

A CHRONICLE OF LIVING LITERATURE

●

Towards Print (an un-Pacific Coast)

How Long to Write a Book?

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JAMES BOYER MAY

TRACE

EDITOR

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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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TOWARDS PRINT

by the Editor of Trace

All winter, disconcerting letters, unanswered in the press of work, have been arriving. Disconcerting, because they've indicated extremely discoloured pictures of the Coast scene, where literary-and-not events have been gaining international publicity. The discolorations are traceable; reporters for big reviews and magazines have, for personal reasons or through ignorance, played up sensational angles and misrepresented so-called movements. Some reporters have been too intimately involved to realise their sillinesses; and straight interpretations scarcely could have been expected from those not close to what's been transpiring, what with ultra-complex confusions amongst clashing personalities.

The Editor cannot pretend that his accidental presence at what correspondents call the 'centre' may not render his own brush suspect; and still, his firsthand knowledge is balanced by other information accumulated over several years and from distant places. If he's unduly influenced by direct contacts with the principals, he at least has tried to hold an open mind. A few factual and incontrovertible statements can be made.

First, there has been and IS no 'movement', no 'underground', no 'school', however inchoate. There HAS been widening interest in experimental writings of many sorts not slanted for mass consumption. Enhanced sales of books, magazines, and recordings attest this. Also, enlarging audiences at public readings of what used to be dubbed private poetry.

Next, the active writers exhibit intense individualities which have been confirmed by their failures to hold together

any of the groups which have each disappeared almost before defined. Even the most eloquent and gregarious of the experimentalists have neither tried to form coteries nor deliberately tried to attract disciples.

Thus, and third, there is no leader and no 'voice'; and each poet has spoken mainly for his personal ideas. Naturally, some who are more experienced and talented have been more copied and are likelier to leave effective contributions. Yet— observe — even the less-original poets have remained apart from their 'models', if not actually antagonistic toward them.

One valid generalisation, at least, must be that a romantic chaos of creativities foams the length of this seaboard. And still, only limited tentative assertions can be made of these, and only concerning familiar figures and fairly established projects.

The senior poet in residence hereabouts is Robinson Jeffers, who has remained aloof during all the excitements, while his influences have been apparent in younger writers, not just here, but throughout the world. And the poet who has influenced more than any (flagrantly imitated by many) is Kenneth Patchen, residing in Palo Alto the past several years. He too has kept his own course; and this has held as well for his pioneering endeavours in combining the reading of poetry with jazz.

The story of this jazz and poetry business has been badly mistold. Patchen began, during 1950 in the East, to integrate and make new 'creations in themselves' from poems and such music. The first public airing of this integration was his — over the Bay Area station KPFA, in 1951. Further taped recordings of his readings with jazz were broadcast in 1953, '54, and '55; and Harry Redl recorded still another Patchen reading with jazz in the summer of 1956, later released over the Canadian network. The LIFE-pictured readings (by others) took place at a San Francisco bar more than a year

afterward. From accounts by the principals themselves, these were unrehearsed and artless performances, simply part of the pseudo-Bohemian exhibitions (including stripteasers and poetry-interpreting dancers) hastily put on in the glare of publicity attending banning of books in the area.

So, it's only fair to set straight not simply that Patchen was the first to read to jazz especially composed for the readings, but — from evidence here, and obviously then available to the mass-media erroneously reporting these events — Patchen was the first person to give public readings to jazz, either composed or improvised. And it also happened that at the time others were being credited as innovators of poetry-with-jazz, Patchen was just quitting a hospital bed, to which he'd been confined for three months.

Kenneth Rexroth, another who stands alone, had long been doing critical articles and reviews, besides presiding over a radio series. His prominence led to his being singled out for the spotlight; but, by his own statements to the Editor, he was seriously misrepresented in a role he had not intended. Meantime, Patchen refused to be interviewed or photographed in connection with the irrelevant furore of the sensationally-concocted 'San Francisco Story'. Yet, despite the carnival-sideshow atmosphere publicised, an important serious development came of Patchen's collaboration with Allyn Ferguson in the arrangements which were to break nine-year attendance records at THE BLACK-HAWK — and now establishing his reputation as one of the truly great poetry readers of our time.

Returning to Rexroth — stress should be placed on the fact that neither now nor before has there been any pretense of establishing a 'school'. Rexroth, himself, has been unpredictably catholic in touting decidedly diverse works.

