of Evil Poesy " reads a little oddly.

A READING OF LIFE and Other Poems. By M. Revell. (Erskine Macdonald. 1914.)

THIS volume has a certain originality and a more definite ambition than many. The opening poem, " An Epicurean's Reading of Life," is clear in expression with an evident meaning throughout. The blank verse narrative poem " The Wooing of Cuchulain and Avair " contains a well-told story, and is interspersed with bits of rhyme which give colour to the whole.

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Beneath the shadow of Night's plumey wings
 The tired world rests in peace
And sleep with deft hands from bonds of sense
 Brings swift release.
 Then sleep
 Sleep and forget.

There are a good many verses in this volume we should like to quote, but it seems a better plan to recommend our readers to purchase it, and to select their own favourites. We give one verse from the "Motor Ride." After reading this we ask ourselves how many of those who ride in a motor have such thoughts!!

We mount the hill as a seagull floats,
 O'er the crest of a heaving wave,
'Tis this sense of kinship with nature's strength
 That our fettered souls so crave
All sense of Time is lost in joy, to our freedom there seems no bar
And space is a ghost of the times that past,
 There is no more near or far.
The Meadow-lands lie left and right
 Flecked with the slow-lived kine.
From the banked up hedges shy wild flowers peep,
 Those daughters of shade and shine.

A VAGABOND'S PHILOSOPHY in Various Moods, including Part II, Songs of the South Seas. By A. Safroni-Middleton. (Constable. 1914.)

MANY Australian poets are well known in England, and Mr Safroni-Middleton well deserves a place by their side. His previous volumes have received high praise from their severe and fastidious critic and poet, Robert Bridges. We feel throughout this book the vigour of actual life and motion, Mr Safroni-Middleton has gone to the kind of life that appeals to him as a man, he has *not* set out to find unfamiliar material for his art. On his title page he says that he is a composer of music for government regimental bands, etc.; his best work is what one would expect from a man of his kind, who has, what is not very common, a real literary instinct and gift of expression. The poems in the first part attempt to express a philosophy; they are unconventional and have a certain boldness and real force, particularly the long poem called "Mortal Aspiration," but the thinking is on the whole bold, rather than profound and we feel a considerable obscurity, more particularly in the "Vagabond's Philosophy" and "Imperialism." In the second part, "Songs of the South Seas," he is much more at home, and more a master of his material. He can make us feel something of the fascination of a simple savage life, even though that life may not actually appeal to us. There is nothing commonplace about these songs of the South Seas, and as Robert Bridges says, "their art is very direct, and the feeling unmistakably sincere." We quote three very characteristic verses.

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Three old barbarians grim sat like wise sages,
Like mummy things; in wrinkles deep their eyes
Did sadly gleam, as though the dead dark ages
On watch sat by that moonlit Paradise—
Sat by a little fire 'neath three giant trees,
Their old heads touched their huddled thin bone knees.

One strange old man on that dim, far off world—
Where round the waves in moonlight soft were singing—
Danced wildly, his thin legs oft skyward hurled,
As chanting, wild girls bodies' bare were wringing
His shadow in moonlight did jump about,
Oft thro' the forest height its head stuck out!

. . . .

Like dead men on some unknown world we stood;
Brown girls danced moonlight, glimmering soft, bright eyes,
Whirled ghostly round the leafy solitude,
Soft-touched our shirted bodies; with wild cries
All joyous circling, clapped and danced again
To find us real, warm-blooded sailor-men."

AUSTIN H. JOHNSON.

The most important book of the month was undoubtedly Thomas Hardy's new volume, *Satires of Circumstance* (Macmillan), which ends with the war poem published in the October Poetry Review. Another October poem leads off E. M. Holden's little volume of verse (Fifield). The month's publishing also includes *The Congo and Other Poems*, by Vachell Lindsay (Macmillan); *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed*, by Amy Lowell (Macmillan); *The Bird of Paradise*, by William H. Davies (Methuen); *Emile Verhaeren*, by Stefan Zweig (Constable); and *Freedom*, by Geoffrey Winthrop Young (Smith, Elder).

New reprints of poetic interest for Christmas uses are scarce this season; the best of the kind we have seen represent the two extremes in price. We welcome so dainty a series, well printed on good paper and excellently bound, as the *Miniature Classics*, edited by George Goodchild (Jarrold & Sons, art linen cloth, 1s. net; leather, 2s. net). The titles issued are Browning's *Pippa Passes* and *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon*, Coleridge's *The Ancient Mariner*, Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*, Shelley's *The Sensitive Plant*, and Tennyson's *Maud*. The one fault is the off-setting in those cases in which the poem is printed on one side of the paper only. We welcome cheap editions, and, for quite different reasons, we ought to be still more glad to see comparatively expensive editions of great poetry. The Riccardi Press booklets (Philip Lee Warner) include *A Shropshire Lad* at 7s. 6d., boards; *In Memoriam*, 6s.; *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, 5s.; and *The Sonnets of William Shakespeare*, 6s. These octavo booklets, printed in special type that is not fantastic on hand-made paper, and stoutly bound, indicate that there is a public for fine book work with its comparatively high price, and that it is possible to reprint *In Memoriam* at 6s. as well as 6d.

