

## Oyez! Oyez!

THERE is a tide in the affairs of magazines as well as of men, which taken at the flood leads on to fortune. Such a tide, we hope, is that which is pouring new features into the *Saturday Review of Literature*. You have noticed perhaps that in these past few weeks new departments have been modestly taking their place in its pages—The Wits' Weekly, which already threatens to swamp its conductor, Edward Davison, under the flood of sprightliness that is rushing in upon him; The Children's Bookshop, a department for parents, to which H. M. Tomlinson, Lee Wilson Dodd, and Rachel Field have already contributed, and which wears as headpiece a drawing by our good friend, W. A. Duggins; The Play of the Week, wherein are reviewed from the script by Oliver M. Saylor, such dramas holding the boards as have literary quality, and The Compleat Collector under which engaging designation Mr. George Parker Winship of the Widener Library, Harvard University, and Mr. Carl Purington Rollins of the Yale University Press are commenting upon rare and old books and matters typographical.

You may, perhaps, have already surmised also, though he has so far furnished only two of them, that once every month Henry Seidel Canby is to substitute for his usual editorial a long article combining the functions of critique, essay, and editorial. Not to be outdone by him, William Rose Benét is also to contribute a new feature, "Mr. Moon's Notebook," wherein a genial observer of men and literature discourses on everything from the groceryman to Einstein as the whim seizes him.

So much for our editors. Ernest Boyd, who is known of old to subscribers of the *Saturday Review*, will resume his monthly survey of Literature Abroad. His general discussion will be supplemented by letters from England by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes, and from France by Abel Chevalley, while the interstices will be filled in with notes garnered from foreign sources. Our staff of Saturday Reviewers will continue to discuss and appraise the new books as they appear from the press both in signed reviews and in the brief classified notes which lack nothing of the authority of longer critiques because of their brevity.

Finally, and we must enumerate without commenting for we have exhausted our space before our features, we shall during the coming season run essays by Walter Lippmann, Lewis Mumford, Carl Van Doren, George Jean Nathan, H. L. Mencken, Louis Bromfield, Ruth Suckow, Elinor Wylie, Alfred Zimmern, Harold J. Laski, Langdon Mitchell, James Truslow Adams, Struthers Burt, Eugene O'Neill, Edward Garnett, J. B. Priestley, and Humbert Wolfe among others, and poems by Robert Frost, Siegfried Sassoon, Edith Sitwell, T. S. Eliot, Lizette Woodworth Reese, Louis Untermeyer, and other poets of England and America.

We rest our case, your honors.

etymology as a tool for the reconstruction of history.

How astonishingly effective a tool it can be in competent hands may be seen again and again where the author discusses the "dark age" which preceded historical record, and followed the "heroic age" portrayed by Homer. Of this "dark age" we have abundant physical remains among the finds of archaeologists, but Professor Myers has given us here an insight into its way of life of the highest value. The book deserves a more elaborate consideration than is here possible, but one item of virtue must not be omitted: the author sticks to the evidence that he has. Parallel ideas are quoted from as far afield as Iceland and Polynesia, but they are quoted as parallels only; there is no attempt to suggest that because other primitive people had a custom the Greeks must have had it also.

## Miscellaneous

INDUSTRIAL PROSPERITY AND THE FARMER. By RUSSELL C. ENGBERG. Macmillan. 1927. \$2.50.

The common theory that the general business cycle exerts an important direct influence on agriculture is effectively refuted by Professor Engberg in the first detailed statistical study ever made of this problem. The volume of production of a given agricultural commodity, along with the supply of substitute crops, is shown to be the chief determinant in the annual fluctuations of farm prices. The volume, in turn, is affected mainly by factors independent of general business conditions—such factors as warmer weather, insects, and plant diseases. The demand for farm products, the author points out, is influenced by the business cycle, but only in relatively slight degree.

The book does not touch on the converse of the problem; that is, whether business fluctuations are determined to any considerable extent by changes in agricultural conditions. A similar analysis of this question would be very useful.

Professor Engberg's work, which is one of the publications of the Institute of Economics, is an excellent statistical study. At the same time, it shows such a first-hand knowledge of farming as is none too common in works on agricultural economics.