Southward, the long-resident and better published poets are William Pillin, Thomas McGrath, and Lawrence

Spingarn; and while all three are romantics, the first is an experimental lyricist, the second absorbed by social problems treated in his own imagistic manner, and the last functions distinctively within traditional forms. None has been mentioned in the recent furore — nor has Joseph Joel Keith, an international ‘name’ long resident here. And for that matter, the jazz specialist amongst poets, Kenneth Ford, of Pacific Grove, editorial associate on the New Orleans CLIMAX, hasn’t been mentioned either. Continuing on back north, others not marked as living and breathing, are Harold Witt, of Cupertino, and James Schevill, Berkeley — also Josephine Miles and Jean Garrigue.

But, for the other poet (and editor) of considerable unacclaimed influence, it’s necessary to return to San Francisco, itself. He is Leslie Woolf Hedley, whose INFERNO (magazine and press, as well as recordings under PACIFICA label) activities have provided primary aid in early developments of poets not now usually associated with his name. More than any, he has stood for identification of independence with integrity.

A recent evolution of free editorship has been that of William J. Margolis, with THE MISCELLANEOUS MAN, which did crash the bigtime news with ‘censorship’ troubles involving CITY LIGHTS BOOKS, whose Lawrence Ferlinghetti has singlehandedly built unprecedented sales for pocket paperbacks of both known and unknown writers. Being a poet also, Ferlinghetti became somewhat identified with impromptu jazz readings, but he has indicated no serious interest in the experiments.

And down in Los Angeles, similar publicity singled out Wallace Berman’s SEMINA, now temporarily issuing from San Francisco — though again, no more (dis)affiliated than, say, Gil Orlovitz, who produces poems of distinctly unsoporific textures, lately featured in magazines and on radio as representative of an ‘underground’ he himself avers projects

no tunnels to his visions of rocketships and interstellar corruption.

Another grave discoloration has resulted from disregard of other public poetry activities. Lack of space compels passing of dozens of other magazine and press activities (northward, the just-discontinued BRIDGE and GRUNDTVIG REVIEW of Glen Coffield, Oregon, and now founding GOLDEN GATE, in San Francisco . . . up in Seattle, the once-intense EXPERIMENT group); however, in all this blather about an unconceived 'renaissance', no mention whatever has been given the many years readings at THE POETRY CENTER (San Francisco State College). Longterm effects have been considerable; and, too, from the recent well-attended POETRY LOS ANGELES readings. Also in the south, large informal monthly gatherings have been held at the Malibu home of Curtis Zahn, another ignored 'far-out' man.

Such activities, together with the consistent print obtained by long-practising poets (more than can be named here), have formed the special Coast atmosphere. The most casual of enquiries would make evident the near-irrelevance of this late noise of the big press. 'Near' — because their subjects definitely have made a stir. The perspectives have been warped by irresponsible commentators making all sorts of erroneous contextual references, which have carried sadly bedaubed pictures to the East and Europe.

EDITORS WRITE

A. Karl Austin: 'WANDERLUST, devoted to man in search of himself, will use both regional and occult fiction, articles, and poetry from the world over. The underlying theme will be man against the elements, man's pausing to touch, explore, and discover the world around himself in all arenas of endeavour.... Wanderlust is more than a state of mind, a preoccupation. It is a spiritual search, touching upon the whole of human striving, and illuminates man's best endeavours. Wanderlust is reflected in man's constant quest, in the seeking, and, in the reward.... Fiction ... about 1,500 words Articles, as wide as the imagination, 1,500 Brief biographical sketches, 750 words, of specific vagabonds or wanderers or professionals in search of dream or conquest—750 w.... Poetry will be lyrical, traditional in quality, free verse and rhymed. Occasional light verse slanted to the armchair vagabond. (No June, spoon, moon verse will be considered.)'

Roy H. Miller: 'The SAN FRANCISCO REVIEW will print prose, and poetry, stories, short plays and essays. In these categories, we will publish anything which we feel constitutes a creative and original expression of moral, intellectual, or emotional individuality. We observe no limitation as to subject matter. We are concerned with the need of any individual to express or assert himself in any form, and with the frustration of that need in any era.... We particularly encourage contributions from Great Britain, but will accept mss. in any language. Translations will be submitted to the writer, on request, for his authorisation.

'As individuals, as well as in our capacities as editors of this magazine, we believe that all men have certain indestructible rights—rights which are inherent, not enfranchised. One of these is the right of the individual to

disassociate from the political or cultural milieu in which he finds himself. For the poet, this is not only a right but also, in one sense, an obligation. Because the poet has nothing in common with the state, and is in some respects its natural enemy. The state seeks obedience to its laws and conformity to and belief in its ideals and goals. The poet, on the other hand, is nothing if not independent and original. If he is to survive as an artist, he cannot be imitative or conforming in his ideal.

