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James Russell Grant

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JAMES BOYER MAY

TRACE

EDITOR

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Essays & Articles · Poetry · Reviews

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Edited by James Boyer May

A READING EDITION

ABOUT THIS EDITION

This reading edition preserves the issue's poetry, fiction, essays, correspondence, reviews, and other literary writing in their printed order. Advertising, subscription matter, mastheads, the magazine's own contents pages, annual indexes, address lists, and the running trade directory are omitted as reference apparatus.

The text was checked against newly rendered source pages. Poetry lineation, stanza spacing, shaped indents, and hanging continuations for long lines are retained; prose continuations are joined without false paragraph indents. Conjectural readings are enclosed in square brackets, while original spelling and punctuation are otherwise kept.

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POETRY AND MIND BY JAMES RUSSELL GRANT

(the conclusion of an essay begun in Trace No. 23)

We have already mentioned certain dynamics involved in poetic creation. One, is the element of regression to awareness of omnipotence; another, is the interactivity of the poet and his Muse, which has ambivalent associations for him.

This love affair with the Muse, we have said, culminates in poetry, or disaster. It is a creative event, analogous to human procreation. We shall now attempt to discover how close the analogy is.

When Kinsey published his report on the American female, he included a paragraph on the electro-encephalogram findings during human orgasm. These showed a disturbance of cerebral rhythmic activity identical with petit mal epileptic seizures. There are evident similarities between orgasm and the epileptic fit. The immediate common factor we want to imply is that of lost or disturbed conscious control.

Twilight states are common conditions during poetic creation. The most famous example is that of Coleridge, in writing KUBLA KHAN. During such states the poet has the sensation of some thing—not himself, as he knows himself—directing his pen and poem. The act is semi-automatic, and his conscious artistic demands are only able to assert themselves in a fragmentary way.

This disturbed state of consciousness is the concomitant of all genuine creation; otherwise we could never do more than construct.

How does it come about, and what does it mean? We can easily theorise, here, beyond the limits of logical

presumption. Is the poet inefficiently myelinised, and is a poem written in a fit? This may be possible, if scarcely credible; but certainly the form is first stamped on the poem, as much as on the fit.

Such poetry is rarely prolonged. The short lyric takes five to ten minutes. The long poem is inevitably a series of climaxes, and these poets tend to write in stanzas. Joseph Weiss, writing in the *PSYCHO-ANALYTICAL QUARTERLY*, 1947, furnishes a theory to account for this formalisation process in art. He states it as an 'economy of expenditure of psychic energy in perception.' This is obviously an essential process in the brief, available moments the poet has, of material arising from unconscious levels. It is an intuitive appreciation of the situation, which, for poetry, is interpreted largely in terms of rhythm, line length, and sound. It takes shape before there is any conceptual awareness of grammar, or whether such words do, in the dictionary, exist. And we can surmise that what shapes poetic form is what shapes the physical fit, the repetitive, clonic ebb-and-flow of impulse, which is the rhythmicity of life, and the tenor of the unconscious, and the sea.

This to-and-fro rhythm is probably identifiable with Freud's concept of universal sexuality. It is the rhythm of libido, in which the will to live, and the idea of withdrawal and death, are both embedded.

The poet lives by his poem, and within the laws of its functioning, at the moment of creation; just so much as an epileptic is regulated by autonomic mechanisms during a fit.

But, having said so much, we have still only accomplished a two-dimensional approach to the poetic process. We have established a physiology of form, and loosely connected it with depth; it has still to become matter.

The third dimension is precisely this depth. Out of his own unconscious, the poet gives substance to form. He names reality, as we stated earlier, and so gives meaning to

his creation. The quality of that meaning, the heart of the matter, is influenced not only by his collective inheritance, but also by his own integrated personal knowledge and experience; and its expression for us is judged beautiful, if it is in harmony with our own perception of rhythmic form from the matter he provides.

