

A CHRONICLE OF LIVING LITERATURE

PERIODICAL GUIDE TO MODERN WRITING
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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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DYLAN THOMAS AND WALES MAGAZINE

by David Clay Jenkins

WALES was a rather 'explosive' little magazine published and edited by Keidrych Rhys in Llangadock, a small town in the neighborhood of Llanybri, Wales — perhaps more familiar to Thomas's readers as the 'Fern Hill' country. It ran through eleven issues from May, 1937, until the Winter Issue of 1939-40, when publications ceased because of a paper shortage brought on by the War. In 1943, Rhys was able to resume publication, this time with a quarterly which was more appealing to the general rather than the literary reader, and which was more tame than its predecessor (usually known as the 'earlier WALES'). Issues appeared — somewhat irregularly — until publication was suspended for good in 1949.

At a time when his reputation was still being established, Thomas contributed twelve varied pieces to this magazine; and it is interesting to note the part played in this concerted effort by this poet, whose poems have become so firmly established since that time in the literary canon of the Twentieth Century. We see him in his more cherubic character among the peers above whom he had not yet soared; some of the problems faced by this young 'Anglo-Welsh' group are more clearly defined.

Keidrych Rhys made a statement of policy for himself and his contributors in one of the early issues which made the claim that the magazine was 'primarily cultural — in the broadest sense . . .' He pointed out: 'We want to make them [the English] aware of Welsh differences and virtues. English is the only medium in which this can be done.' This last

statement was not so clearly a matter of fact at the time it was written as it may seem now. One might try substituting the following phrases and offer this purpose equally with the one just stated: 'We want to make them (the Welsh) aware of Anglo-Welsh differences and virtues. English is the only medium in which some of us can do this.'

At the time when WALES was being organised, the country was one of some two-and-one-half million inhabitants; one third of these inhabitants were militant speakers of Welsh, although nine out of ten of these also spoke English. Although the majority of Welshmen spoke English, the Welsh Nationalist Party (begun in 1926) was experiencing its strongest influence at this time; in addition, there was in existence a flourishing Welsh literature of the past and a strong surge of literary activity in Welsh, spear-headed by Saunders Lewis, the founder of the Nationalist Party. Although he was born in Liverpool, Lewis turned wholly to Welsh for his literary expression; even today, critics of Welsh literature equate his verse drama with that of T. S. Eliot. The manifesto of Plaid Cymru (Welsh Nationalist Party), of which Lewis has always been the undisputed head, stated:

We must release Wales from the grip of the English. We can aim at nothing less than to do away with the English language in Wales . . . We must blot it out of our land. Delenda est Carthago.

What a predicament for a Welshman such as Dylan Thomas, who spoke and wrote only English from birth and who 'had no Welsh!' Although the audience for those writing in Welsh was a Welsh elite, Welsh was not a commercially-practical medium, since the Welsh audience was relatively small. It is understandable that the Nationalists, however, should consider Welshmen writing in English as 'turncoats'. 'Anglo-Welsh' was an unpopular word. Lewis, in effect, took away Thomas's birthright when he wrote in 1938: 'Mr Dylan Thomas is obviously an

equipped writer, but there is nothing hyphenated about him. He belongs to the English.' It was the same year (1938) that Saunders Lewis and two other ardent Welsh Nationalists burnt the aerodrome at Penrhos, in order to demonstrate their anti-English feelings. After they had surrendered themselves to the local constable, they refused to speak a word of English in their defense—with the embittering result that they were shipped off to England for trial and subsequently given one-year prison terms. Keidrych Rhys's effort to found WALES at this time was something of an effort at 'peace-weaving'; Rhys and his group were to act as literary ambassadors to the English-speaking world. While demonstrating their Welsh sympathies, they could at the same time write in the language (English) to which they were accustomed.

On the authority of Glyn Jones, one of the contributors to the 'earlier WALES', it was Rhys who had the initiative in the publishing and editing of the magazine. Rhys at this time was known to Thomas and Watkins and others of the Anglo-Welsh writers who had their center in Swansea. Welsh Nationalism and Welsh language had more natural surroundings in rural North Wales; Swansea was a large industrial town in the south-west.

Born in Swansea, Dylan Thomas had attended Swansea Grammar School, and after leaving in 1931, he had worked as a reporter for the SOUTH WALES EVENING POST from 1931 to 1932. In 1933, he had made the abortive move to London which is fictionally reflected in the story ADVENTURES IN THE SKIN TRADE. The SUNDAY REFEREE had published his EIGHTEEN POEMS in December, 1934; these poems had appeared previously in magazines such as Geoffrey Grigson's NEW VERSE, the NEW ENGLISH WEEKLY, and other small magazines. Edith Sitwell had boldly remarked about Thomas's poetry in the SUNDAY TIMES:

... A new poet has arisen who shows every promise of greatness. His work is on a huge scale both in theme and structurally and the form of many of the poems is superb.