Each generation has seen poets and editors alike furiously debating the question of what poetry is to be termed “good”, and even the criteria by which a writer’s effort is to be evaluated. One school holds that the poet’s sole function is to exploit the language, and that the measure of his greatness lies in the breadth of his syntax. Others emphasise the idea or ideal of the poem, and evaluate it according to the coherency and impact of the poet’s concept. But our approach is essentially a broad and selective one. We belong to no particular school of poetic thought; we have no literary axes to grind; we favour no special cult; we lead no Renaissance, though, if one exists, we hope to become a part of it.

We take this approach because we feel that there is no theory or definition of poetry that is not too narrow to be applied. Poetry cannot be weighed, measured, or calibrated. It is so complex and illusive that the human mind is the only device sensitive enough and scrupulous enough to perceive its worth. Rules and formulae, which in any event tend to stifle originality, are therefore no substitute for editorial selectivity. We reject, for example, the time-honoured rule enforced by some that the poet must not be influenced or motivated by environmental factors. Of course, poetry should not be used merely as an instrument of propaganda, or as a vehicle for some social or philosophical notion of the author. But a poet is only the sum of his experiences, and his writing

cannot be expected to be entirely divorced therefrom. And we do not believe that his art, if valid, is any less so because his views on society are incidentally and necessarily reflected in his poem.'

E. V. Griffith

'Coincident with the publication of its third regular number . . . HEARSE will issue the first of a series of quarterly chapbooks, each devoted to the work of one writer. . . . The chapbooks will be available at \$1 each from HEARSE and in leading bookstores; national (U.S.A.) mail distribution will be handled by HENNY PENNY PRESS.... fourth regular number will be a presentation of "Eye Poems" by various hands, with a special introduction and commentary on the "Eye Poem" as art form by Kenneth Lawrence Beaudoin. Samples are in both HEARSE 1 and 2; writers and artists everywhere, who have worked in this form, are invited to submit samples of their best work for consideration for HEARSE 4. Sizes should preferably not exceed 8½ by 11 inches.

HOW LONG TO WRITE A BOOK?

by David Gunston

How long does it take to write a book? Authors often get asked this question. There is, of course, no straightforward universal answer; so much depends on the book, on the author concerned, and also on many other circumstances. Some books are generated slowly, some quickly, a few at immense speed. Some may even be the work of very many years, or even a lifetime. The question of the actual time taken over writing is one that always interests readers.

According to Boswell, Dr. Johnson wrote the whole of *RASSELAS* in the evenings of one week, sending the completed portions to the printer as they were written, and never reading it over again. Here the need for speed in composition was economic, Johnson needing some ready money to pay for his mother's funeral and to meet some debts she had left.

Urgent need for money apart, it is usually the irrepressible drive of white-hot inspiration that makes writers work at intense pressure to finish a book. Robert Louis Stevenson, obsessed by his inspiration dream of the story, dashed off the first draft of the 30,000 words of *DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE* in six days, and this during a period when he was dangerously ill and subject to recurring haemorrhages. He was always one for speedy writing when, as he put it, the 'tide of delighted industry' was flowing fast. The first fifteen chapters of *TREASURE ISLAND* came from his pen in that number of days, although such a pace could not be maintained to the story's end. On another occasion, R. L. S. finished over 60,000 words during a short spell when he was confined to his bed.

Many other quickly-written works are on record, some typical of their author's ability for speedy writing, others

isolated cases when the story simply had to be put down on to paper within the shortest possible time. A. J. Cronin's first, reputation-making novel, *HATTER'S CASTLE*, was finished in three months, the last 50,000 of its quarter-of-a-million words being written in a terrific effort lasting nine days! The American author, Harry Stillwell Edwards, wrote a 155,000-word prize novel in 23 days, while S. R. Crockett wrote most of *THE STICKIT MINISTER* in under 48 hours.

After that memorable day on the river at Oxford in 1862, when he recounted the original adventures of *ALICE IN WONDERLAND* to his three little girl listeners, Lewis Carroll worked most of the night setting down his immortal story on paper from memory. T. E. Lawrence wrote *SEVEN PILLARS OF WISDOM*, another immensely long book, in swift lengthy sittings, completing the whole of Book VI in twenty-four hours between sunrise and sunrise, without a pause. Then when he left the completed ms. in a railway carriage and lost it, he rewrote the whole work in record time.

Plays, being usually shorter than novels, take rather less time to write, but even so there have been some record play-writing performances. Oscar Asche wrote the record-breaking *CHU CHIN CHOW* in a week, and Arthur Wing Pinero created his *TWO HUNDRED A YEAR* in an afternoon. J. B. Priestley, self-confessedly a slow starter but a speedy worker once he has got going, wrote *THE LINDEN TREE* in ten days, besieged indoors by icy February weather, working, eating, and sleeping in one small room, where the Lindens 'were almost my only company and the people I seemed to know best.'

