

and that must include a magnetic body. But such can be born only of a perfect woman; the future of the race lies with her."

Especially illuminating is Whitman's attitude toward sex. He sees that "sex contains all," and—"underneath all, nativity." But he uses the word sex in a mystical sense. He was no more a *roué*, declares Mr. Binns, than he was an emasculated theorist:

"Whitman believed in the domestic institution of marriage, but he was not primarily concerned with institutions. His intensely vital personal and social morality would have been shocked at the suggestion of neglecting his own part in strengthening and vitalizing his race, physically, mentally, and spiritually to the utmost of his power; and his influence makes it more difficult for any who come into contact with his vigorous and robust personality as it expresses itself in 'Leaves of Grass,' to escape the obligation and glory of parenthood. The obloquy which is supposed, in America, to attach to his work, attaches to it precisely because American society is hostile to all essential considerations of good breeding; and abhors above all things that wholesome but irrepressible sexuality which Whitman regarded as an essential quality of the people of the future.

"Whitman never suggested that the mere bringing to birth of a better race is the whole responsibility laid upon men and women of exceptional personality. In the 'Calamus' poems and elsewhere he reiterates the tremendous force of comradeship and the value of every other vital form of inspiration. A sound body is a good foundation to work upon, but it must be fine, too, and responsive to every living rhythm; it must be capable of enthusiasm and heroism, it must be made of the very stuff of poems. Health is nothing to him unless it can be kindled into illumination. However prolific she may be in other births, America is but barren till she is the mother of bards that can arouse. So also in the relation of the sexes, he is not concerned with the child alone; but—

'After the child is born of woman, man is born of woman'—for manhood does not properly begin before the second birth of sex enfranchisement, that new consciousness into which womanhood alone can open the gate."

DIMMING BOSTON STARS

AFTER CARRYING in mind the glowing words written by Carlyle upon Emerson's first visit to him, it gives a shock to read how he later came to regard this "bright spirit" from the New World. In some "Reminiscences" by the late Goldwin Smith, published in the September *McClure's*, we get hints of the sinking of Emerson's star. Besides this, the same writer manages to make the whole Boston galaxy shine with a diminished brilliance. Professor Smith speaks of meeting Emerson, and, of course, of looking "with interest on a man whose name and influence were so great." We read this:

"Emerson's character was undoubtedly fine and his influence was very good. But I can not honestly say that I ever got much from his writings. I can find no system; I find only aphorisms; an avalanche, as it were, of unconnected pebbles of thought, some of them transparent, some translucent, some to me opaque. Carlyle introduced Emerson to the British public as one who brought new fire from the empyrean. But the two men in genius were leagues apart and Carlyle at last found the new fire a bore. George Venables, calling one evening on Carlyle at Chelsea, found himself received with extraordinary warmth, the reason of which Mrs. Carlyle explained by exclaiming, 'Oh, we were afraid it was Emerson.' I heard Emerson lecture. Now and then he shot a telling bolt. The rest of his discourse to me was almost darkness. I heard him read his own poetry aloud, but it remained as obscure to me as before. Certain, however, it is that, by whatever means, he was inspiring and an elevating influence in his day, which was the critical time, when, New England Puritanism having lost its power, there was pressing need of something to maintain spiritual life. Longfellow also I met, of course, with interest, and he was most attractive as a man, tho I can hardly credit him with anything more than sweetness as a poet. Bryant lives by his 'Waterfowl,' and almost by that alone. Poe had poetic genius if he had only taken more care of it and of him-

self. Excepting him, can it be said that America has produced a poet? Perhaps America might ask whether at this time there is such a thing as a true poet in the world.

"Lowell, whom I also met, was in those days very anti-British. We could not greatly complain if the feeling of the ruling class in England was taken to be that of the nation, and resented as such. *The Times*, from its immense ascendancy as a journal, was naturally regarded as the great organ of British opinion, and nothing could be more galling to American patriotism than its attacks. From their English visitor the courtesy of the Americans concealed any feeling they might have against his country. However, among the best of them there was still a lurking affection for the old land, and sorrow rather than anger at her defection from the good cause."

COMPETING HEROINES

AMERICAN and English heroines of fiction come in for a rather strange comparison in the independent observations of two newspaper writers. One of these, in the *New York Press*, cries out against the ladies of the past summer's crop of fiction, mentioning as the best of them *Honorina Leffingwell*, of Winston Churchill's "A Modern Chronicle." This one, we are reminded, was faithless to her first husband and deserted by the second. And yet *Honorina* "could be discust" in a mixt company—

"Something more than can be said of most of the young women who serve as the 'leading ladies' of the fictional dramas issued since spring set its vernal sign upon the publishing world. Lacking in honor, living in immorality of thought and deed, shorn of the highest and most admirable attributes of women by their creators, this sorry company of wretched heroines passes leaving behind a wholesome disgust—if such creatures leave any memories at all."