There is also involved that pleasure in the extension of consciousness, by which fear of the unknown becomes a calculable risk in terms of actuality, something we may then attempt to cope with. Here, again, is a close parallel with psychotherapeutic method. But notice that the fear, fixed and killed in becoming conscious, implies death of that matter on which it was attached. In poetry, the matter is 'born again,' but in harmony with life. The naming process kills the evil, but formal beauty resurrects it into life. It is transformed. We can suspect that, unless we achieve that harmony, and establish that meaning, of which we have spoken, in psychotherapeutic practice, then what we summon up from the unconscious and kill, will remain without rebirth, intellectualised, and the patient will not benefit.

A good result must depend on the quality and timing of interpretations, within the transference situation. They are the match to the fire, the sperm to the ovum, inducing that disturbance of consciousness, however minute, which gains for the patient his moment of reorientation and reintegration. The accumulation of such moments, like a process of desensitisation, swings round his compass card to coincide with the true north of his life. Which is not the magnetic north of the analyst, nor the ideal north of perfect citizenship.

So far, we have made no mention of dreams. We have preferred to trace the poetic act in terms of the real creative act. For it is an action, and produces something real. Dreams produce nothing real. Their gain is fantasy

fulfilment. However, they are symbolic revelations of that depth the poet touches in reality; and as such they provide the aura, the incitement to the act itself, and may continue through its duration, affecting the quality of the poem. The deliberate use of this phenomenon constitutes the technique of symbolism in poetry. It is rather an accompaniment of poetry, than inchoate with it ; being convenient and to hand, at the time.

The final event in the poetic process is that application of conscious artistry which embellishes or censors the poem. By now, the poet has become no more than the reader of his own poem, and whatever he does, however influenced by the experience he has had, it can only be from the reader's point of view that he does it.

If we consider the language of poetry, many problems present themselves, not all of which will be amenable to the method of investigation we are pursuing. The subject of meaning, we have touched on. It is calling reality by name; and, for the poet, reality is his perception of sensation, and the quality of affect associated with this perception is its meaning, which he conceives and verbalises.

For the poet, there is, properly speaking, but one sensation, and that is love.

Grief is the emotion of lost love. It expiates guilt, in Freudian terms: the guilt of forbidden knowledge, which has damaged the loved object. Our tragic sense of the world springs from this, and pervades world literature. Contact abolishes identity. Happiness is rhapsodic, hypomaniac, an act of worship, a reaction away from that grief, in the oral optimist, which defends him from more serious consequences.

In both cases, an excuse is made: in the one, mourning; in the other, prayer. But the triumph has been gained in each case, for this to happen. He has stolen fire. He has got to know something he had not known, which is the fuel of

his poetry—reality.

Its meaning for him in terms of these emotions is a gauge of the intensity of his love, and as such becomes meaningful for us. If we are not prepared to accept the validity of that intensity in terms of our own experience, then we cannot understand his poem. As long as people love, they may understand poetry. But what they can, and what they do understand, are two different things.

It is on the matter of meaning that contemporary poetry is most rejected. Obviously, the reality of the poet fails to become reality for the general reader: that is, the quality of affect is disproportionate between the two.

Going back to our recognition of personality, as opposed to character, we might say that the state-organised, socially-conscious man, of well-marked character, is unwilling to hazard his jealously-guarded superstructure of security in order to commune at that level he seeks at all costs to shun. In civilisation, he is living too near neurosis to jeopardise his mental security. He will rather indulge in meaningless freedom. Free love. Free speech. A general free-for-all. His sense of values is clearly undermined. It is not that he cannot understand the poetry of contemporary life, but that he dare not submit himself emotionally to the revelation of his own real state of mind beneath the obsessional facade he has constructed.

Basically, the modern reader is unemotional compared to readers of a century ago. He wears an air of disillusion, if not frank depression, which corresponds with the meaninglessness of life as he sees it. He is in constant search for a new sensation, a new thrill, to ease his floating state. Each new sensation palls, lacking in meaning for him, and he is driven to rationalise his aims with whatever creed comes to hand.