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PAN: A FABLE

THERE was once a youth who longed greatly to see Pan. But he dwelt in a low land where slow streams drew past lush meads and lazy kine slept the day round, and Pan never came to him. And when he asked of Pan men laughed at him for a fool, or vaguely said that Pan was dead or that he dwelt among the hills of Arcady. To the youth it seemed a fine thing but once to see great Pan roaming the wild hillsides and to die thereafter.

Now there lay beyond the broad plain that girt his home the purple line of distant crests, and thither his eyes would turn at even when the tired sun was flinging strange mysteries of shadowed glory on the vague horizon.

" Pan is there," he said, and sighed.

And after many days the deep longing drew his steps across the wide meadows to visit that dim wonderland that lay on his world's rim; and as he went his heart grew gladder and the jagged purple line grew greater and more clear, with hints of sunken glens and ribbed crags. At morning he saw them lustrous with spilt gold, and at even dipped in the red of roses, or etched against the sky pale as sapphire or the evening sea. And he loved them always.

So he came to the hills and sojourned there many days, sleeping by night among the waving bracken or under a leaning rock, laving in tarns deep-hued like heather-honey, begging his livelihood from shepherds with kind and serious eyes. There he grew to know the splendid pomp of our lord, the Sun, the might of his sudden uprising and the lurid pageantry of his obsequies; at times he wept for joy at the nascent vision on the Eastern crests; at times he scarce dared look on the grandeur of those wild passings. And in the still noon he loved to run naked in the sun, to bathe in deep waters and race the wandering breezes on the long fell-tops. At evening he lay couched in heather to see the moon's pale splendour slowly climb among the silvern stars; he knew the wizardry of misty glens and silent starlit meres. He saw too the leagued battalions of the cloud-host roll slowly over the hushed crests, and the rain in ordered files go marching up the valleys. The savour of the damp earth, the scent of pines and a thousand flowers borne from lands unknown by the vagrant breeze, the hum of earnest bees like the surf of the fairy ocean, the dew upon his forehead, the white clouds

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that coursed over the field of blue before the pursuant breath of heaven—these things were to him a cup of joy that knew no draining.

The music of a hundred streams as they ran swiftly after rain down some organ-fronted steep, seaming with faint silver that stern face, was very wonderful to him; filled with meaning yet inexpressible, stirring deep currents in the blood and waking desires lovely as twilight and as vague. Alone he was, yet knew no loneliness, for his heart was full.

And from the hilltops he used to gaze upon the distant plains that seemed to be of another world than this. Now the sun lit the spires of a far city with the lamp of dawn or bathed them in sad rose red at evening; now a wandering beam found a river, leagues beyond, and with subtlest alchemy transmuted it to lambent flame or pallid gold. And all the while the courier winds drove the swift shadows over the spreading fells.

He stayed there many days, and then wound his slow way back to his quiet home among the sleepy streams and pastures. Men saw him; "How his eyes have changed," they whispered, and asked him: "Have you seen Pan?"

"I have seen him," he answered them.

"Of what manner was he?"

"Of every manner. I saw him sorrowful and weeping and I saw him glad and joyous. He was sometimes angry and terrible as judgment, sometimes arrayed in splendour and majesty, and often mysterious and strangely sad; but always he was noble and to be worshipped."

Then they cried: "He is mad," and would have laid hands on him. But he laughed, and fleeing from them swiftly left that low land and came again to the steadfast hills.

W. H. HODGSON.

THE POETRY SOCIETY IN BURMA

A Centre of the Poetry Society has been promoted in Burma by Mrs Rodway Swinhoe, who was actively connected with the Kensington Centre some years ago. The membership has grown to gratifying proportions, and several interesting meetings, of which we hope to give more details later, have been held. The Poetry Review is greatly appreciated as the connecting link between members, and its circulation is now established in Mandalay, Maulmein, Rangoon, Maymyo, and other parts of this far off lotus land, which, by-the-way, is vividly described in verse by R. C. J. Swinhoe in a recently published volume of graphic pictures by F. M. Muriel.

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"SHE FOUGHT FOR GARIBALDI"

TONINA MARINELLO, a young Venetian exile, fought, in man's apparel, side by side with her husband for Garibaldi. She showed great courage, and was promoted and decorated on the battlefield. She died at Florence in the May of 1862, just at the time of the budding of the roses with which her lifeless form was covered. The following translation by the present writer is one from the lines of the Garibaldian poet.

FRANCESCO DALL' ONGARO.

She was a Garibaldian. 'Neath the shade
San Miniato lent, her corpse we laid,
The face turned seaward, for her Venice there,
Her home beloved, was ever in her prayer.
A fair slight form, yet, with a lion's heart,
Amid the ranks she played the soldier's part.
Had it not been a woman whom we mourned,
Then martial trappings had the corpse adorned,
While laid upon the funeral couch to rest,
And medals, deeds of valour to attest,
Covered her bosom. Yet what needed this?
She fought for Garibaldi! That was bliss.

ALGERNON WARREN.

[ORIGINAL]

L'abbiamo deposta la garibaldina
All' ombra della torre a San Miniato,
Colla faccia rivolta alla marina
Perchè pensi a Venezia e al nido amato.
Era bella, era bionda, era piccina,
Ma avea cuor da leone e da soldato.
E se non fosse ch'era nata donna
Porterie le spalline e non la gonna,
E poserebbe sul funereo letto
Colla medaglia del valor sul petto.
Ma che fa la medaglia e tutto il resto?
Pugnò con Garibaldi e basti questo!