When Keidrych Rhys launched WALES in 1936, Thomas was in Laugharne busy gathering together the poems which he would publish in that year as TWENTY-FIVE POEMS. From the letters of Thomas to Vernon Watkins, we have the picture of Thomas himself soliciting poetry contributions for consideration by the editor and himself. Two of the poems he had collected were those by his friend Watkins. In submitting the copy to the editor, Thomas had mistakenly turned in a text of the Watkins poems on which he (Dylan) had made suggestions for certain changes. When the first issue came out with the poems printed in the changed versions, Watkins responded by sending Dylan a letter which began with a curse; and he had previously gone to the trouble of altering every copy of the magazine on the stands in a bookshop in Swansea.

When the first issue of WALES appeared, Thomas seems to have been living temporarily in Cornwall; in the letters to Watkins, we get the rather touching picture of the penniless (even stampless) young poet, playing Monopoly (which he spoke of as having ‘a serious subversive charm’), writing to Watkins to apologise for the mistake. At the end of the letter, he touchingly informs Watkins of his news—that he has been married to Caitlin MacNamarra at the Cornish Registry Office. ‘She looks like a stage Wendy or the fairy on top of the Christmas tree — but you needn’t tell her that I said so . . .’

In a letter dated 15th July, 1937, he comments to his friend on the new magazine which he had helped through its birth pangs:

Yes, I thought ‘Wales’ was good, too. I had actually very little myself to do with the editing though when Keidrych goes up to Cambridge next year I shall probably—and with

you as colleague, or whatever it is, if you'd be—take it over.

Thomas's contribution to the first issue of WALES, PROLOGUE TO AN ADVENTURE, was begun on the cover in a box to the left of and below the title of the magazine.

As I walked through the wilderness of this world, as I walked through the wilderness, as I walked through the city with the loud electric faces and the crowded petrols . .

This poetic prose with Bunyanesque overtones and satire of modern industrialism was an appropriate overture for the particular adventure of the magazine which was to become known for its efforts to shock the bourgeois. It was destined to oppose almost all established authority and institutions—the government, the English, the Church, the Chapel, THE WESTERN MAIL (the Kemsley chain newspaper published in Cardiff), the upper classes, the owners of industries, and the 'etceteras' of Welsh local colour. (Richard Llewellyn's HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY was referred to in one issue as 'the work of a Bloomsbury hack').

In the second issue of WALES, the editor typically called for money to support publication:

What do we want to do? Without money, it is hard to answer. If we are given a reasonable chance we hope to print work by our younger writers — an opportunity denied them in the English Literary Map of log-rolling, cocktail parties, book clubs, knighthoods, O.M.'s and superannuated effeminacy in Bloomsbury editorial chairs . . . We ask for support if we are to survive.

The magazine seemed to line itself up with the Republican cause in the Spanish Revolution, the Welsh and Scots Nationalist Movements, and — strangely enough — pacifism. WALES No. 2 carried the following slogan in bold type on the back cover :

26% of Welshmen Unemployed BREAD IS DEARER ENGLAND
SPENDS £1,500 million on WAR

T. S. Eliot in the *CRITERION* remarked about this issue: 'Wales is a more deliberately regional organ, pulsating with good, young, red blood.' (April 1938). True to its name, *WALES* was about Wales. It offered a place for publication for young Anglo-Welsh writers such as Glyn Jones, Vernon Watkins, Alun Lewis, and Dylan Thomas; generally speaking, it was read by Welsh and English intellectuals interested in the country and in good writing. Certainly, it contributed to the awareness both inside Wales and out, that something literary and interesting was going on.

Dylan Thomas and Keidrych Rhys are listed as co-editors of the March, 1939 issue. After this issue, Nigel Heseltine took over the editorship for several numbers, until publication was suspended due to the War and the paper shortage which it had brought about. In 1939, Dylan Thomas was best man at the marriage of Keidrych Rhys to the poet Lynette Roberts; Dylan wore to the wedding a brown suit which he had borrowed from Vernon Watkins. The War dispersed the group—Thomas going up to London again. Rhys went into the Air Force, as did Heseltine and Vernon Watkins. Lynette Roberts attempted to continue the venture by publishing single sheets from *Llanybri—WALES WARTIME BROADSHEETS*—evidently without much success, since only one sheet was forthcoming. Keidrych Rhys resumed publication of the magazine in 1943, this time in a more restrained vein and with a different format. In an editorial, he stated: The policy of *WALES* will be a serious and responsible one toward Wales . . . The pioneer work of the old happy-go-lucky prewar *WALES* is done . . . The era of unfruitful introversion . . . is gone . . . [No. 14, July, 1943] The seriousness did not sit so well on the shoulders of the no-longer happy-go-lucky editor. The later more sombre journal went through eighteen numbers—designated fourteen through thirty-one—until publication was suspended for good in 1949. In a letter to Watkins in 1944,