— ‘The fault . . . is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings.’ —

Apart from psychotherapy, there is only one experience which seems to reinduce meaning for him: and that is electro-convulsive therapy. Give him a fit — let him see his stars — and he can be aware of himself again in reality. The rigidity of death-in-life becomes the rhythmic form of life itself. And with this, we have arrived back at the crux of poetic creation.

Language which has meaning can express itself in any way which doesn't destroy that meaning. Modern poetry takes full advantage of such license. Poetry is the living example of 'free will,' as so expressed. The nuances of idiom in the English language allow scope for such meaningful freedom. Meaning guarantees freedom against anarchy.

These are some of the problems of semantics which the modern poet has to handle, and they are the same problems the psychotherapist faces in his use of language. Symbols, we have seen, are strong catalysts in the poetic reaction; and for the patient to create in himself his own salvation, he must be made aware of his symbols, so then they may become meaningful on the emotional basis of the transference situation. Considering again the sense of values we have seen undermined in the contemporary reader, is it possible this represents a change in human physiology, a real shift of value — perhaps, from the emotional to the cognitive faculty — and the common tendency to neurosis is merely the phase of human adjustment which accompanies it? In other words, can we contemplate a future based on cognitive, rather than emotional, values? If so, what is going to happen to poetry?

The first step in this progress would be the enlargement of metaphysical experience. That is, it will not only be from perception, conception, and emotion, we form a conative principle, but cognitive processes themselves will be sufficient to inspire our whole efforts. In order to do so, however, they must coincide with the basis requirements of

the organism. As long as these remain in some degree 'unconscious,' and different in every individual — not only through environment, station, culture, but genetically — then complete reliance on cognitive value is impractical.

For the rest, man is dependent on his religion and art to supply and express the missing values and ultimate meaning of behaviour. There is no hope of complete consciousness, except in death.

The loss of our sense of values is therefore a real event, and does not imply simply a revaluation in the light of modern knowledge. Our language is becoming meaningless, because we are becoming meaningless. The poet is all the more necessary to us thereby, at this time; and what he has to say we should persevere to understand, for his aesthetics will be the aesthetic of life.

'Beauty is truth ; truth, beauty. This is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.' —

I have tried to state some of the close connections existing between poetry and mental function, with special reference to psychotherapy. Whereas science discovers the universe to man, and religion discovers man to God, art discovers man to man, and is the basis for his knowledge of himself. A science which denies these things is naive, and unrealistic; particularly since its own empirical foundations are so open to attack. However, we are all grateful for aeroplanes, and cars, and electric light, even if they do nothing, in themselves, to make us more content, more truly civilised, more sure of ourselves for the future.

I feel it is at the frontier between these approaches to life, that our possibilities of progress — and intellectual progress — exist.

In this no-man's-land, it is the witch-doctor still holds sway, as poet, priest, and psychiatrist. We should not be too much put off by his paraphernalia and apparel. For he knows the ground.

ROSES IN JANUARY, or a policy that is to be deplored by Eric Cashen

Editor : It doesn't work.

Editorial Secretary : But we accepted it six months ago.

Editor : It doesn't work.

Editorial Secretary : I know, sir, but what can we do? The piece was accepted, I wrote him a letter, you wrote him a letter.

Editor : Letter? What's in a letter. It doesn't work, and I'm not going to publish it. Don't you know, Rakeleigh, that we have a duty to our readers? To our cause? It doesn't fit our requirements. Reject it.

Editorial Secretary : Yes, sir.

Editor : If he writes back, tell him we read it, tell him we'll read everything he writes. Got that?

Editorial Secretary : Yes, sir. But . .

Editor : But me no buts. Tell him we'll read everything he's

ever written. Maybe we'll publish something.

Editorial Secretary : Yes, sir. But . . . what if we accept some-

thing, and reject it, again?

Editor : Hm? Oh . . . Lightning never strikes twice.

Editorial Secretary : Yes, sir.

Editor : If he had a name . .

Editorial Secretary : If he had a name . .

Editor : Or had influence . .

Editorial Secretary : Or had influence . .