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THE POETICAL GAZETTE

The Kensington Centre meetings will recommence next month. Details of the programme now being arranged will be given in our January issue. Pressure of other affairs has compelled Miss McGavin to relinquish the local secretaryship. Happily, Miss McGavin remains a member of the Society. We believe that Mrs Horsey, who has consented to take up the duties, will be found to be an alert and devoted successor to a most faithful and long-time worker for the Poetry Society.

SHORTLANDS

Two meetings have been held, on October 28 and November 11, for readings of Poems by Women Writers and Poems on "Duty" and "Conscience." There has been a distinct improvement in the average attendance and a gratifying increase in the number of readers, who begin to show much keener interest and enthusiasm. A reading of *Hamlet* is being arranged for November 25. We hope that next month Miss Huntsman will conduct an audition for the benefit of readers.—M. Duffield, Hon. Sec.

HAMPSTEAD

The subjects for the December meetings are: December 1: *Prometheus Unbound;* December 15: Poems relating to Animals.

The Annual Business Meeting of this Centre will be held on Tuesday, January 19, 1915. Nomination papers will be distributed at the last meeting of this year, December 15, and must be returned, together with any notices of motions, to the Hon. Secretary, Mrs L. Tilly, 193 Camden Road, N.W., on or before December 31.

PUTNEY

The Autumn Session opened well with two good October meetings. At the first one fifty-four persons were present. There are now seventy names on the Putney Centre list since starting here three years ago, but unfortunately about twenty of these have either left the place or resigned through illness. There are two meetings held here every month, the first of which always takes place at the local President's, 10 Carlton Road, at 5.15, on the "Second Mondays," when any members from other Centres are always welcome without giving previous notice.

On November 9, at 10 Carlton Road, Lady Margaret Sackville, whose exquisite personality is known to us through her poems, "Songs of Aphrodite," "Lyrics," "Bertrud," "Hildre's Queen," etc., recited some quaint and charming Rumanian folk-songs, one, "At a Grave," beginning "Look not upon the sky at eventide, for it makes sorrowful the heart of man," was most beautiful. Also "The Neighbour," "Laughter," "Hopeless" ("We envied him that he could sing without a heart to sadden him"), etc. Lady Margaret also read from her own lovely poems, "The Flight," "The Victim," "Pan" ("Poets mean not what they say; Give me a shepherd any day"), and the last one she wrote this month on the war:

"Not these I pity
    Who in the sweep and surge of battle die

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With passion in their hearts, but these
The wrecks and ruins of the city,
These million souls outcast, they know not why,
Torn, trampled, outraged, driven over-seas.

For these what price
Shall the inexorable laws demand?
Upon their heads what heavy toll is set?
Theirs is the sorrow and the sacrifice,
Their tears have watered the waste lands.
When God remembers, who shall pay the debt?"

Mrs Gambier Noel gave three pretty French songs in the "interval." It has been decided to hold no meetings here during December. The next meeting after that of November 23 will be at 10 Carlton Road on January 11.

FLOWERS IN POETRY

The Putney meeting on October 26 was at Northam, Upper Richmond Road, the subject being "Flowers in Poetry." Several members read poems, and Mrs Bishop gave a charming and poetical address, of which a short summary is given below:

Flowers—the blossom and fragrancy of the material world—have been an inspiration to "Poetry, the blossom and fragrancy of all human knowledge, passion and emotion." Flowers, like the poet's soul, rise from sordid environments, seeking space and light, creating beauty, alluring by fragrance and sweetness. "Song is not Truth, not Wisdom, but the Rose upon Truth's lips, the light in Wisdom's eyes." "The wonder of the sweetness of a rose" and of a flower's existence have "shamed the foolish wisdom" even of poets. Tennyson's "Flower in a crannied wall" and Mrs Meynell's "To a Daisy" are examples. But it is the poet's privilege "to enjoy a flower's birth before its budding." For him, "Ambushed in winter's heart the rose of June is found." The Persian nightingale is said to have been dumb until inspired by a tender passion for the rose. A poet's song, too, has been often vivified by the coming of love. The reign of the rose as Queen of Love has been long established. She is the especial favourite of the earlier and of the romantic poets. Few, indeed, are those who have not used flowers to express the tenderness and ardour of youthful passion, the appreciation, veneration, regret, or anguish of later love. Elegiac poetry contains some fine examples in Wordsworth, Shelley, Arnold and others, and in Milton, who calls on every flower "To strow the hearse where Lycid lies." In religious poetry, from that of Hebrew Scripture to Dante and onwards, the emblematic flowers, the rose and lily, are used, while in Milton's Paradise were "Flowers of all hues and without thorn the rose."

The source of the flower's greatest beauty has been variously expressed by Omar Khayyám, Stephen Phillips, Tennyson, Browning, Francis Thompson and others.

"I sometimes think that never blows so red
The rose as where some buried Cæsar bled
That every hyacinth the garden wears
Dropt in her lap from some once lovely head," etc.