Agatha Christie, who recently published her fiftieth detective thriller, usually completes the whole genesis of a book in about six weeks, thinking over the plot and characters. 'Then, one fine day,' she says, 'you start, and that's that.' The actual writing never takes her more than ten days — otherwise, she finds that it goes stale.

The author with the most legends about his fast writing is, of course, Edgar Wallace, who employed what he called 'the fastest stenographer in the world,' dictaphones and high pressure methods. Although much of his work was dictated into his machine at the not-abnormal rate of around 1,200 words an hour, he could, if need be, dictate 3,500 words an hour, thus finishing in one hour what many authors consider a fair day's production. His peak effort was the dictation of a 36,000-word article on World War I which he finished in 24 hours. He wrote his novel based on the life of the criminal, Charles Peace, *THE DEVIL MAN*, in 60 hours, spending a whole weekend at his desk, drinking innumerable cups of sweet tea, and dictating every one of the book's 80,000 words; thereby earning, incidentally, about £4,000.

Authors like Sir Walter Scott, Alexandre Dumas, Voltaire, Balzac and Lope de Vega must have worked extraordinarily fast — without mechanical aids like typewriters and dictaphones — to produce their colossal individual outputs. Many modern novelists, Daphne du Maurier and H. E. Bates among them, produce a full-length novel in three months, but that means steady going.

On the other hand, plenty of writers take their time over their work, picking the right word without thinking about the clock, or spending years thinking over stories, or researching for them. Donald Culross Peattie says he spent twenty years getting ready to write one of his best books, *FLOWERING EARTH*, and more than two years writing it. Even *FOREVER AMBER* took its author over five years to write and another year to revise.

It is all largely a question of output, that problem of every writer, and baffling mystery for many a reader. An average day's work for a typical writer is a round 3,000 words, but some write 8,000 or 13,000 as a regular routine, although if anything, the average is far lower. C. S. Forester writes 1,000

words every morning, never more. Phyllis Bentley considers twice that amount a good day's work for her. Elizabeth Bowen says: 'At best, I write four or five pages (never more, I think); at the worst, I do even less than one.' William Sansom writes about 1,000 words a day, six days a week, revising that output many times before it reaches the printer. Ngaio Marsh admits that all her novels have been 'concocted under pressure', yet she writes them mostly between midnight and two in the morning, only. And although she rewrites repeatedly, C. V. Wedgwood can get down the first draft of a book within a fortnight.

Yet, George Eliot wrote her long novels at the rate of seldom more than 400 words a day, and W. W. Jacobs' amusing tales flowed from his pen at the rate of only 250 words a day. But such a small daily output did not need revising, for every page was word-perfect, style and choice of word were impeccable. Not so Trollope, who put his watch in front of him and set himself the mechanical task of writing 250 words every quarter of an hour. Most of his work, however, was written at this fearsome speed, not during the long working day, but only for two or three hours before breakfast.

The real mystery lies in how authors manage to keep up the quality of their output, not its quantity. As André Maurois has rather startlingly put it in *THE ART OF LIVING*: 'Consider the fact that a writer who produced only two pages a day would, at the end of a long life, have equalled in quantity, though certainly not in quality, the writings of Balzac or Voltaire.'

AFTER THE PARTY

by Eric Cashen

Enid Fresno was a librarian, and a very good librarian, but she wrote short stories on the side. Indeed, all her spare time was spent in writing short stories, reading them, and in talking about them. All her friends on the faculty, from the first grade up, were tired of hearing her talk about short stories (secretly), and they all wished she would give up short story writing. And take up knitting. Or crocheting.

She didn't. She just read and wrote, wrote and read. Her favourites were Wallace Stegner, and John Galsworthy. But not in that order.

She felt she had a great deal in common with both of them, that her work was vastly underrated by editors (she sent it out), and that some day, some day, she would be recognised. Then the smile on Miss Pooley's face, the grin on Miss Smatters', the grimace on Miss Jones', would be changed. Until that day, she wrote and wrote, and read and read.

The library used a Dewey decimal system. It was an extraordinary system. She had her own network laid out, too, and could find books quicker than any Dewey expert could; but still she abided by the laws, the rules, the triangulations, of the mastermind.

Her day was spent in signing out books to children, taking books back from children, fining children, etc., and she was glad to get home to the short story, the cup of tea, the typewriter. She was nearing retirement age. She hoped, on retirement, to go to Atlantic City, and write, and write. Her book of stories, which had been returned a dozen times, was given final editing, and sent out once more.

Next year would be her last. The days passed. The book came back again, and again. She thought to herself: 'I will write in Atlantic City, write, write, write.' But, as the days passed, she found herself with less to write about. Not that subject matter changed, or her touch was less sure, but that with departing from school, with retiring, her life seemed to have ended. The next year came, and went. Toward the end of it, she busied herself extraordinarily, not in library work, but on her book. She knew she would never write again.