GROVE'S DICTIONARY OF MUSIC AND MUSICIANS. Edited by H. C. Colles. Third edition. Vol. 1. Macmillan. \$7.50.

SPEAKING WITH TONGUES. By George Barton Cullen. Yale University Press. \$2.50.

LADIES OF THE UNDERWORLD. By Nulley Lucas. Sears. \$2.50.

AMERICAN LOANS TO GERMANY. By Robert R. Kaczynski. Macmillan. \$2.

CULTIVATING THE CHILD'S APPETITE. By Charles Anderson Aldrich. Macmillan. \$1.60.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF AMERICAN ANTIQUES. By Lucille Van Arsdale Guild. Doubleday, Page. \$4 net.

MORROW'S ALMANAC FOR 1928. Edited by Burton Rascoe. Morrow.

THE WINSTON SIMPLIFIED DICTIONARY. Edited by William Dodge Lewis, Henry Seidel Canby, and Thomas Kite Brown, Jr. Winston.

THE POST OFFICE. By Sir Evelyn Murray. Putnam. \$2.

A DOCUMENTARY ACCOUNT OF THE BEGINNINGS OF THE LABORATORY PRESS OF CARNEGIE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY. By Porter Garrett. Pittsburgh: Laboratory Press.

FOSTER'S BRIDGE FOR BEGINNERS. By R. F. Foster. \$1.

THE SILENT FORCE. By Morris T. Longstrech. Century. \$4.

THE COMPANIONATE MARRIAGE. By Judge Ben B. Lindsey and Wainwright Evans. Boni & Liveright. \$3.

THE PROHIBITION MANIA. By Clarence Darrow and Victor Yarrow. Boni & Liveright. \$2.50.

THE ETIQUETTE OF BEAUTY. By Dorothy Cooks. Dorso. \$5.

RUDELS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN. By Admiral G. A. Ballard. Houghton Mifflin. \$5.

LEND ON BRIDGES. Vol. II. By Sidney S. Lenz. Simon & Schuster. \$2.50.

THE BOOK OF OPPORTUNITIES. Edited by Richard H. Platt, Jr., and Rebecca T. Farnham. Putnam.

MODERN RUSSIAN COMPOSERS. By Leonid Sabanoff. International. \$2.75.

GOD'S DREAM. By Harley Alexander. Dutton. \$7.50.

THE LAW OF SALVEMANSHIP. By E. Paul Hutter. Appleton. \$2.50.

FOUR-LANCING IN FORTY MAGAZINES. By Edward Mott Woolley. Writer Publishing Co. REPUBLICAN MARRIAGE. By L. J. Seabacker. Argus. \$2.50.

A KEY TO THE ULYSSES OF JAMES JOYCE. By Paul Jordan Smith. Covici.

MAJOR SPORT FUNDAMENTALS. By Charles E. Hammett. Scribner. \$2.

BALLYHOO. By Silas Bent. Boni & Liveright. \$3.

BEAUTY AND HEALTH. By Lois Leeds and Hilda Kaji. Lippincott. \$2.50.

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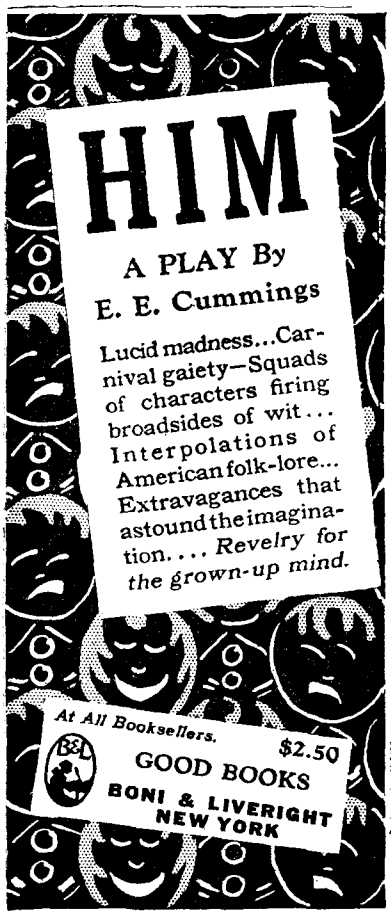
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## The Wits' Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

Competition No. 4. Haydon records that "Keats made Ritchie promise that he would carry his 'Endymion' to the great desert of Sahara and fling it in the midst. . . . Poor Ritchie went to Africa and died in 1819." We offer a prize of fifteen dollars for the most convincing account (in not more than 400 words) of the finding of the volume by a traveler in 1850. (Entries for this competition must be mailed in time to reach *The Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of November 7th.)