Editor : But he doesn't.

Editorial Secretary : . . . He doesn't.

Editor : Reject it.

Editorial Secretary : Yes, sir.

Editor : Don't let him think you're weak in the knees.

Editorial Secretary : No, sir.

Editor : If he's a writer, he's got to learn to take the knocks.

Editorial Secretary : I got it.

TOWARDS PRINT

by the Editor of Trace

A better name for this one might be TOWARDS READINGS. Reports from nearly everywhere concern efforts to enlarge poetry audiences by verbal publications. Slight improvements in poetry book sales have been merely tantalising — and dismayingly slow. Reports concern readings to small groups, large groups, and even to some auditoriums filled by those actually induced to pay for listening. Theatres have been utilised not only for verse drama, but for nondramatic poetry recitation ; and much poetry has been on radio and television, to say nothing of booms in disks and tapes for libraries and private collectors. There are, to be sure, better fundamental reasons why poetry ought to be disseminated orally (an oral art by birth); but the spur to this revival (rather than recent erudite articles to prove poetry should be heard rather than seen) has been from frustrations of poets grown desperate over conditions governing print.

Now frustrations or not, or fames deservedly-meagre or not, this is healthy. The benefits, however, aren't unmixed . . . for the reason that the nature of a poet in large measure is that of an introspective 'solitary'; and with most sincere devotees of the Muse overly modest, if not really anti-social, many readings are fanfared by and for pseudo-poets and possible psychopaths. Personal aggressiveness weighs heavier than sterling merit, in this picture. Numerous frankly-frantic individuals, whose activities (including their writings) are parts of misreckoning strivings after immortality, press to the fore. And while neuroses aren't uncharacteristic of genius, all neurotics are by no means even mildly talented. Some public exhibitions by the

'sick-sick-sick' (apologies to Julius Feiffer of THE VILLAGE VOICE, New York's Greenwich Village) may prove the opposite of advantageous in campaigns for poetry audience.

A simple and regrettable corrective would ask that those invited to read to an indiscriminating and largely-unconverted public shall have been published by many editors and shall have been noticed by a few critics of reputation. This would be regrettable, because some genuine younger talents might be held back. Yet, the concern is for poetry as a whole; and the good young poets would soon prove themselves and soon enough gain turns on the platform.

EDITORS WRITE

Harry Hooton (21st CENTURY): 'It is even the absurdities, extravagances — the folly — that must be stressed which underlies the direct logic of the 'anarcho-technocratic' line. Perhaps that ingredient might prevent the seeming inevitable debasement which attends all doctrine — the taking of truth too seriously. Clear logic is not enough . . . Our functional integrity as poets must be exalted over the processes of thought, science, technology . . . There is a sense in which this makes me far more tolerant of the spate of (relatively worthless) poetry that little mags offer. There should be more of it. There can't be too much. Anyway, I am increasing the flood . . .'

And then, this same editor, elaborating, in the new second issue of his magazine: 'It takes a long time to assess poetry, if not a lifetime. Even then assessment can never be sure, so it is inevitable good stuff is rejected. Certainly this is so from the bias 21st CENTURY admits . . . First, your indirect allusion, symbolism, "imagery," leave us cold. There is a poetry of ideas as well as of images, there is a poetry of direct plain speaking as well as of subtle implication — not necessarily a "better" brand, but certainly one overlooked today in the retreat from world social reality. We want to regain the balance which we believe characterises great poetry — simple, clear and literal statement, as well as, not instead of, the exalted, figurative language which is necessary to lift poetry above the level of matter of fact prose. Some of your poem must be immediately intelligible and of current, common value.

