

Entre Nous.

William Watson.

Amazingly clever are many of the poems in Mr. Watson's new book, of which the title is *Retrogression, and Other Poems* (Lane; 3s. 6d. net). Some are sarcastically clever, as this:

TO A LITERARY CLERIC.

I would not have you scorn archdeaconships,
Or comfortable deaneries refuse;
Yet should I mourn, did these things quite
eclipse
Your mild and worthy Muse.

Nor shall I watch incurious your career;
For though your heart on things above be set,
You lack not gifts such as avail us here,
And may reach Lambeth yet.

Others are quite as clever reverently, as this on Milton's use of the sonnet:

A hundred Poets bend proud necks to bear
This yoke, this bondage. He alone could don
His badges of subjection with the air
Of one who puts a King's regalia on.

Edward Shillito.

How few are the great preachers who have been able to write poetry. The Rev. Edward Shillito is reckoned a great preacher even in London. That he is also a poet we already know. Out of many magazines he has gathered some sixty of his poems and had them published in Oxford through Mr. Blackwell, under the title of *The Omega, and Other Poems*. Every one of them offers itself for quotation; we shall be content with this one:

THE TEMPLES.

Come to Thy temples, Jesus, come to-day;
Dream dreams of us, as once a wondering
Boy
Within His Father's House dreamed time away,
Come with that awe and joy.

For these our lives are temples, built of old,
In faith that shaped us for Thy praise alone;
The dead in us adore Thee; prayers untold
And dreams in us live on.

But come to us, Lord Jesus, with the cords,
And scourge the money-changers from Thy
home;
Thy praise sounds faint amid the jangling
words,
In wrath and judgment come!

Come, Jesus, there is darkness on the land,
But through the veil what hidden glories
wait!
Come, rend the veil with Thy late-wounded
hand,
Come, it is dark and late.

Wheels.

What has come to the Oxford poets who have written this book called *Wheels* (Blackwell; 2s. 6d. net) that their outlook on life is so unhopeful? Their names are Nancy Cunard, Osbert Sitwell, Iris Tree, E. W. Tennant, Edith Sitwell, Arnold James, Sacheverell Sitwell, Victor Tait Perowne, and Helen Rootham. And they are poets every one. But they have no outlook beyond the immediate present. Nancy Cunard passes in the train and sees:

Smoke-stacks, coal-stacks, hay-stacks, slack,
Colourless, scentless, pointless, dull;
Railways, highways, roadways, black,
Grantham, Birmingham, Leeds and Hull.

Steamers, passengers, convoys, trains,
Merchandise travelling over the sea;
Smut-filled streets and factory lanes,
What can these ever mean to me?

Is it war weariness? There is no word of war.
And yet it seems more than a passing fashion.
Take this, again from the same author:

This is no time for prayers or words or song.
With folded hands we sit and slowly stare.
The world's old wheels go round, and like a
fair
The clowns and peep-shows ever pass along.
Our brains are dumb with cold, and worn with
strife,
And every day has lingered on our faces
Marking its usual course and weary paces
With cruel cunning care and sober knife.

Fate, like a sculptor working with great tools,
 Now moulds his genius into clever ways.
 Our souls are cut and torn all for his praise
 When his great masterpiece is praised by fools;
 Yet winter comes like death, and takes the
 pride
 From his strong hands that held us till we died.

William John Ferrar.

In the very first poem of his book *Three Faces in a Hood* (Pitman; 1s. net), Mr. Ferrar might be reproving the Oxford poets of whom we have been speaking. This is a poem:

TO A SAD SINGER.

Laugh, poet, laugh!
 Hast thou no merry runnel in thy heart,
 For us to quaff,
 Where all the sun-rays beam and dart,
 Up-welling from the eternal springs,
 Where God sits and sings?

God is most glad!
 For all they paint Him old with a grave face,
 Solemn, and sad,
 Grey hairs, and venerable grace,
 Brows burdened with long thinking on the plan
 To save His lost child Man.