Competition No. 5. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the most original unrhymed poem in which every second line is borrowed, without alteration, from the work of some "standard" poet. Excepting Shakespeare, no such poet may be twice drawn upon. Entries must not exceed twenty lines in all, and lines borrowed should be referred to their sources in footnotes. (Entries for this competition must reach *The Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of November 14th.)

Competitors are advised to read very carefully the rules printed below.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT'S daffodil-time lyric reached the Competitions' Editor belatedly last week when this page had already gone to press. The prizewinners, I think, were lucky, for his entry, printed appreciatively below, would certainly have carried off a large part of their cent.

## THE TRIUMPH OF TIME

Or

The World's Greatest Literary Tragedy

"It's daffodil time in New Zealand," Sang in Weimar a poet named Wieland.

(The rhyme's not exact. Nor is it a fact

In New Zealand that Wieland took pride—

Or wotted of Charles Godfrey Leland Who wrote of Hans Breitmann a deal

and Of Gypsies a lot. Why, you know he could not!

Ere Leland's birth Wieland had died.)

But—if Leland had lived in New Zealand,

And, inspired with new zeal, if old Wieland

Had moved (to be sporty) at one hundred and forty

To Auckland, Dunedin or Clive, It might have improved Leland's

spiel, and Sealed deal and for woe or for weal,

and In faith and in pride, a friendship denied

To Leland and Wieland alive.

Hark!—O hear!—on the headlands and highlands

Of both of the North and South Islands,

Aloft and afloat, either side of Cook Strait,

From Plenty to Pegasus Bay, How the daffodils wave like pal-

mettos, How the kixis all shriek in falsettos,

How laeland and hieland for Wieland and Leland

In woe unassuageable sway!

Ah, "It's daffodil time in New Zealand,"

But alas! for our Leland and Wieland,—

With a zeal to be leal, they were whirled on the wheel

Of Time and were sundered by Fate! So the seal at his meal of fresh veal

and The eel in the creel, and the teal,

and— O, whatever you choose,—dance the Daffodil Blues

In Spring—in New Zealand—to date! William Rose Benét.

The First Competition

There was—and no two other words could furnish an apter beginning for a discussion of limericks—

there was nothing facetious in the request for a serious lyric in limerick stanzas. Our competitors were not the first to wrestle with the difficulties. It is fact and not blasphemy

to suggest that Poe himself employed the limerick rhythm, not ineffectively, in "Annabel Lee," if not elsewhere.

And neither the angels in heaven above,

Or the demons down under the sea, Can ever discover

My soul from the soul Of the beautiful Annabel Lee.

There, almost undisguised, cakewalks the limerick rhythm. And at least one living poet—Mr. F. W. Harvey—fulfilled the strictest requirements of rhyme and rhythm in his lyric "Atlantis," beginning

'Neath root of a shadowless tree In sunken Atlantis lies she,

Ah, long, long ago Adored . . . to and fro

Flit the shadowless shapes of the sea.

Not many reviewers who wrote about "September and Other Poems" noticed the *tour de force* which is not so good that our wits need despair of surpassing it.

There were about sixty entries of which some twenty had to be disqualified at the outset. These included a number of deliberately humorous efforts. Garland Smith began with a line from Tennyson's "Maud"—"My heart is a handful of dust," but did not sustain it. Tima Newson Sullivan, inspired by

fifteen bucks in the offing For a serious thought worth coughing

doffed her cap-and-bells a little too late to be taken seriously. (More-

over we asked for a serious lyric, not a serious thought.) H. H. H., Michael Bruce, and Sylvia Satan won my sympathy though I had to dis-

allow their amusing indifference to the terms of the competition.

Quite a number of competitors apparently did not know what a limerick is like. Here is one specially written for their edification.

