

AND THE RHYMERS, THEIR RHYME FOR US EVERY DAY—SOME NEW FICTION

BIG AND LITTLE POETS OFFER THEIR VERSE TO US

Some Comment on the Work of Richardson, Stephen Benet, Middleton, McClure, Mrs. Kilmer, Babette Deutsch, Towne and Wheelock

IT IS the mode nowadays for English men of letters to voyage the sea (the U-bat peril having been replaced by that older hazard of the lady from Boston in the adjoining deckchair) in order (so they say) to get in touch with the American poets who are really worth while. One hears echoes of their progress among the literary dinner tables. Alas, many a shy American poet who might have had the delight of being discovered by these adventurers from the older Hellion is frustrated by the rapacious hospitality of our grandees. Hugh Walpole, we learn, was kidnapped from the Mauretania by a Newport steam yacht before the liner was fairly berthed, and haled wildly to the damask napery of Narragansett while the envoy of his New York publisher snatched forlornly on the Conard line pier.

It is a pity (so one may think who has the literary rapprochement of the two countries warmly at heart) that exploring friends are not left a little more to themselves, to wander observantly about and see things quietly, gradually forming their own conceptions of the catchwords of that literary coterie which happens (by unstinted use of wireless) to capture them first, and then to show in its wild hospitality, and all the hubbub about Amy Lowell and Carl Sandburg and Vachel Lindesay, and the clang of crockery and the tintinnabulation of the spoons of some writers whose work is admirably significant, though little touted? To the American poets who have made it on their own printing press, to read Mr. Richardson's book, "The Forest-Altar and Other Poems," is to meet a mind of beautiful courage and sensitiveness; a mind in which the wild hospitality of the poet's friendship of bitter bitterness. In his tense, shrewd, passion-shaken verses, "There glows a subtle moment now and then of perfect apprehension."

William Rose Benet and his younger brother, Stephen Vincent Benet, are the Barnum & Bailey of the younger American poetry. Will Benet's delicious gift of fantasy is already well known. Stephen Benet in his "Young Men of the Orient," shows the same golden and priceless heritage of wild, gorgeous imagination. With this he knits a supple, gymnastic grace in the sonnet. Benet, Stephen Vincent Benet, are the Barnum & Bailey of the younger American poetry. Will Benet's delicious gift of fantasy is already well known. Stephen Benet in his "Young Men of the Orient," shows the same golden and priceless heritage of wild, gorgeous imagination. With this he knits a supple, gymnastic grace in the sonnet.

Mr. Towne is a true poet, but, unfortunately for his art, too much of a poet. He feels the beauty and color of the world so keenly and enters so fully into its joys and sorrows that his utterance grows somewhat overabundant. Mr. Towne is one of those poets to whom a governmental

ration of intellectual sugar in small manila envelopes will be helpful and bracing. But he is always lucid, always bright and honest in technique, and always rooted to the highest sense of agreeable excitement by his romantic themes. One wonders how a man so stirred by the manifold appeals of beauty can have remained so long a bachelor. Safety in numbers, one concludes. Mr. Towne is unquestionably (with Vachel Lindsay) the most rainbow-minded boldy in America.

John Hall Wheelock, in "Dust and Light," has written a volume of poetry of the highest order, and one which deserves the faithful scrutiny of every honest lover of the muse. It is doubtful whether any man in America can write better sonnets than Mr. Wheelock. In his lines passion and stricken apprehension of life's lovely and torturing riddles mount upon a fiercely tempered sobriety in expression. Such poems as he has written in this fine collection give one happy opportunity to forget the shallow absurdities of many of our younger choirs. He has the sense of words as medicinal sirups for the human brain.

THE FOREST-ALTAR AND OTHER POEMS. By James Edward Richardson. Copyright by the author, Philadelphia, 1919. Young Adventure Press, 1200 Locust Street, Philadelphia. \$1.50. THE NEW DAY. By Stephen Middleton. New York: The Macmillan Company, 41 Ave. of the Americas, 1919. \$1.50. THE NEW DAY. By Stephen Middleton. New York: The Macmillan Company, 41 Ave. of the Americas, 1919. \$1.50. THE NEW DAY. By Stephen Middleton. New York: The Macmillan Company, 41 Ave. of the Americas, 1919. \$1.50.

War-Inspired Poems. In "The Village Wife's Lament" Maurice Hewlett has written a long lyric narrative poem of love and the war. The general flow is iambic, but monotony is avoided by skillful substitution of trochees, cyclic dactyls and anapaests by the war. His lines are in various meters in the stanzic scheme.