'Secondly, your scrupulous avoidance of the "trite" values of mankind is despicable. The fight for freedom, for power, nobility, grace, creativity, divinity, are all "clichés" which we uphold and utilise—despite the soiled associations you are

unable to separate from them. Never to use a cliché is to become unintelligible; it is to fail to provide a contrasting context to a vivid and original phrase anyway. People who never write clichés never write anything else worthwhile either. Poetry arises out of common human needs and problems, and never apart from them. It is too easy, to disrupt everyday sense, to juxtapose incongruous words—the number of such combinations is infinite. Anyone can attach any adjective to any noun. You may say what no one else has ever said before; you can also reflect that no one else will ever say it again—that it is not memorable, and so, immortal. Finally . . . in order to make a new and valuable idea vivid a writer may join unfamiliar words, if that idea is in itself vital. But what idea or image are you seeking to vivify? One in every line, in every phrase?’

SOME ITEMS RECEIVED by the Editor

With perhaps three exceptions, there are no slight or dull studies in the dull-titled NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS, edited by L. J. Ludovici (ASSOCIATED BOOKSELLERS, Westport, Conn., U.S.A., \$3.75). Besides authoritative compact references on fourteen men of letters and science, this contains brilliant examples of the biographical essay, rather than tortured undertakings of full-portrait compressions or empty expansions of publicity blurbs (such as commonly render books of this kind of transient, if any, value). Two rewarding sections are by Martin Turnell — on André Gide and François Mauriac. J. Bronowski on Albert Einstein should not be missed ; and Charles Carrington does a good enough job justifying Kipling to make one wish to reread him from the new dimension available from the elapsed years. Excepting maybe Turnell’s Gide essay, Arthur Mizener’s on T. S. Eliot probes deepest ; while D. C. Somervell does a distinctive comprehensive, if partisan, appraisal of Churchill. As in the last, W. S. Merwin on Faulkner and M. J. C. Hodgart on Hemingway are not impartial pleadings — still, by no means therefore necessarily

unsatisfactory writings.

Although NEW EDITIONS 2 scarcely deserves the secondary label 'An Anthology of Literary Discoveries,' some of its not-new material makes this paperback worth adding to a library, and Robert Stock's translations from the Portuguese of ten poems of Carlos Andrade are marvellously exciting. They demonstrate how lively, precise, and realistic the deepest philosophical observations may be. What modern relevance an abridgement of an eighteenth century slave-trader's account of a visit to savage Dahomey has, beyond a sequence of wild brutality (out-horrored by many contemporary shockers) is dubious. Nor is it exactly clear what's maintained to be 'curiously modern' about a story quite characteristic of her time, by Mrs Gore (Catherine Moody, best known for the novel, CECIL OR THE ADVENTURES OF A COXCOMB, and for her French translations). But such items are nice to own, as is a brief Molnar piece on Shestov, along with the latter on Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy — and all for \$1.

Irving Layton's THE IMPROVED BINOCULARS (2nd edition, JONATHAN WILLIAMS, \$3) not only confirms him as the leading Canadian poet, but as a major poet in the language. Thirty added pieces are in this edition. His intrinsic integrity now grows indisputable. He shows less and less self-consciousness over possibility of being underrated, as had seemed in some not-quite-integrated unspontaneous near-postured efforts to impress. The man decisively holds essentials of greatness ; beside his concern over immediate problems of society against backgrounds of human universals, he exhibits a comprehensive range of sensitivities. Taken together with the powerful drive in numerous intense moods, from limitedly-amorous excitement to agitation over international discrepancies he feels are injurious to all mankind, his mature personal idiom built out of varied familiarity with forms and traditions makes him outstanding in contemporary poetry. He's never

regional; and his very lack in this regard antithetically long has militated against his recognition. For, being a poet in Canada poses problems with re communication with the rest of the English literary world, whose thick-skinned pundits seem always only looking for quaintnesses-out-of-locale in writers of the 'provinces.'

Following closely his ZERO HOUR, is what may prove an even more significant pamphlet selection of Leslie Woolf Hedley's — POEMS FOR A PASSPORT (HENNYPENNY PRESS, \$1). Though it would be difficult to visualise a group more exclusively concentrated on the problems out of man's enmities for man (plus some of Hedley's most horrifying anti-war conceptions), these saliently demonstrate that he's much more than an overwrought zealot putting into poetic forms what should be in pamphlets of protest. He here displays his own distinctive lyric powers and control of condensed imagery for connotative effects resembling the atomic blasts concerning which he's issued many Jeremiads. And while the saying may provide substance for nightmares, the expression is at the same time restrained, and even at times rigidly disciplined to forms which obviously, however, were utilised without straining and rendered in their final shapes with few afterthoughts.

