

V E R S E

Nonchalance

This cool and laughing mind, renewed
From covert sources like a spring's,
Is potent to translate the mood
Of all distraught and twisted things.

In this clear water shall be cast
Outrageous shapes of steel and gold,
And all their hot and clotted past
Beaded with bubbles silver-cold.

The moving power takes their heat
Into itself, forgetting them;
And warmth in trickles, slow and sweet
Comforts a fainting lily-stem.

ELINOR WYLIE.

Sonnet

What's this of death, from you who never will die?
Think you the wrist that fashioned you in clay,
The thumb that set the hollow just that way
In your full throat and lidded the long eye
So roundly from the forehead, will let lie
Broken, forgotten, under foot, some day
Your unimpeachable body, and so slay
The work he most had been remembered by?

I tell you this: whatever of dust to dust—
Goes down, whatever of ashes may return
To its essential self in its own season,
Loveliness such as you will not be lost,—
But, cast in bronze, upon his very urn
Make known him master, and for what good reason.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY.

Susanna

Under a birch-tree in the park
She sits and sews till nearly dark.
Her knees are crossed. On either hand
Old men like watchful angels stand.

A brass band squeals. The vibrant brass
Stirs the dust on the tarnished grass.
The old men preen their lean moustaches,
Hearing, through her, the music's crashes.

Lovers around her, far and near,
Trill in the dust and say "My dear":
The music thrills to a slow emotion
Of hands that torpid human ocean.

The old men weary. But others come,
Lured by the fleshly horn and drum.
The sultry ragtime from Havana
Moves them, but does not move Susanna.

The lamplight shows her sitting, still,
With meek hands folded. It is chill.
Faint dew maculates the bushes,
In all Hyde Park there are seven thrushes.

CONRAD AIKEN.

Decoration

For W.

A macaw preens upon a branch outspread
With jewelry of seed. He's deaf and mute.
The sky behind him splits like gorgeous fruit
And claw-like leaves clutch light till it has bled.
The raw diagonal bounty of his wings
Scrapes on the eye color too chafed. He beats
A flattered tail out against gauzy heats,
He has the frustrate look of cheated kings.
And all the simple evening passes by:
A gillyflower spans its little height,
And lovers with their mouths press out their grief.
The bird fans wide his stripes' regality
Prismatic, while against a breath-white sky
A crystal tree lets fall a crystal leaf.

LOUISE BOGAN.

A Girl Adoring

His kisses touch her marvelling eyes
And wander searching through her thinking face;
And though so loved and near she lies
He knows he travels in a distant place.

And as he clasps her close close form
He does not know the far goal of his kiss,
What clouds and isles and ships and storm
That haunted stillness of her body is.

Her eyes are dry, he does not know
He sails with Noah on the endless flood;
Her breast is pale, he sees not how
Behind leaps the Niagara of her blood.

Upon her brow his hand is light
Above her mind's deep-sunken cities there.
He knows not in her breath's sharp flight
What splintered Indian mountains break the air.

He does not know, how far, how far;
Only she makes him think of some strange land.
Beyond the earth his journeys are,
Touching that wild, wild heart and thinking hand.

VIOLA MEYNELL.

Evening

There was an evening when the sky was clear,
Ineffably translucent in its blue;
The tide was falling, and the sea withdrew
In hushed and happy music from the sheer
Shadowy granite of the cliffs; and fear
Of what life may be, and what death can do,
Fell from us like steel armor, and we knew
The beauty of the Law that holds us here.
It was as though we saw the Secret Will,
It was as though we floated and were free;
In the south-west a planet shone serenely,
And the high moon, most reticent and queenly,
Seeing the earth had darkened and grown still,
Misted with light the meadows of the sea.

SARA TEASDALE.

The Fruits of Victory

The Fruits of Victory, a sequel to The Great Illusion, by Norman Angell. New York: The Century Co.

FEW men have ever lived to see themselves so borne out by facts as Norman Angell. When he published *The Great Illusion* he had nothing to offer but a hypothesis, the hypothesis that modern war is futile. That hypothesis did certainly reach headquarters and stir up excitement. We know that prime ministers raced for the book, that King Edward recommended it and the Kaiser as well. We know that *The Great Illusion* went bombinading around the world and circulated well over a million copies. But we know also, ironically too, that the very men who read it most closely, defied it most heartily. Not only the militarists sneered at Mr. Angell and called him a Jew and yowled at him as a pacifist-internationalist, but the people who thought there was a great deal in it threw it to the winds in the heat of rivalry and armament. And yet, in the outcome, Norman Angell was dead right. He was not unpractical. He was not pacifist-internationalist. He was not propagandizing for an emasculated world. He simply had a tight hold on the economic realities of inter-dependent modern states and he knew that large-scale war must become civil war, and civil war must become suicide. That is what he said in *The Great Illusion*. But pugnacity, which obeys laws of its own, got the better of his million circulation. Ten million men died for the great illusion.

