

Then our hearts shook, there on the world's wild rim  
 Fronting eternity and neighbouring the Abyss.  
 Had we not cowered all night from the face of Him,  
 The King of Terrors, from the coil and hiss  
 Of the pale snakes of death  
 Writhing about our very door?  
 Had we not borne his clammy breath  
 Upon our hair  
 Nightlong, and his stealthy footstep on the stair,  
 His vast voice everywhere?  
 Had not each echoing wall and hollow floor,  
 Worn by his winds so grey and spectre-thin,  
 Resounded like the shell of a fragile violin  
 That screams once at its death and never more?  
 Had He not homage of our fear enough before  
 He sent this last dark cohort crashing in?

### THE PLUME

"Here is a gift!" the Brownie said,  
 As something fell on the little maid's head;  
 "A golden feather with silver bars  
 Of the Faraway Bird who sings to the stars!  
 A beautiful plume to use as you will,  
 Fortunate Friend on-top-of-the-Hill!  
 Fasten it into your curly hair,—  
 Love will follow and find you fair.  
 Put it into the Magi's hands,—  
 They will pay you with gold and lands.  
 Feather a shaft with the magic thing,  
 And bring down Fame with a crippled wing.  
 Other wonders the plume can do,  
 But I wouldn't bother, if I were you!"

Now the queer little maid on-top-of-the-Hill  
 Clipped the plume to a scratchy quill,—  
 The golden feather with silver bars  
 Of the Faraway Bird who sings to the stars!  
 Then she wrote and wrote, all night, all day,  
 The curious things it made her say,—  
 Wonder-tales and whimsical rimes,  
 Faraway deeds of Faraway times;  
 Told for the clamor-ing boys and girls,  
 With bangs and braids, with clips and curls.  
 The children laughed and clapped and cried,—  
 "Tell it again! Tell more beside!"  
 The queer little maid was proud and glad;  
 And this was the good of the gift she had,—  
 The magical plume of the Faraway Bird.

But the Brownie sighed; for never a word  
 To the busy house on the hill-top came,  
 Of flattering love, or wealth, or fame.

# CONTEMPORARY POETRY

## NOTES AND REVIEWS

BY JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE

### COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRIZE

### POETRY IN WAR LIBRARIES

WHEN the late Joseph Pulitzer founded the School of Journalism of Columbia University, he left an endowment for annual prizes in all branches of literature save poetry. Mr. Pulitzer could hardly foresee the time when poetry would again take its place as a force in American life and it is not to be wondered at that a practical journalist should have made no provision for it. This fact, however, did not escape the attention of the president of the Poetry Society of America, Mr. Edward J. Wheeler, who took the matter up with Dr. Butler and received the reply that Columbia would be glad to award such a prize had it funds for the purpose. It was not difficult for Mr. Wheeler to persuade a well-known patron of the arts to pledge the sum of five hundred dollars to be used by Columbia as an annual prize for the best volume of poetry published by an American. As the genesis of the idea came from the Poetry Society of America, through its president, and the judges are annually to be nominated by the society, Columbia University has paid the society the compliment of naming the prize in its honour. The judges for the present year are Professor Bliss Perry of Harvard University, William Marion Reedy, editor of the St. Louis *Mirror*, and Jessie B. Rittenhouse. All American poets, whether resident here or abroad, are eligible for the prize, which will be given on the merit of work published in book form in 1917. Those wishing to enter books for the prize should write the Secretary of Columbia University for an application blank, which gives all conditions.

We hear from Burton Egbert Stevenson, editor of *The Home Book of Verse* and librarian at Chillicothe, Ohio, that the demand for modern poetry on the part of our boys in camp is out of all proportion to the supply. Mr. Stevenson is assisting in assembling books for cantonments of the Middle West and makes an appeal to the Poetry Society of America to assist him in having poetry more adequately represented in war libraries. Mr. Stevenson says that in the cantonments immediately within his knowledge, and their branch libraries, fourteen copies of each volume of verse could be used to advantage. If this many are needed in one vicinity, it will readily be seen what an opening is presented for poetry, should the board in charge of the selection of books be made to see the necessity of having it more fully represented. The Poetry Society of America has taken the matter up with the proper authorities and hopes to bring about this result.

It is now several years since Vachel Lindsay evolved the distinctive type of poetry which we have grown to associate with him, poetry written primarily for the ear and not the eye, and in these years he has demonstrated his minstrelsy by several poems which stand out as highly original illustrations of his theory. The idea, of poetry susceptible of being chanted after the manner of the primitive bards, came to Mr. Lindsay as a natural outgrowth of his self-elected and picturesque vagabondage, during the period that he tramped the great West preaching the gospel of beauty and tak-