

no regrets that so nice a girl as Ethel does not wear her clothes as a lady born should do, nor is she interested when Norman's missionary and matrimonial plans come to a head together. She would not dream of shedding floods of tears over Guy Morville's early death or Amy's desolate widowhood. Are there any books, for that matter, that one does cry over nowadays? Is it that the pathos is too obviously claptrap and the scenes shifted for effect? Are Miss Yonge's characters too well bred for the up-to-date reader? Have honour and gentleness and courtesy—the habit of sweet family affection, of mutual helpfulness—the small daily graces of renunciation, grown old-fashioned in books? There are no real villains in her stories—this is undoubtedly a loss. If there are any that seem unpromising in the beginning, they speedily develop qualities meet for repentance. Neither do her best characters receive the lion's share of good fortune. We half suspect sometimes that behind her Anglican prejudices lurked an embryonic rationalist. In her pages a watchful Providence raps the devout man over the knuckles and reminds him wherein he has failed. She was not far behind

Huxley in her recognition of the fact that law does not excuse or condone. Dr. May's habit of reckless driving bore fruit as certainly in the death of his wife and daughter Margaret as though he had not been the most devoted husband and kindest of fathers. The rigorous experience which taught courage was never to be lamented. Ethel May, putting love aside, and with it riches and great honour, that she may be true to the task which is nearest, is but one of the many instances in which Miss Yonge emphasises the fact that happiness must sometimes be found in "doing without."

In spite of her excessive shyness, even a casual acquaintance would have been impressed with the directness and force of her character. Her eyes had a quick, responsive flash when anything moved her, and she was so full of eager human sympathy that a more intimate knowledge but deepened the impression that she herself was greater than anything that she had done, and that she had missed by just too much or too little, among the influences that shaped her life, the chance of writing her name among the immortals.

*Mary K. Seeger.*

## THE NIGHT

This is the monster, the Night,  
Shambling out of the deep,  
Breathing a vapour of sleep  
To cover the deeds that the light  
Shudders to name. What is Right?  
What is Truth? Who am I in the night?

This is the Calaban, Night,  
Flung, like an unclean thing,  
On the world made sweet with the spring,  
On the world grown dear to the sight.  
Hawks on the carrion alight.  
What are bloodstains and bones in the night?

This is the Circe, the Night,  
Dark-robed, with jewels in her hair.  
May a vampire's body lie bare?  
Can a vampire's body be white?  
God, who made darkness and light!  
Can there be other hell than the night?

*Zona Gale.*

## CONCERNING "SHIPS THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT"

It is now eight years ago since *Ships that Pass in the Night* was published by Messrs. Lawrence and Buullen. I am reminded of that fact chiefly because I have been looking at the MS. of it, previous to sending it by request to the Glasgow Exhibition. It has struck me that perhaps a few details about its publication might be interesting, both to readers and authors. It was sent to Messrs. Blackwood and refused, chiefly because its tone was thought to be too sad, and because, therefore, it would be unlikely to win popularity. If it had been in three volumes, Messrs. Blackwood said they would have published it. I was, of course, disappointed by this verdict, but after a few days of depression I recovered myself and took the book to Messrs. Lawrence and Bullen. They sent a prompt answer. They offered to buy the copyright for twenty guineas, and said that if the book was a success, they would send a further sum. Being inexperienced and not having any one to advise me, I accepted, not because I wanted ready money, but because I did not want any delay about the publication, and Lawrence and Bullen offered to publish at once. It never occurred to me to apply to the Authors' Society, for I was not an author, but only a beginner, and therefore unproven; and although I had heard of Mr. A. P. Watt, I believed that only well-known and successful people were able to have the benefit of his advice and help. So I did not even give him thought. By St. Patrick—this being his day—I wish I had! For now I know that any untried writer, with careful work, may go to Mr. Watt and be sure of receiving a courteous hearing. As for the book itself, I had not the least idea that it would be likely to command any attention. I hoped that it would meet with a few sympathetic readers, give the publishers a fair return for their investment, win a few favourable criticisms, and thus enhance my position among editors of magazines and encourage me to work my way onward and upward. More than this I did not hope for.

However, what happened was this. The book leapt from edition to edition. The publishers sent me four extra cheques of twenty guineas each, making

thus one hundred guineas in all. Also, I wrote to Baron Tauchnitz, having a letter of introduction to him from Miss D'Esterre Keeling, and he agreed to give forty pounds for the book. The publishers took twenty of this, and gave the other twenty to me. So I have had £125 in England for *Ships*, or rather, I should say, £105 in England and £20 in Germany.

In America, as I had no copyright, the book was pirated everywhere. But one firm, Messrs. Putnam, issued what was called an authorised edition, and gave me £5 for writing the preface, and £25 as courtesy fee. So that in America I have had £30. It is impossible to say how many thousands of copies have been sold in America. I have seen it in every variety: from five cents a copy up to a dollar a copy. One firm alone is said to have sold 60,000 copies. People who know something about these matters have told me that half a million copies is a modest statement. In England I have had no means of judging about the figures until just recently, when the book has practically come back into my own possession, by the kind negotiations of my friend Mr. A. P. Watt, and the gratifying collaboration of my friend Mr. William Blackwood. Mr. Watt felt that I would enjoy owning the copyright, and that the sales would probably justify the outlay. So Mr. Blackwood took over the twentieth edition of the book, and the sales during the first five weeks of the new arrangement were 1134 copies. This applies only to the 3s. 6d. edition. We were to have no control over or interest in the 6d. edition, which was previously sold to Messrs. Newnes. Of this, I believe, about 160,000 have already been sold.

These are the statistics, so to speak, about *Ships that Pass in the Night*. It is obvious that I did not make a fortune by it, but I have had a harvest out of it which I consider altogether priceless—a harvest of friendships and fellowships with all sorts and conditions of men and women in many parts of the world. I myself have seen the French, German, Dutch, Norwegian and Danish, Swedish, Finnish, Russian, and Hungarian translations; and I still continue to receive let-