

Selected Poetry

Hymn of St. Ephrem, the Syrian (For the *N.Z. Tablet*.)

Unveil herself; no longer
Hiding her blushing face;
But thanking Thee, Who freed her
From ruin and disgrace.
Yea, may she hear the welcome
Of perfect peace, for I
Have paid the debt entirely
Of her insolvency.

The serpent, who seduced her,
Lies crushed beneath Thy foot,
O Tree of Life, that grewest,
Upspringing, from My root.
The flaming sword and Angels
Thou hast from Eden's door
Withdrawn, that Father Adam
Might enter in once more.

Let him and hapless Eva
For refuge fly to Thee,
Beneath Thy spreading branches,
And pluck Thy Fruit from Me.
Now let those mouths be sweetened
By This, Which here I hold,
Which by the fruit forbidden
Embittered were of old.

The slaves, that out of Eden
Were thrust, may now again
The blessings, that were forfeit,
Through Thee once more obtain.
By Thee Thyself with vesture
Of Light may be arrayed,
No longer stripped and naked,
But glad and unafraid.

—Translated by F. G. M.

The Hill Born

I have grown weary of this languid land;
Sick of the low horizon line that flows
Like a great sombre river; sick to death
Of rose and laurel, eucalyptus, palm,
Brooding in lavish sweetness. I am mad
For the harsh glory of my own far hills,
For the stern masculinity of home.

They do not have sunrise or sunset here;
Rather the shameful day slinks cowering in
Over gray waste of waters and gray land,
Under a muted, melancholy sky,
And never does it burn away in one
Swift, splendid burst of sanctifying flame
As day once did, but shambles grayly past
Under the mantle of the leper fog,
To the dull stupor of a starless night.

O God!—for splendid spaces in this dawn—
For glimmering vastness—for the wind that swings
Tumultuously in from starry distances—
For the white beauty of a hill horizon—
For the tempestuous magic of a sky
Torn into shreds of fire—and for the hush
Of aspen leaves black on an amber heaven—
For all the mighty pageantries of day
That made life epic large, I am athirst.
They have been music in my memory;
They will go echoing with me till I come
Home to my hills.

—TED OLSON, in the *New York Herald*.

A Prayer

Oh, Young New Year, take not these things from me—
The olden faiths; the shining loyalty
Of friends the bitter, searching years have proved—
The glowing hearth fires, and the books I loved;
All wonted kindnesses and welcoming—
All safe, hard-trodden paths to which I cling.

Oh, gay New Year, glad with the thrill of spring—
Leave me the ways that were my comforting!
—LAURA SIMMONS, in *New York Life*.

You Sang In My Dream

You sang to me, dear, last night through all of my dream-
ing,—
O, why did you sing?—
To know that your song and my joy are only seeming
Is a bitter thing.

For into your voice all our multiplied loves came throug-
ing,—
Dreams have heartless ways,—
And then I awoke to this numb, inarticulate longing
Of silent days.

—S. M. MADEIRA, in *Knights Errant*.

They

They have scribbled on the walls and on the table linen,
They have planted onions in my painted flower-box,
They have pulled the peony buds and played with them for
marbles,
And shorn their chin locks.
They have striped themselves with paint until they looked
like ancient Britons,
They have played with poison ivy till their eye were
swollen shut,
They have fallen down the cellar stairs and out of sleeping
porches
And head first in the water butt.

They have set their bare feet firmly on bees and broken
bottles,
They have stabbed themselves severely with shears and
carving knives,
They have stood in front of motor cars and dared the things
to kill them,
And with the greatest difficulty I have saved their lives.
—ALINE KILMER, in the *New York Sun and Globe*.

The Owl

When I was young my heart inclined
To eggs and fishes, moths and stamps.
These were the lodestones of my mind,
And to my feet-succeeding lamps.

But moths dissolve and stamps decay,
Fishes grow stale and eggs take wings;
And when my childhood passed away
I put away all childish things.

Now am I Mammon's through and through,
And suffer in my soul disease.
I have forgotten all I knew
Of newts and lizards, toads and bees.

Now am I lost. Long years ago
I heard the gates of Heaven slam:
Yet deep within my bones I know
All that I ever was I am.

To-night I felt the silent beat
Of owlets' wings—my blood rushed fast.
Breathless I knew beneath my feet
A little outcrop of the past.

—ALEXANDER GRAY, in the *London Mercury*.

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