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The rose and lily represent life and death, beauty and purity, love and spirituality, sovereignty and dignity. Beyond these emblematic flowers, poets give preference to those of the meadow, the hedgerow, the woodland, the dell. Each season has its flowers and every poet sings them from " The torpor of the year when feeble dreams visit the hidden buds " onward. Milton's " May Morning " gives the inspiration a noble artist might desire. Though some flowers are symbols for sorrow our poets more frequently express through them confidence, constancy, hope, duty, happiness, gentleness. Tasso urges to strenuous life on craggy heights as the true way to honour's bowers. But the heights attained, flowers of the vale are requisitioned for the hero. " Myrtle wreaths and roses twine To deck the hero's brow divine."

An American correspondent has been investigating the prices at which poetry was published before Sir Walter Scott raised the charges, and sold of *Rokeby* in three months almost 8,000 copies, producing above £9,000, and of *The Lady of the Lake* in less than four months 8,000 copies, producing £7,800. But, as a rule, in the days before " cheap " literature poetry sold at a reasonable if not low price. Dodsley's three-volume *Miscellany* (1748) cost the purchaser only 9s.; Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*, that same year, was 3s.; the *Deserted Village* (1770) was a 2s. quarto; Hayley's *Triumphs of Temper* (1781), which ran through a dozen editions, was 6s.; " Perdita " Robinson's *Poems* (1791), in a handsome octavo with a print of one of Sir Joshua's portraits of her, and with a long list of noble subscribers, brought a guinea—but Mistress Robinson was a beauty and an actress as well as a poetess, and her publication was virtually a " benefit." In 1796, Cottle, who had bought the copyright of Southey's *Joan of Arc*, issued it in a quarto volume at a guinea, presumably with the idea of giving a provincial press a high-sounding start; the two volumes of *Thalaba* (1801), however, were priced at 7s. a volume. The *Lyrical Ballads*, sold for 5s., Landor's *Gebir* for 2s. 6d., and Hayley's *Triumph of Music*, a quarto by a poet of reputation, for 10s. 6d. Scott, therefore, was doing a somewhat audacious and risky thing when he published the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* in January, 1805, at 25s. Nevertheless, he sold that year 750 quartos, as well as 1,500 octavos at 10s. 6d., and nearly 10,000 more before *Marmion* appeared. Success brought increase of boldness, and when *Marmion* came out in February, 1808, the publishers issued 2,000 quartos at a guinea and a half. In spite of this increase in price, the 2,000 quartos sold in less than a month, and were followed by 3,000 octavos at 12s., also an increase in price. With the *Lady of the Lake* in 1810, Scott raised the price to two guineas—and in spite of everything—not only sold unprecedented quantities of the new poem, but also 5,000 copies of *Marmion* and some 1,500 of the *Lay*. During these years of Scott's harvest, almost no other volumes of poetry brought anything like such prices. The only ones I have found are Southey's *Madoc* (1806) and Hodgson's translation of Juvenal (1808), both in quarto at two guineas. On the other hand, Wordsworth's two volumes in 1807 cost 11s., Crabbe's *Poems* (1808) brought 8s. 6d., and Lamb's *Specimens of the English Dramatic Poets* (1808) 10s. 6d.

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The British Empire Shakespeare Society

(Founded by Miss Morritt in 1901.)

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THE B.E.S.S. exists for the purpose of making Shakespeare a vital force of the English-speaking race. Public Dramatic Readings are given in London by well-known actors. Throughout the country and in the colonies these Readings are given by the local members of each Branch, but unlike the usual method adopted by Societies previously to 1901, one of the principal rules of the B.E.S.S. is that all Branches should admit the Press free and the Public at a small charge to at least one meeting a year. Essay and Elocution Competitions, open to members in all parts of the world, are held annually. To prepare members for public Dramatic Readings and Costume Recitals, Reading Circles have been instituted in connexion with all the centres. Membership of one centre implies membership of the Society throughout the Empire. The Annual General Performances are held in the early autumn and the casts are representative of the whole Society. The Annual Subscription for Members is 5s., for Privileged Members 10s., the entrance fee in both cases being 5s. Privileged Members are entitled to front seats at all the Society's Meetings.

LONDON.—(Assistant General Secretary, Mr Hesketh Pearson, 14 Abbey Gardens, N.W.)

IN aid of *The Times'* Fund for the British Red Cross Society members of the London Reading Circles and the Chelsea Branch will give scenes in costume from "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Romeo and Juliet," "The Merry Wives of Windsor," and "As You Like It," under the direction of Mr Acton Bond, on Friday, December 4, at 8 p.m., at the West Central Concert Hall, 31 Alfred Place, Tottenham Court Road. The cast includes Mrs Acton Bond, Mrs W. D. Carey, Miss Kathleen Breeds, Miss Gwendolyn Cashman, Miss Muriel Crowdy, Miss Athalie Davis, Miss Constance Fairbairn, Miss Beatrice Fulton, Miss Gertrude Hammond, Miss Nancie Hill, Miss Eileen Hunt, Miss A. Redman King, Miss Mabel Bruce Low, Miss Phyllis Megginson, Miss Felicie Roche, Miss Van Raate, Mrs Vanne, Mr C. E. Adams, Mr Leonard Barker, Mr J. K. Boddy, Mr W. D. Carey, Mr F. H. Macey, Mr J. C. Mason, Mr J. C. Pettican, Mr W. Harold Squire and Mr F. H. Watkins. All these members have undertaken to sell tickets, and the sales already assure an excellent contribution to the fund. Tickets, 2s. 6d., and 1s., from the Hon. Sec. for these performances, Miss Felicie Roche, 111 Edith Road, West Kensington.