Thomas had remarked indicatively: 'Keidrych is living in Llanybri again but I don't see him much.' Thomas's contacts with the editor in the last few years of publication were probably just as occasional as the few pieces by him which appear in the magazine. In 1953, the public accountants Ashmole, Edwards, and Goskar of Carmarthen (near Llanybri) announced that the publishing corporation responsible for WALES—DRUID PRESS—was being 'wound up'. Scanning the list of Thomas's contributions to the magazine, one can see that even the early material which appeared was not always the best material he had written. In the first numbers of WALES, many of the items appeared in print for the first time; but Thomas was also publishing concurrently in other magazines—giving preference seemingly to those markets which paid the most and which had the larger circulation—

**HORIZON, NEW VERSE, POETRY
(CHICAGO). CONTRIBUTIONS OF
THOMAS WHICH APPEAR IN THE
LATER WALES WERE FUGITIVE
PIECES PROBABLY SUBMITTED SIMPLY
FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE.**

Little magazines — like human beings — are born, flourish, and die: in this respect, WALES is no exception. Its decline was due to the fact that the 'younger' Anglo-Welsh writers no longer needed this platform for expression; they were being printed in other journals. In addition, the urgency of the Welsh Nationalist movement had diminished with the passage of time; even such a fiery nationalist as Saunders Lewis could acknowledge consanguinity with Thomas and the Anglo-Welsh writers. In 1953, Saunders Lewis said about Thomas in an appreciation over the B.B.C.:

We have lost the most splendid English-speaking child Wales has produced for centuries, and at a time when he had an abundance of plans for the future. Let perpetual light shine upon him.

The work of Thomas and his contemporary Anglo-Welsh writers, as seen in WALES and in other places, make it impossible for either the English- or the Welsh-speaking Welsh to consider these writers in the old way. And although WALES is a closed chapter in literary history, it continues to reflect the attitudes of the Anglo-Welsh at a crucial time in their fight for recognition. And in any frame of reference, the 'earlier WALES' will remain a byword for the explosive, red-blooded, regional magazine.

* * *

One of the few full runs of WALES in the United States will be found in the Lockwood Memorial Library, Buffalo, New York.

The list of Thomas's contributions to WALES was derived by a search of the magazine itself. Items marked with an asterisk next the Arabic numeral entry were found not to have been entered in the W. H. Huff bibliography attached to the Olson, POETRY OF DYLAN THOMAS (Chicago, 1954). The list has been checked against the contents of the J. A. Rolph DYLAN THOMAS: A Bibliography (London, 1956). The letters and numerals which appear in brackets at the close of many of the entries refer to the section in Rolph where full bibliographical information on the entry may be found. Rolph did not attempt to enter each separate publication of a piece

of writing; he entered a publication when the item was being printed in the magazine or book for the first time, and subsequently when a substantial change took place in the form or content of the piece. It will be noticed that items No. 2 and No. 12 are not entered by Rolph.

A LIST OF DYLAN THOMAS'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO WALES

1. PROLOGUE TO AN ADVENTURE, No. 1 (summer, 1937), 1-6. First appearance. Poetic prose. Rptd. in *THE WORLD I BREATHE* and *ADVENTURES IN THE SKIN TRADE* (American edition). [C.93].

*2. WE LYING BY SEASAND, No. 3 (autumn, 1937), 82. Poem. Appeared first in *POETRY* (Chicago), January, 1937.

3. THE MAP OF LOVE, No. 3 (autumn, 1937), 116-23. Story. First appearance. [C.94].

*4. POEM (The spire cranes . . .), No. 4 (March, 1938), 138. First appearance. Later published in *THE MAP OF LOVE*. [A.63].

5. IN THE DIRECTION OF THE BEGINNING (fragment of a work in progress), No. 4 (March, 1938), 147-148. First appearance. [C.97].

*6. POEM (For Caitlin), No. 5 (summer, 1938), 179-81. ('I make this in a warring absence when . . .') First appeared in *TWENTIETH CENTURY VERSE*, Jan.-Feb., 1938. [A.62; C.102].

*7. POEM ('On no work of words . . .'), No. 6/7 (March, 1939), 196. First appearance. [A.74; C.118].

*8. POEM ('Once it was the colour of saying . . .'), No. 6/7 (March, 1939), 196. First appearance. [A.75].

*9. JUST LIKE LITTLE DOGS, No. 10 (October, 1939), 255-64. Story. First appearance. [C.127].