The new librarian, coming into the school the next year, found in the catalogue the author's name : Fresno. The book's title : AFTER THE PARTY. And when she went to look, curious, at the shelves : she found, scrubby yellow, an old manuscript, stapled together tightly ; and in front of it, not one rejection slip.

UNCOLLECTING A LIBRARY

by Elizabeth D. Coleman (U.S.A.)

Not long ago, Mr William E. Harris wrote an article about earnings from unofficial book reviews. Quoth he : 'You will be paid very little beyond the review copies of the books you cover. But the by-lines you receive and the chance to build up a valuable library transcend the small checks for the beginning writer.'

In this restless world the reverse application of this idea is often painfully forced upon us. To condense a lifetime accumulation of books is sometimes necessary. The old order changeth. New homes have no attics, and often no basements. Rooms are utilitarian, and not cordial to study and reflection. Families fit to or from the city ; from one end of the country to the other ; or even from this to a foreign land. If a book lover has cherished his own collection — and must move, and watches his book shelves denuded, it is as though his life blood were draining away.

What may he save from, perhaps, 2,000 books? After all, that is not so many ; his old home is a big one. He gets to work. He finds himself scarcely visible behind stacks of volumes big and little — in the library, in the dining room, in the hall, in his bedroom. He wipes his tears bravely, and begins to find surcease to sorrow in a new appraisal. He has collected several empty cartons, and begins a fascinating game of sorting. These to the public library; these to individuals—to schools—to churches. Days and days of heart-rendering estimates, reviews; sentiment sternly disciplined.

It is really a refreshing experience; I went through it myself. I was busy skimming the cream from the cream. Through this rebirth, one becomes immune to the avalanche

of book club promotion, and the whispering temptations of book reviews and advertisements.

What to keep? My answer to this is no criterion for an individual reader; for the love of books is a personal matter. But I will describe some classifications, with general appeal, that do not necessarily demand advanced learning: drama, poetry, biography, history, essays, technical skills, travel, old fiction, new fiction, miscellaneous classics, religion, psychology (normal and supernormal), and keepsakes. All this squeezed into—say, 200 volumes, might include heaven, too.

The operation of reduction is an impressive study in comparative valuation. It may take weeks, if you have the time to spare; but while thus occupied you will discover a reformed taste. Some books now appear stuffy indeed, with no application whatever to modern thought. Some speak in accents long forgotten though still beloved. Some have been refuted by greater learning, and now appear a bit ridiculous. Some are known to be present in any library, anywhere, and thus available for reference. For instance, a complete set of Dickens can be reduced to three or four. You may have some bindings exquisite with the skill of craftsmanship; keep these for beauty's sake. And some anthologies are of proven discernment and good judgment.

In this day of digests and condensations, what more fitting than a library in keeping with the times? This may be begging the question somewhat, for in spite of everything, we book lovers would collect ad infinitum if we could. To watch the long loved substance of your library disappear in vapours of remembrance while filling carton after carton to be given away is a superbly

consolidated course in literature, a re-creation of learning. It is a perfect way to refine the literature of ages in the cauldron of necessity. It is almost futile to be specific. If you have known and loved books this many a year, you will

hold to your heart a treasured copy of Thomas Hardy, knowing you cannot give him away ; and so, more willingly part with a complete set of E. A. Poe. The poets? You will lay Elizabeth Browning in the school carton, and slyly retain your five volumes of Ogden Nash. Never in this life will you part with Victor Hugo, but lay him — all eight leatherbound volumes — in your own carton, nestling beside all the Robert Nathans you could lay your hands on. You guess you had better keep Whitman, Kipling, Tennyson, Robert Frost, Milton. With a jaundiced eye toward John Ciardi, you put him in the carton for the high school ; those children must learn something about modern poetry. Well — these thirty-five little volumes of Shakespeare do not take up much room ; their notes are scholarly, and their type is clear.

BIOGRAPHY :

Just for charm and variety we will keep such bits as Benjamin Franklin's AUTOBIOGRAPHY, Pepys, GOODNIGHT SWEET PRINCE (Fowler), ANNA AND THE KING OF SIAM, and Clarence Day.

HISTORY :

Condensed, mostly.

Reference books, anthologies (careful about these !), and an

encyclopaedia (small volumes).

TECHNICAL :

Birds, flowers, trees, dogs, and cats. If you

write, pack up all you can squeeze in of quotations, H. W.

Fowler, Thesaurus, dictionaries, and some magazines for writers.

ESSAYS :

From Marcus Aurelius, through Emerson, to Lin Yu Tang. That 'through' suggests a good many in between.

TRAVEL :

Some are good and some are very tiresome. Take your choice.