ON Sunday evening, November 22, at Passmore Edwards' Settlement, Tavistock Place, "Henry V" was given as a Dramatic Reading by a cast of professional and amateur members, under the direction of Mr P. L. Eyre, President of the Chelsea Branch. It included Mrs Acton Bond. Chorus: Miss Felicie Roche (Katherine), Miss Gwendolyn Cashman (Hostess), Mr P. L. Eyre (Henry V), Mr W. G. Hamilton (Fluellen), Mr J. K. Boddy (Exeter), Mr George Skillan (French King), Mr Terence O'Brien (Dauphin), Mr Frank Macey (Pistol), Mr Horace Sequeira (Bardolph). A full notice will appear in the next issue.

H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF ALBANY will preside over a meeting on Friday afternoon, January 29, to receive contributions from amateur clubs and amateurs generally for

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the Stage Unemployment Fund. It is hoped many of the B.E.S.S. Branches will make contributions. The Hon. W. H. Goschen, 47 Cadogan Gardens, S.W., is Hon. Treasurer and Mr Alan Mackinnon, 43 Chester Square, S.W., the Hon. Secretary. Further particulars of this movement will be given in the January issue.

KENSINGTON EVENING CIRCLE.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss Ada Mocatta, 108 Iverna Court.)—On November 19 " King Lear " was commenced. Miss Van Raalte, a member of the Circle, read a paper on the play. Mr and Mrs Acton Bond were present.

ST JOHN'S WOOD CIRCLE.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss G. Cashman, 65 Belsize Park Gardens.)—" A Midsummer Night's Dream " was read and studied on November 9 and 23, the B.E.S.S. edition being used. Good attendances are being registered.

BELFAST.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss Erskine Longwood, Whitehouse.)—In the Ulster Mission Hall, on Tuesday, November 24, scenes from " Twelfth Night " and " Henry V " were given, with the songs and full orchestral music. Miss Dorothy Casey travelled from Dublin to help, while Mrs Totten, a Belfast member, is singing the songs from " Twelfth Night."

On January 28 Prof. F. W. Trench, of Trinity College, Dublin, has promised to lecture.

BRISTOL.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss V. M. Methley, 9 Royal York Crescent, Clifton, Bristol.)—The private reading circles of this Branch have already met several times. An Afternoon Reading Circle has been formed this season in addition to the Evening Circles, and the membership promises to be good. The first Public Reading of this Branch took place on Wednesday, November 11, when a dramatic recital of " King Henry V " was rendered.

At the Royal Hotel, College Green, on November 11, a large gathering of members of the Bristol Playgoers' Club heard a recital by the local Branch of the B.E.S.S. An excellent recital of " King Henry V." was given by Mrs P. Hartland Thomas, the Misses E. C. Methley, V. M. Methley, McPherson, Parker Atkinson, M. R. James, Wetherman, Cranston Baber, Messrs H. N. Matthews, P. Baldwin, M. Chambers, Gordon W. Boyd, G. K. Archbold, M. O. Pragnell, and F. Richardson. The stage directions were read by Miss A. D. Lees.

DUBLIN.—(Hon. Sec., Mr W. H. Orpen, Wood Berry, Merrion Road.)—The *Irish Times* of November 12 contains the following notice of the first autumn meeting. At the first meeting of the present session the chair was occupied by Professor W. F. Trench, LL.D. A paper was read by Mr S. A. O. Fitzpatrick, Vice-President, on " Richard III, and Shakespeare's Treatment of History." The writer traced the events of the play to their sources in the various chronicles, especially to Sir Thomas More's *History of the Reigns of King Edward V and King Richard III*, and sought to show how the dramatist, while using even minute and trivial incidents to heighten the interest of his representation, and to develop the characters of the *dramatis personæ*, did not scruple to depart from historical accuracy where a like purpose could

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be thereby attained. He instanced especially the unhistorical introduction of Margaret of Anjou—who imparts to the drama something of the dignity of a Greek tragedy—and the scenes between Gloster and Lady Anne and the Dowager Queen Elizabeth, as well as the attribution to Richard of the murders of Henry VI and Clarence, and the supposed poisoning of his wife, the Lady Anne. A prize is to be awarded for the best essay on "William Shakespeare, patriot," which is a very appropriate subject at the present time.

Ealing Branch.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss M. Linklater Thomson, 51 Eaton Rise.)—At the annual meeting, in the unavoidable absence of the President of the Branch (the Rev. Dr W. E. Oliver), the chair was taken by Mr J. W. Reid, who said that in spite of the dark forebodings of a pessimistic former member that "societies of that kind from their commencement contained within themselves the germs of decay"—(laughter)—they had managed to exist cheerfully and prosperously for five years. Their present session would not be an easy one. To begin with, their programme was not "popular." Having dealt in former sessons with nearly all the more readable plays, they were now about to tackle some of the heavier ones, including the first part of "Henry VI." Now, he had himself, in his bachelor days, when a member of a Shakespeare society for young fellows in chambers, studied some of those so-called "dull" plays with pleasure and profit; and he trusted that all their members who could do so would make regular attendance a point of honour. This was the more necessary, inasmuch as their numbers were lessened by the departure for active service of four of their members, namely, Messrs Fletcher, Crossland, Partridge, and Ordish, jun., who took with them all the good wishes of the society. (Applause.)

