

## A PAGE OF VERSE

### A POPLAR ON A WET NIGHT

BY HONOR F. LEEKE

[*Poetry Review*]

A POPLAR turns over his silver  
And counts it in the rain.  
For fear lest a bat should pilfer  
His wealth, he turns over his silver  
Again and again,  
With the moan of a miserly soul in pain.  
A Poplar turns over his silver  
And counts it in the rain.

### SPRING IN LONDON

BY W. R. HUGHES

[*Little Journeys into the Heavenly Country*]

RAILINGS for hedgerows, lamps for trees,  
For hills, the tenements grim;  
To a London lad we offer these —  
What can March mean to him?  
The Spring that breaks in dell and wood  
'Comes slowly up' his way;  
The smell of something very good,  
But very far away.

Yet still she sparkles in his eyes,  
And moves his shoeless feet;  
Whispers to him, and 'Bill,' he cries,  
'I 'll race you down the street.'

### ROBIN

BY H. H. BASHFORD

[*The Nation and the Athenæum*]

O ROBIN with the bright brown eye  
And ear a-cock for clink of spade,  
Do you suppose I cannot spy  
The reason you 're so unafraid?

Nay, Robin dear, full well I know  
Where souls of jolly gardeners go,  
And snug within whose cheerful breast  
Remind us still that they know best.

## LIFE, LETTERS, AND THE ARTS

### THE POSTHUMOUS WORKS OF MARCEL PROUST

THREE posthumous novels are soon to complete the work of Marcel Proust, the brilliant French practitioner of the 'stream of consciousness' novel, whose work is carried on in modern English literature by Miss Dorothy Richardson and Mr. James Joyce. Proust will escape the fate — at which his fastidious soul would have revolted — of having unfinished manuscripts added to or altered after his death by another hand. Twenty big notebooks in the novelist's handwriting, with the interminable alterations, insertions, and additions which give his writing its almost tedious perfection, are left behind, and the word *Fin* is traced in his own hand at the end of the last page.

In 1917, nearly six years before his death, Proust confided to a friend, '*Il y a longtemps que tout est fini*,' but, though Émile Henriot declares in *Le Temps* that the five years from 1914 to 1919 mean very little in Proust's literary life, it is probable that he was writing again shortly before his death.

The twenty notebooks Marcel Proust left behind when he died, seven of which are already published in the three volumes of *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, contain the second part of his life-work. Before he died Proust sent his publisher nine hundred pages of manuscript, which he had himself corrected, and which represented the contents of notebooks eight to twelve. This is just appearing in Paris in two volumes under the title, *La Prisonnière*. Later the remaining eight notebooks are to be published as two more novels, one under the title, *Albertine disparue*, and the other under the title, *Temps retrouvé*. *La Prisonnière* links itself di-

rectly to the concluding volume of *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, and describes — with the characteristic, all-involving minuteness of Proust's psychology — the marriage of the hero, Marcel, and Albertine. Proust himself once observed: 'The story of a hesitating fiancé and of a shattered marriage would correspond to these two volumes in about the same way as the summary of a competent critic might give us the subject matter of an Ibsen play.'

Inevitably other characters from Proust's earlier novels reappear, among them the extraordinary Baron de Charlus, the writer Bergotte, and the members of the Verdurin Salon.

A pathetic interest attaches to the description of Bergotte's death, in which Proust observes that nature would permit only short sicknesses which would cure themselves, '*mais la médecine s'est annexé l'art de les prolonger*.' Proust, as is well known, spent invalid years, and the enforced leisure of a sick bed doubtless accounts in part for the ordinary detail by which he has become famous, though critics who seek to trace his illness in his work are likely to go a little too far. Bergotte's death is the passage which Proust is said to have wished to correct with his own hand when he felt himself to be dying, in order to give a few new touches, drawn from his own last experiences, to the deathbed of his character.



### SHERWOOD ANDERSON AND A PARISIAN CRITIC

FRENCH literary men are not always so overjoyed at the by no means subtle compliment of imitation as the guileless American author is prone to imagine. Our embattled regiments of