NOVELS :

'— ay, there's the rub.' Man has forever and ever loved to tell a story and to listen to one. In the present and the past there are more of these than any other written word. A fair test of worth in your mind is to be able to read a novel more than once. If so, keep it. In 1955 there were published 2,073 titles of adult fiction — more than twice the next highest number, 849 on religion. (Figures from Annual Statistics of PUBLISHER'S WEEKLY.) Charles Townsend Copeland wrote: 'Where novelists are concerned, because with lyric poets novelists are the most personal of writers, the question of the best book is likely to be as alluring as it is ultimately futile.'

You see how personal it is — the business of reducing a library? And when you get all fixed, even with some books under the bed, you will have a supreme content and a smug satisfaction. You have overcome sentimental possessiveness; you have bustled about your literary attic, and switched the overflow to the proper channels. You have even left about two feet vacant on a shelf. Never mind; it will soon be full.

SOME ITEMS RECEIVED BY THE EDITOR

Stating that the enlarged edition of *SELECTED POEMS*, Kenneth Patchen (*NEW DIRECTIONS*, \$2) offers the best large samplings to date from the many works of America's leading romantic lyricist, should be sufficient. And adding that drawings are included from *HURRAH FOR ANYTHING* (reviewed when issued) plus poems from another new book out of his current mature phase, *WHEN WE WERE HERE TOGETHER* (which arrived too late for February review), should clinch matters. Those who have no Patchen can find out about him here; and those who have but a few Patchen volumes can round out their enjoyment without too much duplication (it comprises selections from ten books). Both those who have read him less extensively and those who have read him scarcely at all will learn, reading this, that he's to be credited with more than unusual sensibility of moods and unique mastery of the American idiom—he has built, in the past two decades, a profound philosophical realisation of our time and of his own artistic identification in this time.

Jim Dakin presents relaxed integrated honesties of individual expression in a lively selection of brightly phrased metaphysical reactions to nature, in *GIANT IN THE BEETLE* (*AMERICAN WEAVE PRESS*, Durham Chapbook XIII, \$1, autographed by the author: Locust Hill Farm, N. Rochester, Mass.); and though not perhaps heralding a powerful genius, this presents a genuine talent rare in a period when too many either overdo the pyrotechnics or confine themselves within safe measures. A fault of 'telling' in most of these is balanced by unexpected images; and he doesn't always compromise, obviously to point his objectives. In *THE IRRESISTIBLE DEMOCRACY*: 'An hourglass space supplies with sand / the bell that rings the head within; / . . . Birth and

her cannibal brother / hold the sheet down at each end; / Robin worries earthworms to their death.’ And in *PRELUDE TO DISILLUSION*, he demonstrates he’s not averse to remarking on grim realities: ‘Many prisoners have left the compound. / but we are still here, we collaborated.’

Down in Australia, another young poet, Laurence Collinson, appears in a diverse and larger selection, *THE MOODS OF LOVE* (*OVERLAND*, 10/-), demonstrating parallel achievement of freshness of language, though working in metrics. Happily, his frankness is not modified by this; and he at times takes off with ribald humour—or again, to cut radically deep as with a revolutionary sabre, or sounding that judgment horn only real poets ever blow. There’s high hope even for a writer who sometimes echoes sentimentalities, if he can also write: ‘a history in toothpaste, and / parents never less pedantic; / love indeed has truck with gland / to make a sardine seem romantic.’ Or, close a Valentine’s Day piece with: ‘And so I have this wish for you: / that you may note—to your distress—/ my absence sometimes starts in you / a tentative unhappiness.’ It’s also not insignificant that in a collection centred upon Eros, Mr Collinson slipped in one hot little protest called *A CLERK’S PRAYER*.

An exhaustive study which manages to be stimulating, despite scholarly condensation, is *THE ANATOMY OF THE WORLD*, Michael Macklem (*OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS*, , and *U. OF MINNESOTA PRESS*, \$3.50). Although the professed purpose is to trace the influences on imaginative writings of seventeenth century arguments in re the divine-or-not causes of terrestrial and astronomical phenomena as then first unveiled, most the wordage is utilised to tell about varied rudimentary theories of scientists and non-scientists speculating theologically on geogony and cosmology. On page 37 may be found a remark justly to be turned back upon much of this falderal: ‘...the argument ... not, essentially, one

of fact or logic but one of assumptions.’ And alas!—far too little explication of John Donne, Alexander Pope, and James Thomson. But if one suffers from tightly-congested references, relief is afforded by numerous rare quotations — of which one is from Edmund Halley’s 1691 paper before the Royal Society, *THE CIRCULATION OF WATRY VAPOURS*—delightful tidbits of superb prose. And of course, readers afterward may sally forth on their own in poetry and belles lettres, equipped to find and appreciate meanings and turns they’d missed before. So — thank you, Dr Macklem!

