

THREE POEMS

BY WINIFRED WELLES

HAIL AND FAREWELL

With tears and a faithful heart and brave mirth
Once on a time you watched to welcome me.
Waiting and weariness and agony
Until the last were what you thought me worth.
Oh wearier than the months that wait for birth
Are those that wait for death—How shall I be
Still while you are so still? How shall I see
Unbrokenhearted your slow steps from earth?

And so the white watchers gather and hark
For the soul's approach, the heralding horn,
And so they strain and listen for the tread
Of the free soul retreating down the dark—
Mothers, who wait for children to be born,
Children, who wait for mothers to be dead.

MOONFLOWER

I can not be a banner gold and gay,
A windy glory or a gleaming flight.
I can not lift my face into sunlight,
While some are triumphing I only pray.
I am the one who hides her heart by day,
Who does not dare to rise and blossom white
Until the lovely moments before night,
The interval of lavender and grey.
Then love me delicately as the rain
Fingers the leaves—hold me as if asleep—
Remember that I am perishable,
Lest in the marvel and the swift, sweet pain
Of your hands and your mouth my heart should leap
And break, finding the world too beautiful.

THRENODY

I never have known anyone so proud,
So fierce for faith, so strong for nobleness.
I never heard you whine nor cry distress,
Nor saw you kneel nor knew your bright head bowed.
Dreams, Love and Laughter were a swift, white crowd
Of wings flashed upward from your loveliness—
You carried Truth, wore Honor as a dress,
And wound yourself in Beauty like a cloud.

Surely this is not you who lies so low,
Smitten as others, yielding as they must
With abject hands and smooth, submissive head—
All fire and glory crumpled by one blow,
Bewildered and beaten and brought to dust,
This is not you, oh pitiful and dead!

WINIFRED WELLES.

THE BOOK OF THE MONTH

AN IRISHMAN'S LETTERS¹

BY LAWRENCE GILMAN

THE mortality of great talk is sufficiently tragical, no doubt; but it is less tragical than the mortality of great acting, that most shamelessly wasteful endeavor of the Muses, because—the talker sometimes writes letters. That does not, to be sure, produce a full equivalent: the shining legend of Meredith's talk is not banished or eclipsed by the two copious volumes of his correspondence—any more than the 'cello-playing of Pablo Casals or the celestial sentimentalities of Mr. Paderewski are compensatingly rendered by certain excellent mechanical preservatives. It is but a drab satisfaction that we get from Meredith's *Letters* after we have heard the reports of those who once were listeners in that unique court of the spirit at Box Hill. Nor is it easy to be wholly content with the full and often astonishingly persuasive records of Oscar Wilde's talk that Mr. Frank Harris so devotedly and skilfully gives us in his engrossing *Life* of that bright, bedraggled figure. A master of talk needs an audience—even if it be a cowed and stupidly dazzled audience—as necessitously as a pianist or a singer. The person to whom a great talker writes a letter provides no equivalent stimulus—it is the difference between making love in the presence of the beloved and making love over a telephone: it can be done, but the effect is imperfectly rewarding. And so we would gladly never have read the wonderful things that are set down in the Meredith *Letters* about the exigencies of the heart and the mind, if, in exchange, we might have been, for an hour, one of those enchanted listeners at Box Hill.

¹ *Passages from the Letters of John Butler Yeats*, Selected by Ezra Pound. Churchtown, Dundrum, Ireland: The Cuala Press, 1917.