On the motion of Mr Wootton, the members of the old Committee were re-elected *en bloc*, with the addition of Mr Johnson. The composition of the Committee is as follows: Mr and Mrs J. Stark Browne, Miss Debac, Miss A. Thain Davidson, Mr H. M. Forrest Dodd, Mr F. de Pregent Green, Miss Loveday, Miss Stephens, Miss Marjorie Wood, Mr and Mrs J. W. Reid, Mr and Mrs W. T. White, and Mr Johnson.

In proposing the re-election of Miss Linklater Thomson and Mr J. F. Drake to the offices, respectively, of Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer, Mr W. T. White referred in highly appreciative terms to the zeal, ability and tactfulness of both officers, who were re-elected unanimously and with acclamation.

"As You Like It" was read on November 11 in the Lecture Room of the Town Hall.

Glasgow Branch.—(Hon. Secretary, Mrs Wyper, 6 Burnbank Gardens.)—The session opened formally with a concert and recitations in the Grand Hotel. The audience was large and enthusiastic. Miss Graeme Kennedy recited the Sleep-walking Scene from "Macbeth," for which she had been highly commended by Lady Tree at the annual competition, and Miss Ella Vallance delighted the audience with her recitation from "Anthony and Cleopatra."

The Rev. Professor Cooper, President of the Branch, in welcoming the members, said the large attendance justified the action of the Committee in resolving to continue their meetings, which they did not regard as mere entertainments. The Society existed for the study of Shakespeare, and that study would not interfere with the work of helping the manifold causes of charity and of patriotism laid upon them by the war.

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The Reading Circles are showing great activity, and a number of new members have joined. An extra Circle, "Western Central," has therefore started. The quality of the readings shows marked improvement. The Executive Committee have resolved to give an elocution prize for amateur ladies in the early spring, particulars of which will be announced shortly. An interesting syllabus of lectures is being arranged. Prof. Gilbert Davies has promised a lecture on "The Origin of the Drama."

NORWOOD.—Hon. Secretary, Mrs W. D. Carey, 12 Northanger Road, Streatham.)—The opening meeting of the season was held on Saturday, October 3, when "Henry V" was read to the students of the Royal Normal College. The spirit of the play was much to the liking of the audience. The leading parts were read by Mr A. J. Beck (Henry V), Mr J. H. Hoggette (Canterbury), Mr W. D. Carey (Dauphin), Mr H. V. Barwell (Fluellen), Mr A. E. Fisher (Pistol), Mr C. R. Hart (Nym).

Mrs Carey delighted the audience with her reading of the part of Katharine.

The choruses of the various acts were undertaken by Mrs Minto Nelson, Miss Winifred Oughton, Miss Cross, Miss E. C. Massey and Miss Dorothy Vernon.

On November 7 the members gave a reading of "The Comedy of Errors," also at the Royal Normal College. The audience followed the play with keen appreciation, and much hearty laughter greeted many of the lines. The Antipholuses were read by Messrs A. J. Beck and Alec Lauder, the Dromios by Messrs W. D. Carey and George Hill, Mr J. H. Hoggette was the Ægeon, Miss E. C. Massey, Æmilia; Mrs Harris, Andriana; and Mrs Carey, Luciana. The stage directions were read by Mr H. V. Barwell, who gave a brief explanatory note on the play.

SHEFFIELD.—(Hon. Secretary, Mr Arnold Brittain, 47 Bank Street.)—On November 5 Mr Martin Harvey gave a lecture to the members of the B.E.S.S. and the Sheffield Playgoers' Society entitled "Some Reflections on the Art of Acting." The Montgomery Hall was crowded. Prof. Leahy and the Hon. Sec., also the Executive, are to be congratulated on the success. The proceeds were divided equally between the Theatrical War Fund and the British Red Cross Society.

UXBRIDGE.—(Hon. Secretary, Miss Stevens, Coniston Lodge.)—On Friday, November 13, at Bishopshalt, by kind invitation of Mrs W. F. Thomas, the second part of "Henry V" was read, and on the 27th "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" was commenced under the direction of Mr Acton Bond.

WESTON-SUPER-MARE—(Hon. Secretary, Mr W. G . Harrison, Warwick Beach Road.)—On November 23, at the Grand Atlantic Hotel, a lecture on Shakespeare and Patriotism was given by the President (Mr T. W. Williams, B.A.). A notice will be given in the next issue. An interesting programme is arranged for the season. Two stirring plays, "Henry IV," Part I, and "Coriolanus" being fixed for early recitals.