Editor Clark Mills has followed up, under his own imprint, *VOYAGES PRESS*, the recent *NOONDAY* publication of Adam Mickiewicz translations (*NEW SELECTED POEMS*, \$2.50). Again, a number of English-language poets have made their versions, with aid of a literal translator. More than in the preceding volume, the transmission — for that matter, all the verbal impacts — depend on the several talents. Unfortunately, many are rather uninspired; and the value of a large portion relies on the reader’s penetrative reconstructions of the original impulses, reactions, and ideas of Mickiewicz. Donald Davie does the best of all these ‘third hands’; and between the good reading provided by most his lively interpretations and the revelation of several littleknown facets of the great Pole, this book too must not be passed.

In the running with the best undisciplined young moderns is Tram Combs, who has been a Virgin Islands resident the past seven years and recently published *PILGRIM’S TERRACE* (Editorial *LA NUEVA SALAMANCA*, San German, Puerto Rico, \$2), exhilarating stuff, all about cats, love, jazz, bright sounds and glowing smells of the islands, and brilliant reminiscences of places he had lived, in the U.S.A. William Carlos Williams and Kenneth Rexroth state the obvious in praiseful forewords: that here’s another vital expressionist. In fact, Combs seems just plain drunk on the stuff with which his senses thrill him. And he gets it across

in ways to make readers tipsy too. So that, although the book can be 'put down' as just about 100 percent sensualistic, it does, after all, well serve a purpose (amorally, to be sure) and perform a great poetic feat of enhancing perceptions of beauty in being.

ADDENDA

At the time of this TRACE deadline, rather scanty information arrived concerning two extensive LP record-series of poets reading. One was, however, completely formulated: SIX MONTREAL POETS. And orders for these may be filled through Louis Dudek, of DELTA, by the date this reaches subscribers. The other was in the preliminary taping stage: samplings of California readings, planned for sale by summer.

The winter's U.S.A. magazine scene comprised several outstanding publications, of which only a few can be described in brief. The second number of THE LITERARY REVIEW revealed an undertaking different in kind from those of any other extant periodicals—a true literary journal, with representative selections from varied types of work by established contemporaries, plus comments and biographical notes, and featuring items centred on personalities and the special climates of current writings. ARK III enlarged its showcase to include more kinds of poetry and from more poets who are not residing in the immediate San Francisco area. THE BLACK MOUNTAIN REVIEW No. 7 is a virtual book (paperback), matching in size, if not breadth of contents, the long awaited OLIVANT; between them, these furnish a wide coverage of creative activities in this period (all arts covered in some degree) and more lively materials than do any similar attempts under imprints of large book houses. Exceeding the promise of the No. 1, SEMINA No. 2 is perhaps the season's pièce de résistance; and uneven though the contents may be found, they are highly stimulating and typical of ultimate 'far-outness'.

Others, elsewhere, which ought to be mentioned doubtless are among those unseen. For instance, what appears in THE INDIAN P.E.N. about a new Bombay periodical, THE HYPHEN, indicates an unusual project. However, no

address is available for query and proper listing. A reminder once again to invite better cooperation from those who for their own benefit should supply adequate data, if not copies of publications (recordings too); for TRACE finally has built a circulation reaching a special audience reached by no other magazine. A few simple jottings of facts would have made a better notice of the LP records mentioned above, for example. The Editor no longer finds it possible to comb out all leads and make individual queries, many of which go unanswered anyway.

The magazine listing of OVERLAND should now be repeated in the listing of presses—editorship of S. Murray-Smith, Box 98A, G.P.O., Melbourne C-1, Australia. For the first book with this imprint, see SOME ITEMS RECEIVED. Another new 1958 press is to be PACIFICA (William J. Margolis, of THE MISCELLANEOUS MAN). Meanwhile, THE CAXTON PRESS, Ohio (not CAXTON PRINTERS, Idaho) has ceased; and a dissolution of partnership has rendered the future of ex tempore press uncertain.

As usual, the Pacific Coast news is heaviest, including a blunt (20th February) 'guilty' decision in the experimental films prosecution involving Kenneth Patchen's PLAGUE SUMMER. This brings to focus further radio panel discussions of the non-pornographic nature of any art which is art, and the moot definition of that vague subjective adjective 'obscene'. Notably, one being planned for the new SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PACIFICA FOUNDATION station, to be in operation by summer. Patchen's memorable and fascinating Los Angeles readings with THE CHAMBER JAZZ SEXTET had an extended winter run, demonstrating how poetry can become great theatre when blended vividly with music. Others read their poetry with jazz accompaniments at COSMO ALLEY, Los Angeles, while the POETRY LOS ANGELES committee inaugurated a new series of 'straight' readings.