There was a young freshman of Yale Who hunted a flea with a flail,

Because of a spite He conceived overnight

When the creature said, "Isn't he stale!"

This is the pattern of metre and rhyme, at least, that our serious lyric required. It cannot be reconciled

with some of this week's entries, with the two thousand word review of a book on the prize ring which reached us from Pittsburgh, for instance, or the graceful quatrains by L. H. Kellam and Jean Waterbury. Another group of competitors, shying

at the real difficulties, tried to modify the static rhythm of the limerick though retaining its rhyme scheme. Most of these, like Clare Joslyn, who wrote a good poem, strayed too far away from the pattern even when they did not completely lose their anapestic feet. And the moral of all this is—stick to the terms of the competition.

Too many of the poems remaining when these had been eliminated were serious without being lyrical. There were didactic limericks—

Why can't we fathers and mothers Treat your son and my son as brothers,

And end all this Hell Of war, shot, and shell

Before it destroys any others?

But even when one concurred with such excellent sentiments it was not without a shudder for the future of both lyric and limerick. Some less sententious efforts were spoiled by their authors' failure to distinguish between seriousness of theme and seriousness of approach. Nearly everybody who took the competition so seriously as to seriously pursue a very serious subject (like the courageous competitors who chose death as "the most serious lyric theme I could think of") exchanged the lyre for the tongs and the bones.

In the end the entries were reduced to less than ten; and even some of these were marred by verbal infelicities, *clichés*, and lines where the phrasing fouled the necessary rhythm. Charlotte Van de Water submitted two poems. "Nomenclature" (perhaps inspired by reading "Gallions Reach"), struck an honest note on the flat side, and her second attempt sang lyrically but ended in a slight anticlimax. "Elspeth" was good but slight. Doris E. Pitkin, in "Greek and Goth," wrote with some originality contrasting the conception of Venus with that of La Belle Dame sans Merci, but did not quite make her point. Mary Ellis Opdycke illustrated very prettily the moral that "folly is grief—when it's over" and I hope to print her stanzas in some future week when there is space to spare. The final choice lay between "Slightly" and "Amiens" whose last stanza would have begun better with "Waste creeps in the garden; disaster;" it also needs an additional syllable to improve the sound and sense of the last line. "Slightly" is disqualified for reasons he very well knows. We print both poems however, awarding the prize to "Amiens."

## PAN

I saw him! A moment he stood In the brake at the edge of the wood,

And I cried aloud "Pan!" But he heard me and ran

Where I in my folly pursued.

Not so much as the ghost of a thrush Snapt a twig in the gloom of the

brush, Neither squirrel nor bird In the undergrowth stirred;

Not a leaf rustled, breaking the hush.

But I, by that silence waylaid, Stopped short of a sudden, afraid;

Then turned again home Though I saw in the loam

The prints that his goatfeet had made.

And heard in the wood as I ran How his taunting soft laughter began,

The laughter that haunts me Forever, and daunts me,

The terrible laughter of Pan. "Slightly."

## The Prize Poem

AT DESOLATION MANOR Here fog rules the night, and the

blurring Cold mist with no haste and no

stirring Settles down over grange

And half, as if change Had itself done with change and re-

curring.

Now fire has withdrawn from the embers

On the hearth. In this last of November

Life has seeped from the clay As light from the day—

Till no one is here that remembers.

In the garden waste creeps, and dis-

aster Lays frost over fox-glove and aster. And withered stalks wave

On a vine-littered grave Where the old hound went to the

master. "Amiens."

## RULES

(Competitors failing to comply with rules will be disqualified.)

1. Envelopes should be addressed to "The Competitions Editor, *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 25 West 45th street, New York City." The number of the competition (e.g., "Competition 1") must be written on the top left-hand corner.

2. All MSS. must be legible—typewritten if possible—and should bear the name or pseudonym of the author. Only one side of the paper should be used. Prose entries must be clearly marked off at the end of each fifty words. Competitors may offer more than one entry. MSS. cannot be returned.

3. *The Saturday Review* reserves the right to print the whole or part of any entry. The decision of the Competitions Editor is final and he can in no circumstances enter into correspondence.