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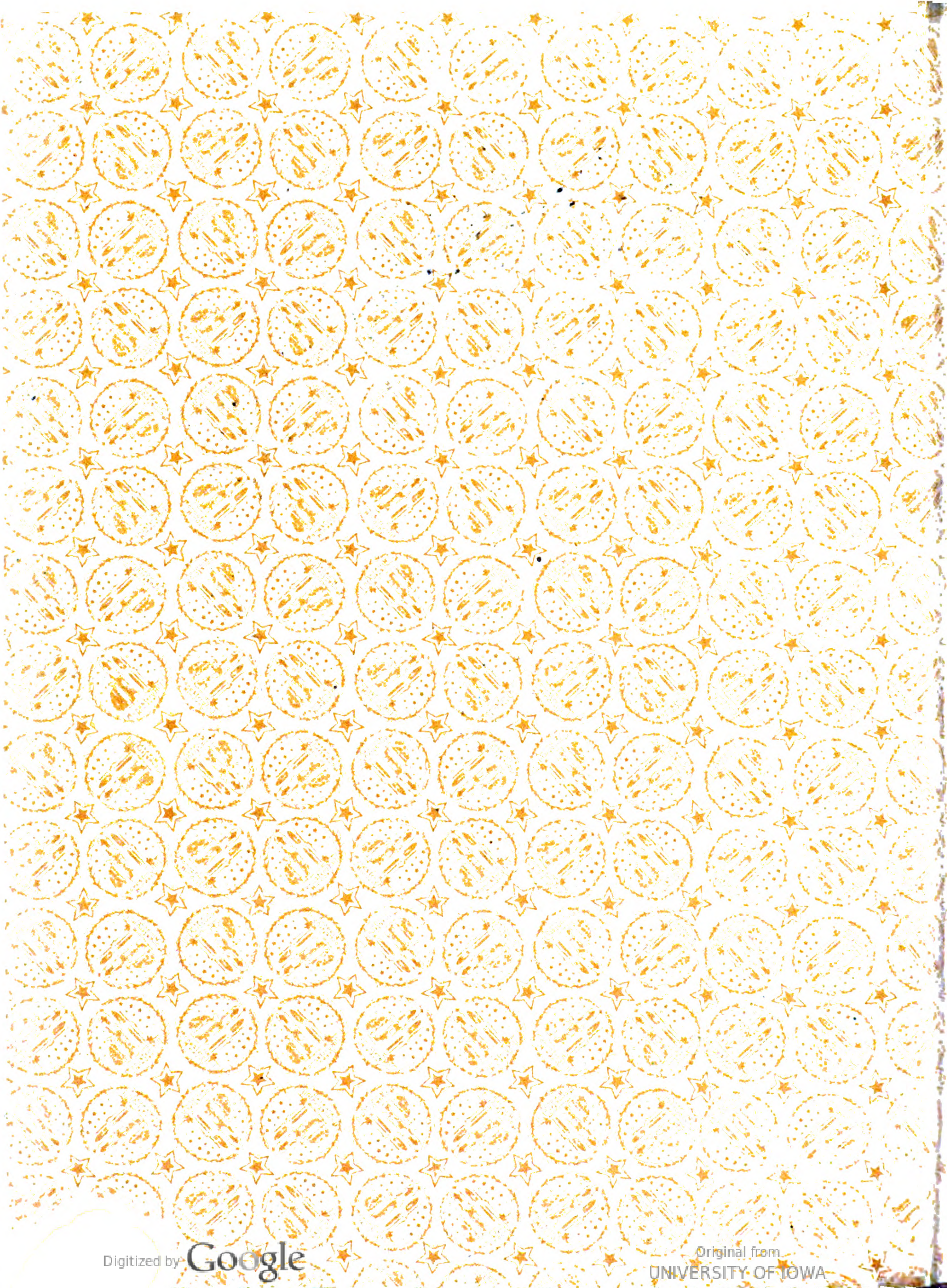

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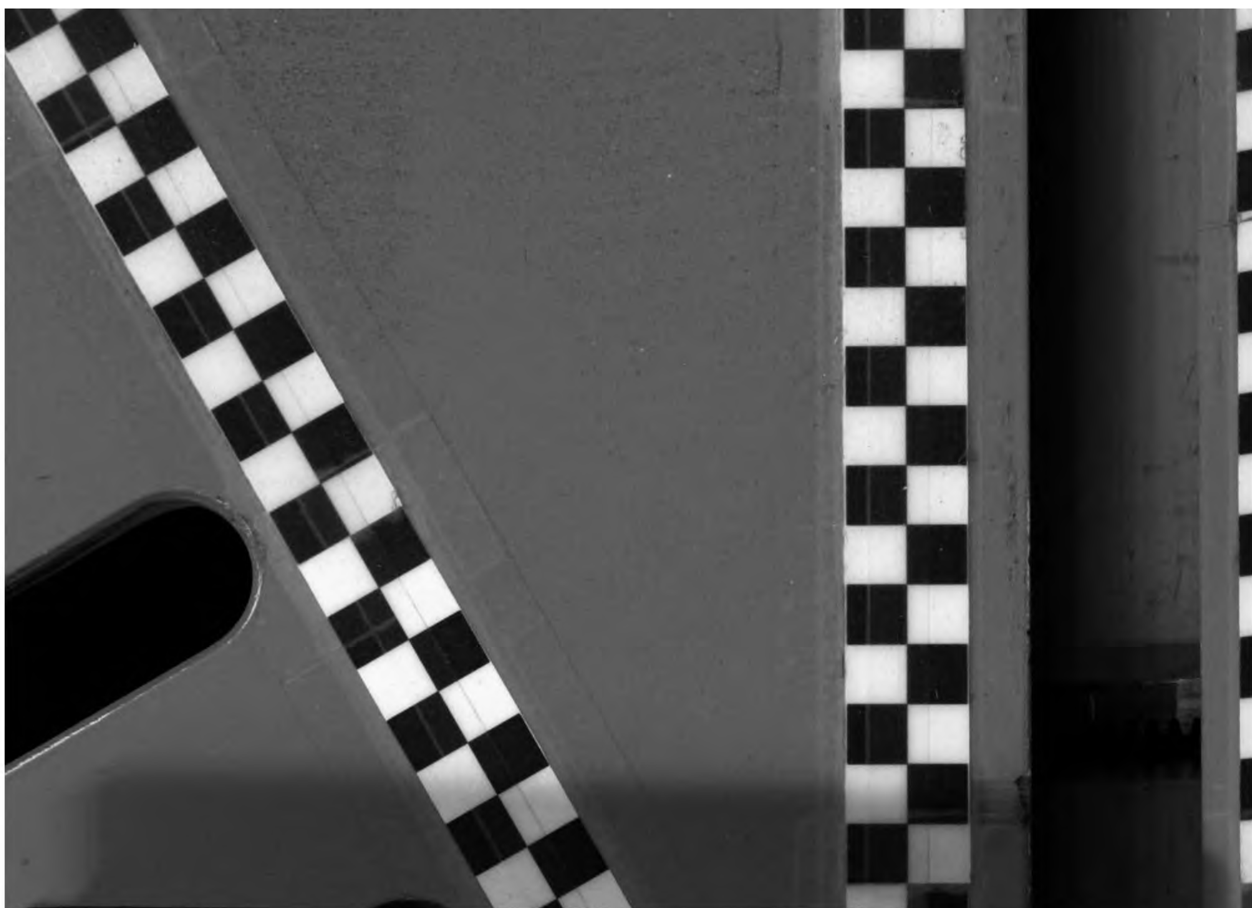