Linked with the above and providing a fitly-relevant illustration of book-publishing difficulties which have helped shift emphasis to oral renditions, is announcement that Patchen's *POEMSCAPES* (JONATHAN WILLIAMS, \$1.75) at last becomes available after three years. And the letter from Mr Williams, announcing this and numerous other books, carries ironical observations on a book of the type which does get speedily into type and circulation, to the damage, many seem to believe, of increasing poetry audiences: 'Perhaps the simplest thing for everybody is, to buy a copy of the Messrs Hall, Pack & Simpson's *NEW POETS OF ENGLAND AND AMERICA* to put on the cocktail table under the poorly framed Klee print. They are all there, albeit, as Rexroth says: "Ninety-nine percent of them don't even exist but are androids manufactured from moulds, cast from Randall Jarrell by the lost wax process."' "

Sir Herbert Read's new volume of essays, *THE TENTH MUSE*, just became available in the U.S.A. (HORIZON PRESS, \$4.50). Also now out in this country (UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS, \$6) is John Hamilton Edwards' and William Vasse, Jr's *ANNOTATED INDEX TO THE CANTOS OF EZRA POUND*.

Late publications of direct interest to those following the creativities of this mid-century are: *TOO GREAT A VINE*, Austin Clarke (THE BRIDGE PRESS, 6/-); *YOUNG MALATESTA*, Horatio Colony (RICHARD R. SMITH, INC., Top Side, West Ridge, N.H., U.S.A., \$2.50); *THE MARCHES*, Cid Corman (ORIGIN PRESS, \$1); *STANCES AND DISTANCES*, Corman (CONTACT PRESS, \$1); *GASOLINE*, Gregory Corso (CITY LIGHTS, 95c.); *NO LIGHT EVADED*, Lisa Grenelle (GOLDEN QUILL, \$2.50); *THE CARNAL AND THE CRANE*, Daryl Hine (CONTACT, \$1.50); *FROST IN THE SUN*, D. G. Jones (CONTACT, \$1.50); *ANOTHER SEPTEMBER*, Thomas Kinsella (THE DOLMEN PRESS, 10/6); *SUMMER UNBOUND AND OTHER POEMS*, E. L. Mayo (U. OF MINNESOTA PRESS, \$2.50); *POEMS*, David Melzer and Donald Schenker (Privately: Donald

and Alice Schenker, 1017 De Haro St., San Francisco, Calif., U.S.A., unpriced); THE RED NOTEBOOK, Henry Miller (facsimile edition of Air-Conditioned-Nightmare Days — JONATHAN WILLIAMS, \$2.50).

Also received, but not reviewed with other ITEMS was a collection of poems done in a Japanese concentration camp during War II by an Australian, P. Brian Cox. Of personal interest, because the Editor read the ms. years ago, and of special illustrative relevance because, after all this time, this

THE PAINTER AND SCULPTOR

Editor Patrick Hayman

A JOURNAL OF THE VISUAL ARTS

THE PAINTER AND SCULPTOR is the name of a new quarterly magazine dedicated to the visual arts. The idea in starting such a journal at this time is to provide a platform, which has been too long lacking in England, for the serious discussion of painting and sculpture, and to some degree films and architecture. Good 'little' magazines of literature and poetry are still in existence in this country, but there is nothing comparable on painting and sculpture. THE PAINTER AND SCULPTOR will, it is hoped, fill this gap and prove to be a worth while and original magazine — not a glossy one, not one with reviews of current shows, but one with original and serious (though not solemn) articles on mainly contemporary themes.

Early numbers will include essays by the following writers: Ronald Alley, Lawrence Alloway, Lindsay Anderson, Alan Bowness, Roger Coleman, John Dalton, Andrew Forge, Patrick Heron, John Heyer, Paul Hodin, Colin MacInnes, Robert Melville, Lionel Miskin, Kathleen Raine, John Read, Joseph Rickwert, David Sylvester, Stefan Themerson, David Thomas and Hubert Witherford.

Artists on whom articles will appear in early numbers include the following: Kenneth Armitage, Prunella Clough, Cecil Collins, Sam Francis, Adrian Heath, Paul Jenkins, Mary Jewells, Oskar Kokoschka, Peter Lanyon, L. S. Lowry, Edward Munch, Sidney Nolan, Eduardo Paolozzi, Cynthia Pell, Jack Smith, F.N.Souza, Elspeth Spottiswoode, Franciszka Themerson and Alfred Wallis.

THE PAINTER AND SCULPTOR is published quarterly. A year's subscription costs 11s. 4d. post free, \$2.00 in the U.S.A.

Single copies 2s. 10d., 50 cents post free in the U.S.A.

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