God's name is Joy!
 If thou would'st see His features limned aright
 Paint Him a boy,
 A gladsome spirit and a bright,
 His Will gay-flowing as a joyous river;
 Now to Forever!

Were He weighed down,
 As we by sullen melancholy care,
 Not thus He'd crown
 Earth with a garland prodigally fair,
 But scanty as a grandame decks a child
 With a dull heart though mild.

See! His Own Life
 Ripe, full and free leaps to the sight in her,
 With laughter rife!
 Art thou His minister?
 Give us a measure of His cup to quaff!
 Laugh, poet, laugh!

C. H. Sorley.

The third edition has been published of *Marlborough, and Other Poems*, by the late Captain Charles Hamilton Sorley (Cambridge: At the University Press; 3s. 6d. net). This third edition has the advantage over the previous two that it contains a number of quotations from Captain Sorley's prose writings. 'Illustrations in Prose,' they are called. These illustrations are nearly all taken from letters. We take this, however, from an essay on Masfield. 'We stand by the watershed of English poetry; for the vastness and wonder of modern life has demanded that men should know what they write about. Behind us are the poets of imagination; before us are the poets of fact. For Masfield as a poet may be bad or good: I think him good, but you may think him bad: but, good or bad, he has got this quality which no one can deny and few belittle. He is the first of a multitude of coming poets (so I trust and pray) who are men of action before they are men of speech, and men of speech because they are men of action. Those whom, because they do not live in our narrow painted groove, we call the Lower Classes, it is they who truly know what life is: so to them let us look for the true expression of life. One has already arisen, and his name is Masfield. We await the coming of others in his train.'

But let us quote also one of the poems. It will stand beside the illustration:

EXPECTANS EXPECTAVI.

From morn to midnight, all day through,
 I laugh and play as others do,
 I sin and chatter, just the same
 As others with a different name.

And all year long upon the stage
 I dance and tumble and do rage
 So vehemently, I scarcely see
 The inner and eternal me.

I have a temple I do not
 Visit, a heart I have forgot,
 A self that I have never met,
 A secret shrine—and yet, and yet

This sanctuary of my soul
 Unwittingly I keep white and whole,
 Unlatched and lit, if Thou should'st care
 To enter or to tarry there.

With parted lips and outstretched hands
And listening ears Thy servant stands,
Call Thou early, call Thou late,
To Thy great service dedicate.

H. R. King.

Mr. Henry R. King has great facility in the writing of religious verse. In his book entitled *The Syrian Soldier, and Other Poems* (Allman), there is a series of poems on Naaman, whence the title, another series on the titles of our Lord in the Epistle to the Hebrews. And there are many expositions of texts. Let us take this as a fair example:

I CORINTHIANS xiii. 13.

Faith's strong pinions, bear us sunward
Into wondrous light,
Pressing forward, pressing onward,
Soon 'tis lost in sight.

Hope, with many a sunlit promise,
Gilds the thorny way,
Cheers us, until hidden from us,
Lost in perfect day.

Love alone, alone remaineth,
With unchanging name,
All its power it aye retaineth—
Love remains the same.

Constance L. Maynard.

Mrs. Constance L. Maynard has written a long poem under the title of *A True Mother* (Marshall Brothers; 5s. net). The mother resolves, on the birth of her firstborn, that she will spare no pains and no prayers in a lifelong effort to train him for God. Other four children come, whose development is directed with the same unceasing anxiety. Her hopes and purposes are set forth in poems that are truly poetical in spite of the very deliberate and determined purpose that pervades them. She herself is instructed at every stage of the journey of life of her little ones by 'Experience,' who speaks in those difficult long lines with which Longfellow has made us familiar. It is a great experiment, not only in poetry but in training, and one is thankful to find that it comes out so successfully in the end. The volume contains a large number of full-page illustrations in colour. Here

are the last two verses in the book, for it is difficult to make quotation. 'Experience' is the speaker:

This is the corporate effort, energetic, unending, most noble,
Here you lie hidden behind your work, and others reap praises.
Ever to God alone you labour, and glimpses of glory
Come to you radiant with joy as a heart is won for the Kingdom.
Mother of many souls (not only of five but of hundreds)
Spring like a fountain of love ever fresh for the next generation,
Serving and blessing the world, for 'the child is the hope of the future.'
Then as the years stretch behind you, the sweet lights of Heaven grow clearer,
Think of Hannah, and think of Elizabeth, rest and be happy.