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War Mothers. By Edward G. Ross. S. J., editor of The Queen's Work, takes the other, and perhaps more conventional viewpoint of woman's willing sacrifice and service of volition in war for abstract principles bound up in the great cause of human freedom and autonomy. Father Garesche's poems recognize the pang of personal loss, but are rich in the solace of the spirit that serves and sacrifices and bears the burden of the world's wrongs. "My Flag and My Boy," by Lieu-



MRS. GENE STRATTON-PORTER Author of "Home With the Birds," at her Humberst cabin

MRS. PORTER'S BIRD CONFESSIONS

The Popular Novelist Explains How She Became Interested in Robins and Things

There is no more persistent and conscientious student of birds in America than Mrs. Gene Stratton-Porter, widely known as an author of popular fiction, and there is no more interesting writer about birds than she.

Three years ago Mrs. Stratton-Porter was telling an acquaintance of some of the interesting incidents connected with her pursuit of bird lore when it was suggested that she write a book about the subject. This she has done in "Home With the Birds," which might be called an ornithologist's autobiography. The book is filled with most fascinating tales about birds.

As a child the author was fond of birds and learned how to approach them without disturbing them on their nests. She has discovered in her own species on her father's farm. One day her father delighted her heart by telling her that he gave her for her own all the birds on the farm. The bird thereupon assumed a proprietorship which consisted mostly of a feeling of motherly responsibility for the safety of every feathered thing that flew. As she grew older she continued her study and in the course of time began to write about the things which she had learned. Her patient observation of the remarkable life of birds, the distinctive French naturalist. She has corrected some of the errors of those who have gone before and she has discovered much about birds and their ways which were unknown before. Her volume, however, is not a dry book on ornithology. It is a human and sympathetic story of a woman's interest in a domestic life, an amusing and pathetic anecdote. For example she tells of one bird which she found blind drunk on the juice of frozen pebbles. He clung head downward to the perch and kept crying the berries as long as she watched him. The story lacks only its last stage, a description of the bird recovering from his spree with his head lashed against a wire of ice to his throbbing brow. She tells also of a silly robin that built her nest in a leafless tree where it was unprotected from the weather. Mrs. Stratton-Porter saw the bird sit on the nest for nineteen consecutive hours protecting her eggs from a driving rainstorm.

THE SOUL PROGRESS OF A TEMPERAMENT

Rita Wellman's "Wings of Desire" Study in Artist's Psychology

"The Wings of Desire," by Rita Wellman, as a novel is episodic in structure and sketchy in manner. But that does not mean that it falls inferior rank as fiction in a very genuine sense. Though it would hardly pass muster on the criteria of technical formulas, it rises to a very superior level in its projection of character in conflicts of standpoint and ideal with the people about and the world's conventions and in clashes of mood and purpose within the individual. This, if you please, is authentic fiction, whether it has a formal heroine, a hero absolute, a "plot" and a purpose, ethical, spiritual, moral, clinical or what not; whether it is romantic or realistic; whether it edifies or amuses; whether it chastens morals with a smile or bludgeons morals with a horrid example. What matters in fiction, after all, is the reflection of an enclosed mirror, but with the subject and the mirror at the various angles of plausible temperament and believable situation and the candles of the scenes varying the degree and intensity of the lighting.

Miss Wellman in "The Wings of Desire" has surpassed her study of racial types and tempers, as dramatically set forth in "The Gentle Wife," a powerful play that has not been staged. And the reason is the same. She squeezes her drama or story out of her people, their environments, placements, attitudes and reactions; she does not force her people into her story, she fits her story to her people. She is, in other words, most of these talented youth's experiences, the conventional stuff of the mass of poetry, but in the Legnina poem there is the vivid illumination of a personal knowledge. Without comparing them to the verses of such "inheritors of unfulfilled renown" as Rupert Brooke and Alan Seeger, as Prof. H. A. Beers, of Yale, who writes an introduction, points out, they have qualities that give promise of future achievement. In "The Village Wife's Lament" by Maurice Hewlett. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1919. \$1.50. MY FLAG AND MY BOY. By William H. Barter. Boston: The Page Company, 1919. \$1.50. THE VILLAGE WIFE'S LAMENT. By Maurice Hewlett. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1919. \$1.50.

THE BELIEVED STRANGER

There is more authentic poetry in "The Believed Stranger" than in anything else that he has written. This is true in spite of the fact that much of it is in free verse. It might be called a love sequence, for love is the theme of the whole and it is the love of which great passions are made. "Laurel," which is the longest poem, best illustrates the temper of the whole. It runs: I will not call you beautiful again, though I may be drawn back by the silence of refraining. And not a sign of a smile. Though I stand full with exclaiming. For you are as beautiful as a hill I know. In spring, breathing with light— But as soon as I told you, a chill like snow. Covered and turned you white. I will not call you beautiful again, your labyrinthine loveliness I will not be silent as forgotten men. Dead beyond blame. No matter how your airs of spring beguile. Be it my fortune, my business, my endeavor. Not to touch the laurel of your smile— Except today, tomorrow and forever! It is announced that the book is the result of a trip to the Orient made by Mr. Byrner in 1916. That may be, but there was that in Byrner before he went to the East, which made the book possible of the Orient could not have brought it back. A sheer poetry it is one of the most notable books which has appeared this year.