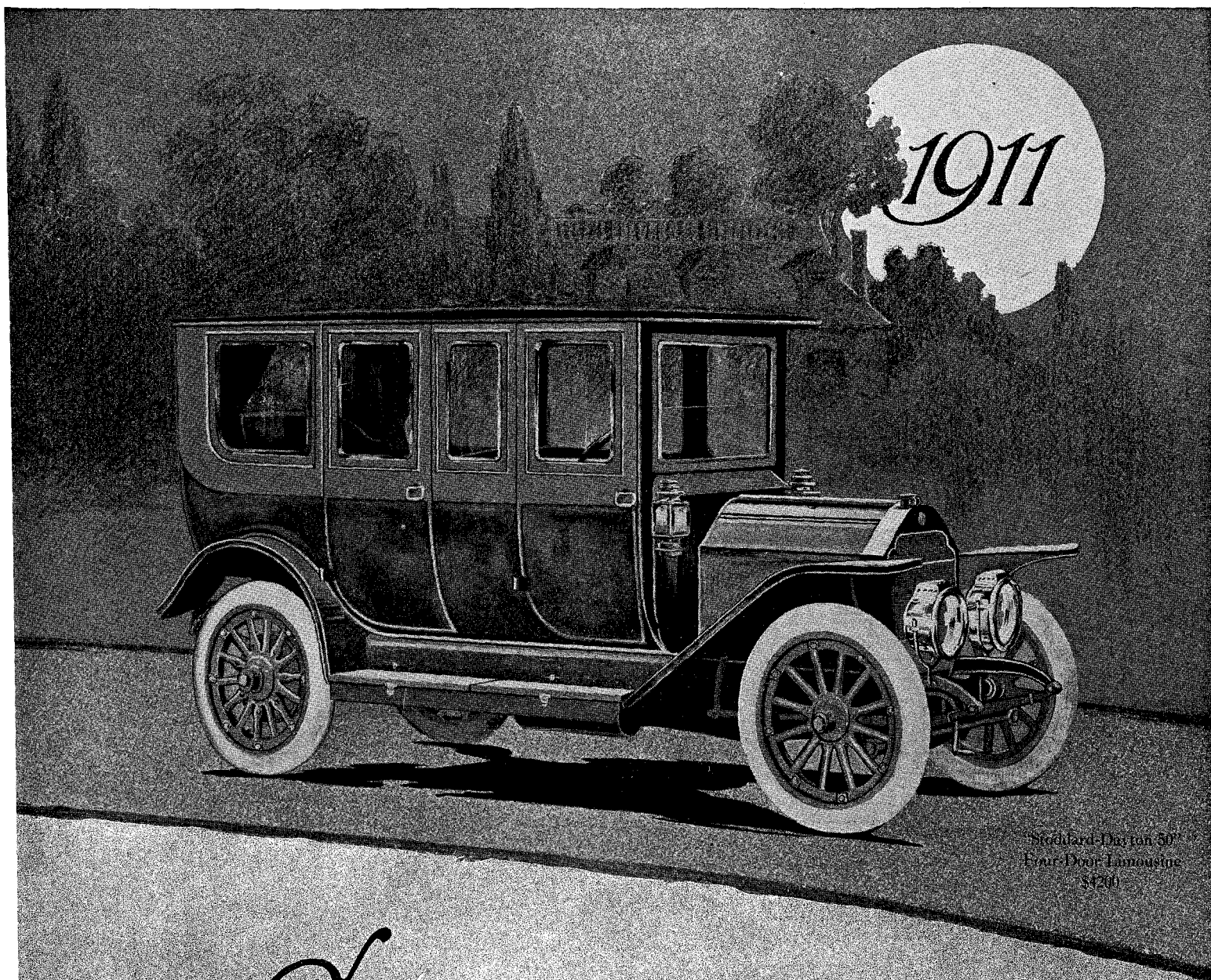
The other writer, Mr. James Milne, who contributes a London letter to the *New York Times*, gives us the curious reason why American fiction has of late been doing so well in London. It is this:

"There is a family reason why the American novel, if it be worth reading, does pretty well in London. Even in those 'advanced' days the British mother keeps a keen eye upon the fiction which her daughters read. It is a fashion which the British father is usually very content to leave in her hands, partly, dear man, because he has a certain lofty scorn toward novels, partly because he is no nimble manager of womankind, especially when they are his own daughters. Well, the British mother knows that we have been running riot in 'advanced' novels, 'problem' novels, call them what you like. She does not know a great deal about America, very likely, but she has heard that thus far your novelists are not so 'advanced' as ours, not so given over to 'problems,' and nothing else. She has heard that you still value the sentimental love story, and like a happy ending.

"Roughly, the British matron is right in thinking that the average American novel is safer for family reading than the average British novel, certainly than the British novel written by a woman. Therefore, when she goes to the circulating library or to her bookshop she asks, 'What new American novels are there?' She is instructed on the point, and she picks out two or three, guided perhaps by the color of the covers, or the appearance of the headings in the colored frontispieces. . . .