Norman Angell didn't, as some people assert, say that war was impossible. He never said it was *impossible*. He said it was futile. "Useless—even when victorious, as a means of securing those moral and material ends which represent the needs of modern European peoples." This futility was his thesis—the futility of modern war, war between modern states, to secure economic advantage, to enforce moral ideals, to impose social institutions. No thesis could have been more straightforwardly, more bluntly and unhesitatingly, advanced. No thesis could have been put to proof more completely. The victory of the Allies has been sweeping enough to allow them to basket the fruit. What has the fruit been? The Allies no less than the Central Powers are forced to testify, in the face of their own shameless propaganda, that military power has secured neither economic advantage nor moral ideals.

Now Norman Angell writes the sequel to *The Great Illusion*. We have had our war, with one big heap of noble causes thrown in. On the theory that the Hun was wicked, (it might just as well have been the Russians or the Japanese or the British), we assumed that the wicked one was in direct conflict with us on matters of vital interest; we employed force to the limit ("a vast orgy of physical self-destruction") and we have reaped "moral violence and chaos." What that moral violence and chaos has resulted in, Mr. Angell summarizes in detail. By the very fact that we had to get and keep a preponderance of power we were compelled "to change or modify or betray the cause for which we entered the war." And having started on that betrayal by secret treaties, (which honest Woodrow never even suspected), and having dosed ourselves with propaganda, (shot through with lies), we now find ourselves flung back on a nationalism which is intense, irresponsible and immoral. Such irresponsibility and immorality, Mr. Angell insists, are just as unavoidable in the functioning of pugnacious nationalism as economic futility is inevitable in modern war. And thus he winds up, as Bertrand Russell and Max Eastman and Thorstein Veblen

have wound up before him, with a call for the revision of "sovereign" popular national ideas.

Owing to the way Mr. Angell writes his books—by accretion and agglomeration rather than by orderly evolution—it is not easy to pick out his main line of thinking or to decide on the relative importance of the striking arguments which force themselves into the text at all points and from all points. But in this Gothic structure it is made clear from many angles that "the ideas which produce war—the fears out of which it grows and the passions which it feeds—produce a state of mind that ultimately renders impossible the cooperation by which alone wealth can be produced and life maintained." This contradiction between war and interdependence underlies his philosophy. All sorts of subsidiary ideas come in. "If to Nationalist hostilities as we have known them in the past, is to be added the commercial rivalry of nations now converted into traders and capitalists, we are likely to have not a less but more quarrelsome world, unless the fact of interdependence is much more vividly realized than in the past. This is an important secondary point, but the main point is "the just anger that makes men unjust," the lust for coercion that lurks in nationalism, the political poison that war generates. If one seizes this idea, the idea that pugnacity breaks down interdependence and that the breakdown means an unworkable society, one has the clue to *The Fruits of Victory*.

The facts of this breakdown are not sufficiently realized. Mr. Angell helps us to realize them and helps us to understand how the process is being accelerated by those very ideas that he proved futile in *The Great Illusion*. He believes that we have practically no statesmanship anywhere, no social discipline. "To restrain the combative instinct sufficiently to realize the need of cooperation, demands a social discipline which the prevailing political traditions and moralities of Nationalism and Patriotism not only do not furnish, but directly discourage." This is nothing new, but it should lead conscientious people to the real moral crux of pacifism—"what price, in terms of national independence, are we prepared to pay for a world law?" "European society is today threatened with disintegration as the result of ideas and motions that have collected round Patriotism." A political Reformation is needed, to change this whole philosophy of patriotism, to deprive nationalism of its passionate misconceptions.

Because he is essentially a realist, Norman Angell has thus naturally turned from his demonstration of the futility of war to an analysis of the reasons why men forewarned should have plunged themselves into such hellish futility. On the whole, and remembering the amplex of his case against nationalist politics as they exist, one must admit that his account of pugnacity is astonishingly close to the facts. What, then, is to be done with us? How are we to get a "better social tradition"? How can we get rid of the feeling that the "enemy" is wicked, etc.? How can we socialize nationalism?

(Don't let us ask such questions, by the way, as top-dogs. Let us suppose we are Haitians, or Bulgarians of the Dobrudja, or Germans of the Southern Tyrol who've actually got a raw deal, or some other acknowledged victims of the war).

Norman Angell, it seems to me, is wise to say: "However mischievous some of the manifestations of Nationalism may prove, the worst possible method of dealing with it is by the forcible repression of any of its claims which can be granted with due regard to the general interest. To give Nationalism full play, as far as possible, is the best means of attenuating its worst features and preventing its worst