THERE IS NO DEATH

The portal is but a higher plane. From the plane of the twentieth degree messages, authenticated and reported by Dr. A. D. Watson of Toronto, have come to add to the sum of our knowledge of intellectual and spiritual power in the person of a young man, remarkable.

THE 20TH PLANE

The book has a scientific purpose and recounts, solely as evidence, the extraordinary recent conversations with great masters of the past, including Lincoln, Taine, Moses, Beethoven and Plato. It forms another important link in the chain of evidence in proof of a life hereafter.

Amy Lowell's New Poems

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Other Books by Amy Lowell

Cam Grand's Castle Men, Women and Ghosts \$1.50 Sord-Biades and Poppy Seed \$1.50 Poetry, Illustrated \$2.50 A Dome of Many-Colored Glass \$1.50 Six French Fables, Illustrated, \$2.50

"Not since the Elizabethans has such a mastery of words been reached in English!" THE MACMILLAN COMPANY Publishers NEW YORK

A NEW DAVID HARUM

"The Touch of Abner" Delightful in Drollery

David Harum will be the first thought that comes to mind in reading "The Touch of Abner," by H. A. Cody. The author has hitherto been known mostly for his western novels of the western school of fiction, but he is very adept at the bucolic and rural on the testimony of this novel, which has rustic humor and a lot of sound sense as well. It moves along at a lively clip from the moment when the titular hero subscribes a cool thousand to the orphanage fund in right, not to say near, community. He has anything like that much money and no way of getting it, but he has his nerve and his wit. His wife does all the worrying, but Abner does the worrying.

This is no mere b'gosh novel at all, and as a piece of literary craftsmanship it has David Harum beaten all over the town. The two main characterizations are skilfully observed and put believably on the page and the situations do not strain credulity. A village life, however, is not to be taken as a process of making good the donation for the orphanage fund and shaming tight-fisted neighbors to lead a helping hand. There is a treasure in the soil of the old farm, which has been discovered and preserved as part of the plot. But the humor is, after all, the chief charm. It is infectious. And the love story concerning Abner's girl is also prettily sentimental without being mushy. THE TOUCH OF ABNER, BY H. A. Cody. New York: George H. Doran Company, \$1.50.

Amy Lowell's Virtuosity

If Amy Lowell would use her undoubted gifts in writing poetry after European models instead of fashioning her verse on the models of China and Japan, she would be a poet of the first rank. But perhaps Miss Lowell does not care for that kind of popularity. It must be assumed that she does not care for it. Her latest volume, "Pictures of the Floating World," contains the verse which she has written during the last few years that did not seem appropriate to be published, either with "Men, Women and Ghosts" or with "Cam Grand's Castle." They are imagist pieces, that is, they have been written in the attempt to create the impression of a picture in the mind. As such they are beyond criticism. Miss Lowell has succeeded in attempting to do what she undertook. There is a small group of admirers of the new poetry whose members will regard with interest as among the greatest poems of the time.

British Naval Record

The first complete account of the part the English navy took in the late war was prepared by Archibald Hurd and H. H. Bushford. The book, which is a full and complete history of the part the British navy took in the conquest of the Dardanelles, the coming of the American navy and the coming of the close of the war a chapter is devoted. The account includes many letters by officers and men giving their personal experiences in many hotly contested. Especially stimulating and helpful are the many heroic acts of officers and men, especially the rescue of the British ship "Hesperides" from the Germans during the destruction of their vessels. A special tribute, it may be added, is paid to Admiral Sims, of our American navy, who was with the British fleet at the time of the German sinking of the "Hesperides" and who was instrumental in their rescue. THE BRITISH NAVAL RECORD OF THE BRITISH NAVY. By Archibald Hurd and H. H. Bushford. New York: Dutton & Co., \$2.50.

A DOG DAY

The Angel in the House. PICTURED BY CECIL ALDIN

The text would be deliciously funny even without the pictures. With a wash drawing in three colors facing each page of it, this little comedy, which is a story of a mischievous puppy, through just one day, is the perfection of amusing absurdity. Dedicated to W. W. Jacobs "because he liked it" \$1.00, postage extra. E. P. DUTTON & CO. 681 5th Ave., N.Y.

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