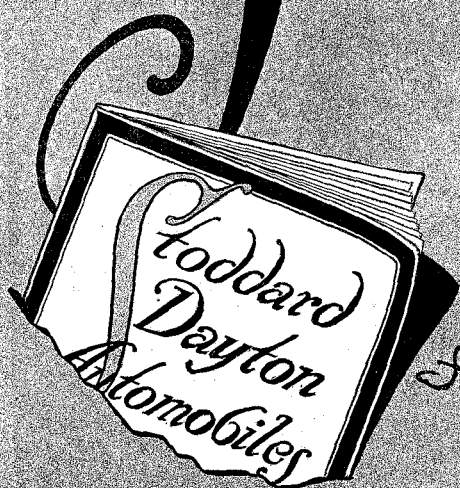
"Is the color blue—a nice baby blue, like he tribbons with which a young mother ties the lace frock of her first child? That indicates a happy, sweet story, and promptly the choice is made. Does the heroine of another story look bold, or daring, a trifle 'catty'? Then she will not do, but if she be just healthily romantic, say of the *Diana Vernon* type, then all is well. The success or otherwise of the three-colored printing of the frontispiece will have a good deal to do with the appearance of the heroine, with whether she looks a minx or My Lady Innocent. But of that the British matron has no knowledge.

"What I have said applies to the British middle-class reader, who is the great support of the novel. The fashionable woman and the intellectual woman go their own ways in reading, and nothing does them any harm."



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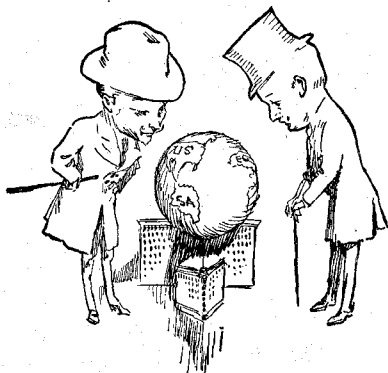
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CURRENT POETRY

IT IS pleasant again to turn to the verse of Lizette Woodward Reese ("A Wayside Lute." Thomas B. Mosher), for here we may enjoy the lyric brought to a degree of perfection not found in the art of five living poets. This sonnet that we quote is so entirely without affectation or artificial emphasis, so free from seasoning, with not even the spice of a metaphor, that it comes at first with the flat insipidity of unleavened bread to the unaccustomed palate. Any callow poetaster can gather a sheaf of verse from the rich profusion of spring—we are humbled by an art that teaches the plain poetry of a gray autumn moor and burning spicewood.

Spicewood

BY LIZETTE WOODWARD REESE

The spicewood burns along the gray, spent sky,
In moist, unchimneyed places, in a wind,
That whips it all before, and all behind,
Into one thick, rude flame, now low, now high.
It is the first, the homeliest thing of all—
At sight of it, the lad that by it fares,
Whistles afresh his foolish town-caught airs—
A thing so honey-colored and so tall!
It is as tho the young Year, ere he pass,
To the white riot of the cherry-tree,
Would fain accustom us, or here, or there,
To his new sudden ways with bough and grass,
So starts with what is humble, plain to see,
And all familiar as a cup, a chair.

Old age, infirm, disillusioned, uncrowned with wisdom, and unsupported by faith, is a dreary thing. It seems to mock our heritage of immortality, and it oppresses us prematurely with the fact that we are all under sentence of death. We take "The Hill O' Dreams" from *The Atlantic Monthly*.

The Hill O' Dreams

BY HELEN LANTON

My grief! for the days that's by an' done,
When I was a young girl straight an' tall,
Comin' alone at set o' sun,
Up the high hill-road from Cushendall.
I thought the miles no hardship then,
Nor the long road weary to the feet;
For the thrushes sang in the deep green glen,
An' the evenin' air was cool an' sweet.

My head with many a thought was throng,
And many a dream as I never told,
My heart would lift at a wee bird's song,
Or at seein' a whin bush crowned with gold.
And always I'd look back at the say,
Or the turn o' the road shut out the sight
Of the long waves curlin' into the bay,
An' breakin' in foam where the sands is white.

I was married young on a dacent man,
As many would call a prudent choice,
But he never could hear how the river ran
Singin' a song in a changin' voice;
Nor thought to see on the bay's blue wather
A ship with yellow sails unfurled,
Bearin' away a King's young daughter
Over the brim of the heavin' world.

The way seems weary now to my feet,
An' miles bes many, an' dreams bes few;
The evenin' air's not near so sweet,
The birds don't sing as they used to do,
An' I'm that tired at the top o' the hill,
That I haven't the heart to turn at all,
To watch the curlin' breakers fill
The wee round bay at Cushendall.

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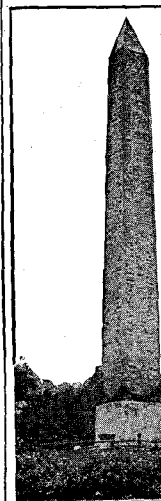
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