

unknown writer is very much out of the rut, this reader decides, 'No; that isn't at all the sort of thing that we print,' and it doesn't go any higher. It takes the very best editor to appreciate the extraordinary—the story that 'isn't our sort.' The best reader should be the first reader. The trouble is that after a year of it he would no longer be the best reader; he'd be mentally bilious. Another thing that acts against the extraordinary story is that at many magazines there are too many readers; the story gets read to death. Any story that goes through five readers without a negative vote is bound to be commonplace. No really extraordinary story can go through five readers without at least one negative vote. I found this out in editing anecdotes at ——'s. I'd rather print something at which two people howled in glee and three people couldn't see at all than something that all five kindly admitted was 'very amusing.' The ideal staff to my mind is the smallest staff possible with a good man at the bottom. In picking real stories impulse counts for more than learned debate. There were a number of good professional reasons why O. Henry's first stories should not have been printed."

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No matter how great may be the command of an acquired language there is always the inevitable pitfall. For example, there was Paul Blouet, better

known as Max O'Rell, who died twelve or thirteen years ago. Max O'Rell was the author of *John Bull and His Island*, *Brother Jonathan and His Continent*, *A Frenchman in America*, and other books made up of keen, caustic, yet never ill-natured comments upon English and American life in various phases. He was a very popular lecturer in England and in this country, he had lived among English people for a long time, and his wife was an English woman. Yet Richard Whiteing, in his recently published *My Harvest*, certain chapters of which appeared in THE BOOKMAN last summer and autumn, recalls what may be characterised as a slight linguistic indiscretion. It was an evening at the White Friars Club of London. Max O'Rell was in the chair, and Rapson, the great Orientalist, then at the British Museum, later an Oxford professor, was the guest of the night. At the Museum Rapson belonged to the department of Coins and Medals; and Max O'Rell wanted to say something nice about him as a numismatist. When the time came he stood up: "Gentlemen," he began, "we are honoured to-night with the presence of a well-known coiner——"

The rest was lost in an inevitable roar, with Rapson as the loudest contributor. O'Rell tried to join in the merriment, but he was too late; it had evidently caught him unawares.

## NEW WOMAN

BY ARLITA DODGE

Twice-born, she comes out of the night  
That shrouded her, and gropes her way  
Into the wan, white edge of light  
That presages another day.  
A vision, like the wraiths that rise  
On windy marshes, when the air  
Reveals to unbelieving eyes  
A misty figure beckoning there.

A homing bird along the track  
It left upon a wayward wing,  
Lost child of Time, come wandering back  
To ask a second welcoming.  
A creature new, as if the breed  
From Chaos came, as if in vain  
The centuries harvested their seed—  
A child that must grow up again.

Triumphant from the melting-pot  
She comes, by secret magic blent,  
Honoured by those who know it not,  
Imperfect, yet magnificent.  
Strange crucible, wherein such tears  
As women shed, their scars and stains  
Were thrown commingled with the fears  
Of slavery in silver chains.

Oh, Sculptor Time, whose art creates  
Figures subservient to thy call,  
Pause not—a noble statue waits  
Unfinished on its pedestal.  
"New Woman," rough-hewn, crudely wrought—  
Made animate at thy command—  
Yearns for the Artist touch that brought  
Her contours forth, the Artist hand  
That chipped at her, to set her free  
That she may come forth, unconfined,  
From the cold stone that answers thee  
As harpstrings do the wandering wind.

Let other Masters touch her youth  
With long-lost fire; let Destiny  
Add to her miracle of truth  
Her old-world Open Sesame.  
Let Life prepare for her alone  
A draft that shall intoxicate,  
Of kisses concubines have known,  
The virgin's love, the harlot's hate.

Bring back the laugh that ruined Troy,  
Delilah's lure, and Hebe's smile,  
The spell that made a woman's toy  
Of Cæsar by the flowing Nile.

And, as a sheltering tree will screen  
The sleeper on the warm earth's breast,  
So may Tomorrow, brooding, lean  
Across her dreams, her radiant rest.

So heralded, her birth shall be  
Beheld with joy. A starrier span  
Draws very near, whose dawn shall see  
Come forth, twice-born, a Mate for Man.