



Ode to a Few Books

OH THE po-ems of *Miss Proctor* who was born in '29
Now re-issued lie before us; how they breathe of *auld lang syne*!
Shenandoah, Mississippi, and the brimming Contocook,
Holy Russia, Mount Tacoma, all are chanted in this book.
Here are incas, here are angels, here New Hampshire's pine and fir,
Here are Cleobis and Biton (You remember who they were!),
Here a life of lights and shadows, here devout religion lurks,
In the po-ems of *Miss Proctor*—her "Complete Poetical Works."
She sings of an ancient people
In pueblos near to the sky,
Of "the lordly bison with his herds;
Coyote swift and sly",
She should have pronounced it *kyote*
As *John G. Neihardt* doth,—
Which reminds us of *Colonel Homer Wheeler*
Whose volume appeals to uth.
His volume's title is "Buffalo Days"
And full of Indian fights;
We prefer it to *Miss Proctor's lays*.
It made us sit up nights.
And turning away from it
To a very different volum',
We find not a little versified wit
In *Preston's* "Top o' The Column";
Then "the cymbals whang
And the kettledrums bang"
As we open *Vachel Lindsay's*
Unlimited harangue
Lavish of material for half a hundred tomes,
With drawings by the author,—in "Collected Pomes."
But *Achmed Abdullah*
Also has cullah
In "The Swinging Caravan";
He explains the East,
Both man and beast,
In a book it is hard to pan;
Yet with sensitive face
We turn for cheer
To *Dick Lovelace*
The Cavalier;
"The Cavalier Spirit" is all about him;
What would poetry do without him?
How would King Charles's time appear
Reft of *Lovelace*, the Cavalier?
Chesterton probably wouldn't
Agree with us, we know,—
For here he comes (as he shouldn't)
Drawing his longest bow;
We find his stories a trifle brittle;
He's a little *too* crazy,—just a little!
Therefore it seems the fantasy's less wearing
In these "Dead Letters" penned by *Maurice Baring*;
Here's *Nero* interviewed, and *Messalina*
Looking more human than we've ever seen her;
And let a short laudation now
Be parcelled out to *Alpha of the Plough*
For "Many Furrows." Here is pleasant writing
Besprent with decorations most inviting;
Oh dear!
So many books are here;
When we began this Ode
We hardly knewed
How many books there weer!
Nevertheless, though you may think it minor,
Take a squint at *James Scherer's* "The First Forty-Niner."
It tells of Sam Brannan and his picturesque fate
From the time he sailed his Mormons through the Golden Gate;
And here's a book of poems in which we suspect
Considerable talent—"Those Not Elect,"
By *Léonie Adams*, a good gal poet;
And "The Forge in the Forest," though you may not know it,
Is the most romantic of juveniles by *Colum*.
"The Neuroses of the Nations" is much more solemn,
(For fuller description see back of wrapper)
And isn't there another book by "Sapper?"
If there only were, how pat it would come 'nd
Furnish us a rhyme and a Bulldog Drummond!
Instead of which we must point out how
This brand-new novel by *Ruth Suckow*
Probably merits your attention.

And "The Elder Sister" is a fine invention
By *Swimerton*. . .
Ah God!
Our lines are lame;
We are not now as erst when erst we trod
The echoing parapets of fame
And used our "erst" and "o'er";
What we did then we do no more,
And what we're doing now
That winter comes and days are rarely warmer
Is (and the book's by *Howe*)
To read "Confessions of a Reformer;"
(Call it con-fess-i-owns
In real robustious tones
And thus you make the metre!)
What, on the other hand, could be much sweeter
Than *Edith Wharton's* "In Morocco."
She never seeks to shock; Oh,
She never sheiks, nor shrieks of gore;
The Harem of *Abd-el-Kader*
A simple harem is to her
And it is nothing more.
Thus do our chances
Of writing mighty verse wax little fatter;
"Wagnerian Romances"
By *Gertrude Hall* is praised by *Willa Cather*.
(When *Willa Cather* praise
One of our lays!)
And "Hagar's Hoard"
By one *George Kibbe Turner*
Full fatly doth afford
A chance for *Hergesheimer*
(Whose name's a satisfaction to the rhymers!)
In its malarial topic to discern a
Tremendous novel.
We'll take it to our hovel
And read it through. Indeed it looks
Amazing, as it orter;
It's one of the *Borzoi Pocket Books*
At a dollar and a quarter. . .
So doth our anthem fade
We think we have outstayed
Our "welcome while"
As *Coleridge* put it aptly.
We've contemplated raptly
Much literachure, and sullen
Hath sunk our soaring strain.
One book of poems by *Countée Cullen*
Doth remain. . .
'Tis good, 'tis better than the most can do;
And so, Oh patient friends, a long fare-
well to you!

W. R. B.

Foreign Notes

THE National Library Bill of Scotland has become a law and Scottish people now possess a national library, the third finest in Great Britain. The British Museum and the Bodleian Library at Oxford alone surpass it. The library contains 750,000 books, not including manuscripts, maps, and music. This priceless collection was owned by the Faculty of Advocates, who, in 1922, offered the library as a free gift to the nation. The Scotland Library Endowment Trust was set up and donations invited. This famous library was founded in the time of Charles II, and as the faculty has taken a leading part in the life of the nation, the one has grown with the other. An act of Queen Anne's time gave the library the right to claim a copy of every book entered at Stationers' Hall. The library is a mine of wealth to the historian. It contains the charters of the Scottish kings, and other historical material concerning the Scottish people of priceless value.

Edouard Schneider, who wrote the recent book on *Elanora Duse* which made such a favorable impression, is editing for the publisher, Bernard Grasset, a new series on "Les Grands Ordres Monastiques." Each volume will be devoted to one of the great brotherhoods, Carmelites, Franciscans, Trappists, etc. M. Schneider's own work, "Les Heures Bénédictines," which had been out of print forms the initial volume, being a new edition to which the author has joined a life of St. Benoit, founder of this order. The publisher is encouraged to undertake the series, partly by the great success of *Emile Baumann's* "Saint Paul."

In his "Storia del Regno di Napoli" (Bari: Laterza), Benedetto Croce begins with the Normans and ends with the disappearance of the Kingdom of Naples in 1860. Signor Croce adheres closely to the main thread of his discussion in his narrative, introducing considerable character portrayal and philosophical speculation, but not digressing in the historical chronicle.

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