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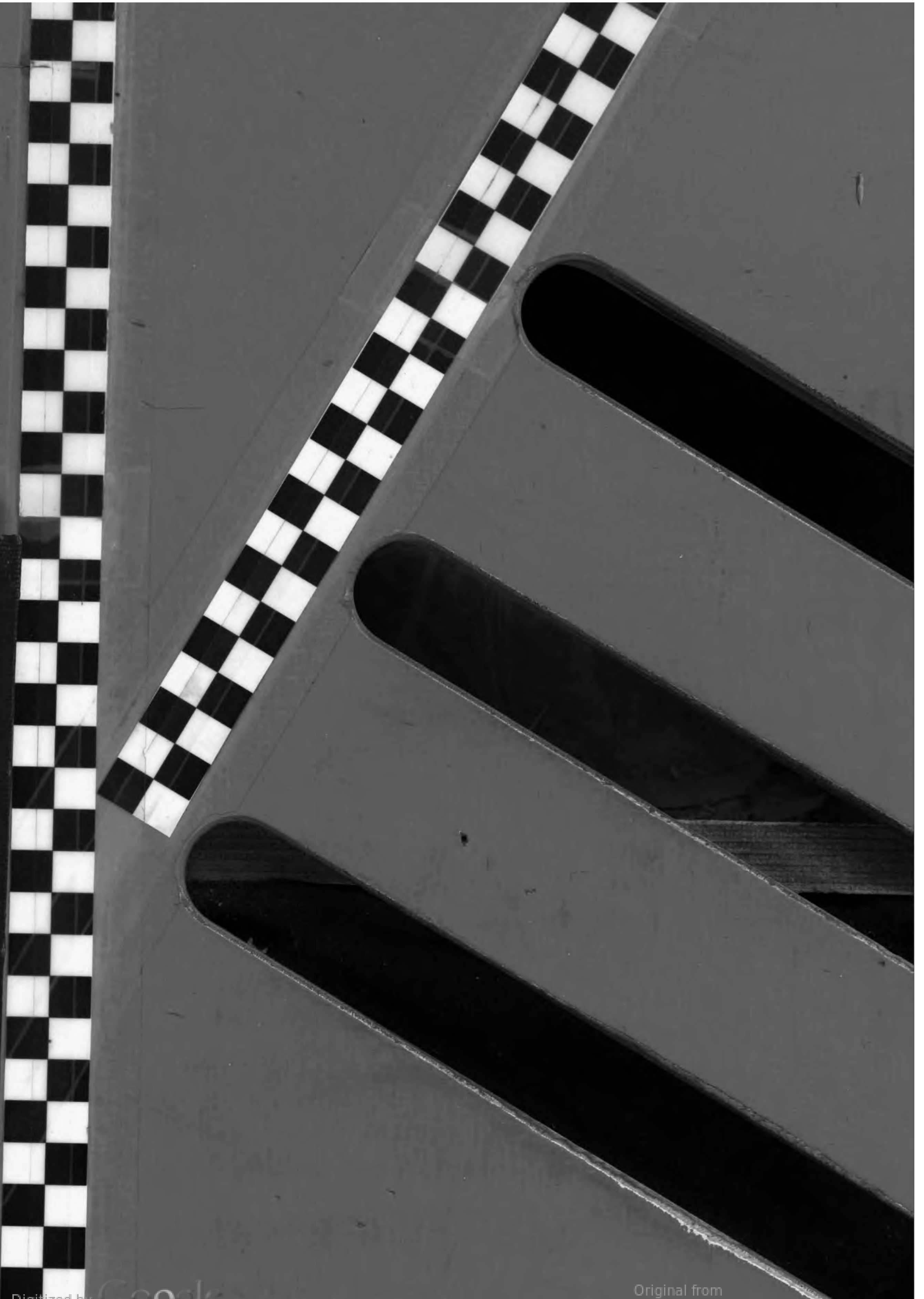

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