Mother, I have no more to tell you. You are such a Mother.
Offering all your flock to the work of the Kingdom of Heaven.
Hark to the chimes as they ring out their tale o'er the homes of the sleepers,
Hark and rejoice, for you share in the song with its swelling and sinking.
Lifting its resonant peal high up to the clouds of the midnight,—
'Glory to God in the highest! Honour and power and blessing,
Be to the Lamb on the Throne, who reigneth for ever and ever.'

W. M. Letts.

The war has laid its hand with a strong grasp on this Irish poet. He gives his book the title of *Hallow-E'en, and Poems of the War* (Smith, Elder & Co.; 2s. 6d. net). There are poems which may have been written before the war came upon us, but the war poems are the substance and the strength of the book. We take this for example:

HE PRAYED.

He prayed,
There where he lay,
Blood-sodden and unkempt,
As never in his young carelessness he'd dreamt
That he could pray.

He prayed ;
 Not that the pain should cease,
 Nor yet for water in the parching heat,
 Nor for death's quick release,
 Nor even for the tardy feet
 Of stretcher-bearers bringing aid.

He prayed ;
 Cast helpless on the bloody sod :
 'Don't trouble now, O God, for me,
 But keep the boys. Go forward with them,
 God !
 O speed the Camerons to victory.'
 The kilts flashed on : 'Well played,' he sighed,
 'well played.'
 Just so he prayed.

F. R. H. Wicker.

A really beautiful and attractive patriotic masque has been written by Mr. Wicker under the title of *The Making of the Flag* (Elliot Stock ; rs. net). The last song and chorus will show that there is poetry in it also :

'THE FLAG OF THE MOTHERLAND.'

O land of glory, brave and fair,
 True Home of British hearts,
 In Thy great heritage of fame
 Grant we may bear our parts.
 From North and South, from East and West,
 One shout rings out to-day—
 'We come to fight for Home and Right,—
 Let nought the Flag dismay !'

Blue, for the seas that bear it secure
 In the hollow of God's right hand ;
White, for the Light that shines from afar
 To guide to the Heavenly strand ;
Red, for the love that surrendered all,
 Nor at the call did lag ;—
 Cross-crowned and love-decked, blood-bought
 and God-blessed,—
 All hail to the Motherland's Flag !

Mildred Low.

Five poems are contained in the pretty little volume entitled *Victory or Death*, by Mildred

Low (Elliot Stock ; rs. net). They are poems of the war ; this is the first of them :

We see our soldiers march away
 To victory—or is it death ?
 'A splendid lot of men,' we say,
 With sudden tears and catching breath.

One, dry-eyed, watches them from sight.
 'I lost my son last month in France,'
 He says : 'I'd go myself to-night,
 With these chaps, if I had the chance.'

Oh, faith divine ! that proudly gives
 In sacrifice, an only son.
 He grasps a truth that ever lives,
 That victory and death are one.

Lily Doyle.

Bound in Khaki (Elliot Stock ; 2s. net) is the title which Miss Lily Doyle has given to the collection of her recent poetry. Like so many of our present-day poets, she is Irish. A keen patriot, the poems are mostly an encouragement to the winning of the war. One of them—it is the first we have seen on the subject—commemorates the recent Irish rebellion :

FATA MORGANA.

Their minds were fill'd with visions strange,
 They lived not in the present but the past,
 And fancied they were chosen now at last
 Their country's destiny to change.

Of future greatness was their thought ;
 They did not see the misery and pain
 And all the ills destruction brings in train,
 That by and through them would be wrought.

Poets and dreamers all were they.
 While we condemn their folly, as we do,
 Can we not find a thought of pity too,
 That they so far were led astray ?

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