An exquisite 'first' is COLLECTANEA : I. E. ALEXANDER (ex tempore press, 50c.) in four colours of ink, and cover by Wallace Berman. And the poetry by this scarcely published writer deserves to be read carefully for the supra-tonal nuances out of individualised multiplex imagery and closeknit realisms, transcending forced intentions to shock, such as characterise too much less-sincere modernity. Though he sometimes fails, by pausing to spell out what should have been synthesised and conveyed by implication, and is not entirely free of echoes tuned almost to triteness, the earnest genuineness predominates, and original idiomatic subtleties compensate for the weak spots. He also

slips in some lighthanded significatory altered spellings.

What originally had been announced under title THE CHRISTIAN ERA, appeared at midyear as RELIGIOUS DRAMA/1 (MERIDIAN BOOKS, \$1.60—\$1.45 in U.S.), containing James Schevill's THE BLOODY TENET, along with other verse and part-verse plays by W. H. Auden, Christopher Fry, and Dorothy Sayers, and D. H. Lawrence's DAVID.

ADDENDA

Continued stress on West Coast matters makes the Editor's accidental residence seem responsible for unbalanced reporting; however, it also does appear there's more relevant 'spot' news in this area. As this issue was preparing, plans were projected for a West Coast anthology of short modern fiction (to become an annual). Editorship remained undetermined; and no definite mailing address had been fixed, but adequate support appeared to make this more than a speculative probability. Queries will be forwarded via TRACE.

Censorship troubles spread to Los Angeles, this summer, with the prosecution of Wallace Berman of SEMINA for exhibiting the No. 1 as part of a sculpture—a municipal allegation of lewd intent in one drawing, taken from context, being upheld by the trial judge. Funds for an appeal were lacking, as this was written. Trial of the city of San Francisco case against Lawrence Ferlinghetti, for allegedly dealing in 'obscene' literature (works by Gil Orlovitz and Allen Ginsberg) had just been continued a few days, to enable Judge Clayton Horn to read THE MISCELLANEOUS MAN publication of STATEMENT OF ERICA KEITH and the CITY LIGHTS publication of HOWL. Coast poetry readings proliferated during late summer weeks. One of a new series was at the new ex tempore press (see Directory); another, at VENICE WEST Poetry Center, where the visiting Jonathan Williams gave one of numerous readings in conjunction with the forwarding of his book sales plan comprising

advance-contractual acceptance of \$25 for up to eight and not less than six new books, to be published by him by September, 1958. And yet another even more important development here was a series of TALKS ABOUT POETRY, directed by Peter Carr at the U. of Southern California FM radio station KUSC.

Yet another programme of 'uncompromised and uncluttered' broadcasts is announced for a projected educational FM station. Literature and other arts will be featured in a noncommercial venture. The American Civil Liberties Union leaders are among sponsors (may be addressed at: PACIFICA FOUNDATION, Box 504, Altadena, Calif.)

A new reading group in the eastern U.S. is under direction of George Stillman (1031 Norwood Ave., Elberon, N.J.), who asks that poets visiting New York contact him. And in New England, Robert L. Peters (see NEO) has launched a modern poetry propagandising campaign, booking lectures in Canada and the U.S.

The time-lapse between TRACE preparation and publication again has delayed an important note. The June LIBERATION contained the opening instalment of A. J. Muste's autobiography NOT SO LONG AGO—which continues in a special double late-summer number, with more contents of high interest for all liberals and dissenters from war.

Whereupon, getting about as far away as possible, noting that the Australian appearance of the long-overdue second issue of Harry Hooton's 21st CENTURY makes available not only exciting modern writing, but matter of keen interest (not so oddly-assorted as it sounds) to architects and philosophical anarchists (see EDITORS WRITE).

