



## WITH OUR READERS

### ►► Mrs. Coolidge as a Poet

To the Editor:

Highlands, N. C.

SIR—Perhaps you will permit a reader who is often in hearty sympathy with many of your points of view to take exception as heartily to your editorial comment (for your “quite a few questions” are most assuredly comment of the deepest dye!) upon Mrs. Coolidge’s recent poem, *Watch Fires*.

First let me say that I have no personal acquaintance with, nor have ever even seen, Mrs. Coolidge; but I think I may confidently say that all who witnessed the difficult years at the White House, throughout which the First Lady conducted herself with unfailing tact, good taste and great good sense, must regard her with admiration and deep respect. Whether her poems be many or few, inspired or otherwise, they are not “fair game,” nor should any of them be made the butt of public ridicule in the form of more or less Socratic impertinence.

Did the writer by any chance forget that the woman of whose manifestly heartfelt lines he was making a jest is a mother who has lost a dear and most promising young son? And if he wish to know whether that mother be indeed a poet, let him think for a moment of the roses placed daily on that empty pillow in the White House, and of the little worn Bible held forever in a young lad’s quiet hand.

Aside, however, from all personal or political feeling, the verses in question are not deserving of ridicule. Their craftsmanship is excellent, well above the average of published verse. There is not a false rhyme, nor a trip in the by no means commonplace measure, from beginning to end. Moreover, it is profoundly true, and its emotional appeal is as deep and sincere as the expression of it is restrained.

It is of course the privilege of those who prefer a state of mind of the sort to believe all love, all faith, and all expression of either, to be silly and contemptible. Yet courtesy is worth remembering. Perhaps your critic has never met with a wise saying of cynical Lord Chesterfield, which might well be of use to him and to your periodical: “Cultivate the graces, my dear boy—cultivate the graces!” In other words, bad feeling is too often a source of bad manners, and bad manners never pay.

ROBERT EMMET WARD.

[*Editors’ Note*—We who witnessed the difficult years at the White House through which Mrs. Coolidge conducted herself with unfailing tact, good taste and great good sense, regard her with admiration and deep respect.]

### The Encyclical on Marriage

To the Editor:

Narberth, Pa.

SIR—For the last few years, I have read the OUTLOOK, agreeing often, and sometimes disagreeing. Since you have taken up your determined stand for repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, my interest has increased a hundred fold, for I agree with you entirely.

Imagine then my surprise on the Tuesday afternoon that I picked up your 21st number, and saw the editorial, “The Encyclical on Marriage.” Never before had I seen such a revolting piece of opinion

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and Independent

VOLUME 157

NUMBER 5

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## Next Week in the Outlook

### The Farmers’ Friend, by Ray T. Tucker.

A portrait of the picturesque Chairman of the Federal Farm Board who, the author says, is one of the two or three really dynamic figures in Washington official life.

### Oil Hells in Oklahoma, by Earl Sparling.

What happens to a prosperous city built over a prospective oil field? Mr. Sparling tells the story of Oklahoma City.

### Uncle Sam’s Status in the Skies, by C. B. Allen.

A flier and authoritative writer on aviation answers those who say our military arm in the air is deficient.

### Gangland Invades the Provinces, by Robert Frank Lynn.

The story of new lawlessness on the Texas-Arkansas border, and how bootlegging there has made its minor Al Capones.

THE OUTLOOK AND INDEPENDENT, February 4, 1931. Volume 157. Number 5. Published weekly by The Outlook Company at 120 East 16th Street, New York, N. Y. Ed.-Pub. Pres. Francis Rufus Bellamy; Vice-Pres. Marshall Kernochan. Harrison B. Freeman; Treas. Rodman Gilder; Sec’y William T. Adey. Subscription price \$5.00 a year. Single copies 15 cents each. Foreign subscription to countries in the Postal Union \$6.56. Entered as second-class matter July 21, 1893, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., and July 20, 1928, at the Post Office at Springfield, Mass., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Copyright, 1931, by the Outlook Co.

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