Reminding us that the first novel written and published in the Western Hemisphere was out of Mexico City (Lizardi's ITCHING PARROT, 1816), the Centro Mexicano de Escritores, A.C., Volga 3, Mexico 5, D.F. asks that TRACE readers be informed they may keep abreast of the Mexican creative

renaissance for a \$6 subscription to their bi-monthly bulletin, RECENT BOOKS IN MEXICO.

Close on the heels of first English translation of PLATERO AND I, by Juan Ramon Jimenez (PHILIP C. DUSCHNES), FARRAR, STRAUS & CUDAHY (N.Y.), has announced the first comprehensive translations of him, by H. R. Hays, edited by Eugenio Florit . . . News of extensive translations of living American poets into Chinese arrives from Walter Lowenfels, asking that writers desirous of reaching a large Asiatic audience write the editors of I-WEN, P.O. Box 40, Peking . . . Besides just having issued NEW SELECTED POEMS by Adam Mickiewicz, edited by Clark Mills (various translators — \$2.50), VOYAGES PRESS announces SELECTED POEMS by Kazimierz Wierzyński.

Among periodicals of recent special interest was the ANCHOR REVIEW (2) with some highly endorsable ideas in a William Barrett article, which also contained, however, a good deal of devastatingly-erroneous observation with re a nonexistent 'decline' of little-mags, a W H. Auden essay, an expurgated portion of Vladimir Nabakov's LOLITA, an excellent piece by Dwight MacDonald, and other good material. . . . Deserving of note too — a little-mag 'first,' a group of Francis Golfing poems in the initial AMERICAN LETTERS. . . . Felix Stefanile has announced early publication of Frederick Eckman's poetry essays, as VAGROM CHAPBOOK No. 5 . . . The policy statement in No. 1 MODERN AGE : ' . . . prejudice against doctrinaire radical alteration, and . . . preference for the wisdom of our ancestors . . . ' suggests a rather 'far-out' impulse for a periodical in this category. . . . A handsome unpriced single-sheet presentation of THE EYE, by William J. Margolis arrived from INFERNO PRESS. . . . Ethel King (12 E. 86th St, New York 28) has privately printed a leaflet of sonnet sequences upon THE ZODIAC.... The long-jinxed HEARSE of E. V. Griffith was — after years of abortive starts — finally in motion 'vehicling the dead' as this

TRACE prepared (see Magazine Suppl.).

HAWK, by Vivian Ayers (\$3 from press of coincidentally-same name) is not reviewed at length, only because the Editor gives it full treatment in the current PHYLON. This first book by a new Negro writer is recommended for contents and for unusual format, with illustrations by John Biggers.... Just one other book of prose was received — MAN'S SPIRITUAL QUEST, by John Lindsay (GREENWICH, \$2.50).

New poetry includes: WALKER'S FORD ANTHOLOGY, Harold Lee Drake (BLUE RIVER PRESS — from author: Box 4616, University Stat., Tucson, Ariz., \$2); PERDITA, Ray Nelson (PINCHPENNY PRESS — but, from author: 212 Columbia Ave., Berkeley, Calif., 75c.); THE NEON STAIRS, William J. Noble (LITERARY CALENDAR, 75c.); ARCHE-TYPAL LUTE, Rose Noller (BROOKSIDE, 10/- — or from author: Victor Hugo Hotel, 414 Delaware Ave., Buffalo 2, N.Y., \$2); ANCESTRAL TIMBER, Ballads without music, by Kitty Parsons (GOLDEN QUILL, \$2.50); THE SUICIDE ROOM, Stuart Z. Perkoff (JONATHAN WILLIAMS, \$2); TO A MODERN HERO, Anthony Rye (RICHARD GAINS-BOROUGH Periodicals, 19 Berkeley St., London, W.1, 3/6); NOW WE ARE ONE, J. Merdith Tatton (GOLDEN QUILL, \$2.50); THE TIME BEING, Richard Weber (DOLMEN PRESS, 5/3).