10. OUR COUNTRY, No. 15 (October, 1943), 76-78. Commentary for two reels of a five-reel film produced for Strand Film Co. First printed version. [C.144].

11. QUITE EARLY ONE MORNING, No. 23 (autumn, 1946), 83-86. First printed version; broadcast originally over B.B.C. in 1945. [C.144].

12. MEMORIES OF CHRISTMAS, No. 24 (December, winter, 1946), 10-14. Read by Thomas, December 16, 1945, on a

B.B.C. programme and printed in the LISTENER, December 20, 1945. The WALES version is considerably different from later revisions. Dylan Thomas and Keidrych Rhys are listed as co-editors of WALES No. 6/7, March, 1939.

TOWARDS PRINT

by Gil Orlovitz

(The Stranger's Mirror)

FOR TWO WEEKS RUNNING, a news magazine of portentous circulation discovers major novelists, through its book-review section. The tote of Parnassian creators both discovered and declared, by this same periodical, would tax the twilight of the gods. A daily, somewhat more august in its Sunday literary foraging, lavishes a fat fatherly hand at least each fortnight on the sudden materialisation of belles-lettres genius; also — it accommodates critics of transcendentalist memory who are ravished exclusively by the New England literary barons, to which one is admissible only by ribald familiarity with Latin and Greek, and the torture of the banality of being witty in one's native tongue so that one may cross multilingual bons mots.

Another glossy yields half a page to the precious petites of a child poetess who, if she does not render Bach on the harp over the figured bass of long-settled family estates, gains entry by having composed in a French provincial town, where one must watch her carefully for the ghosts of Ronsard, Rimbaud, and Jammes. (Especially Jammes.) In one of the more arcane Reviews, in which one may be treated now and again to the grand-mal treatises of the Revolutionary Right, a critic regularly indulges in literary necrophilia, bestowing with resigned lamentations laurels on the uncaptiously dead.

Nevertheless, if a living poet or novelist exposes a chiasma labelled the Anglican Church, Agrarian Economy for the American South, Documented Bias Against Negro and Jew, and—Rational Royalty, he may be hailed a reborn luminary of the Aristocratic Order. Too, the rich harvest of

the Beat Generation will attract congruent exponents of a kind of carrion mystique, in which automatic writing and the mentation of self-seance are extended. On the other hand, an urbane bullyboy for the Purist Faith excoriates a novelist for high crimes against grammar, this protector of syntactical morals steadfast in his stupor outside the philosophy of language and the existence of the spoken word, divinely convinced that English is administered by a condominium of lexicographers and University Unitarians, to take arms against the Troglodytes.

We may go on, if we will, to behold yet another critic dredging up the emergence of a New Method of the Novel Form: he will pontificate the General Theory of Relativity pertinent, without, of course, alluding to Browning's *THE RING AND THE BOOK*, to at least half the work of Pirandello, to the later pieces of Strindberg, and the more recent *MEN OF GOOD WILL*; and he will dismiss *FINNEGANS' WAKE*, because a critic of properly Bramble-League origin regretfully, some time ago, kissed off that slight piece as an unfortunate failure. On another page, if we turn, these polished fatuities are burnished by a reviewer deploring that too many great writers are described *ex post facto*; this category of specious guilt appears about once a month, roughly consonant with the usual baying at the moon. If all else fails, the magazine will detail a critic to make a blood-count of the number of writers wheeling about to encase their products in conventional novel-form structure this year, so that readers can rest content in the knowledge that, while the Content of American (or European, or Asiatic, or African) Life may be waterlogged, the Structure, thank our critical gods, is in dry hands.

These are not, surely rare examples of aesthetic assessment; any by-now arthritic Diogenes can supply choice multiples of his own. The three reasons for the proliferation of these gargantuan goofs from the time of

Aristotle to our goateed contemporaries (tragedy, tragedy!) are very clear. Two belong to the critics: stupidity and fraud. The third belongs to the public: its ineptitude at articulating against the stupidity and fraud imposed on it.

The stupidity need hardly be demonstrated. It is suitable game for a phony quiz-show m.c. to inquire of a contestant that he name a dozen instances in which critics have been unable to detect talent in given literary works when they appeared; and the obverse — a gross of examples in which they have assigned sublime elements to works later conceded to be the most soporific of trivia.

The fraud is perhaps more fascinating. In an effort to engender an intellectual profession which would require the least effort for the university man's survival, or a marginal method of augmenting income, the word-panderer in various civilisations devised canons and codes which said, in effect: 'By these lights shall a true work of art be known.' Such canons got Gide to flick Proust aside; MOBY DICK shrugged off; Teleman adjudged the superior of Beethoven. The proof of the fraud lies in the fact that not a single contemporary critic, during the course of a dissertation on new literary work, discusses at ruthless length the simple and compounded errors of his predecessors together with his own. Nor did any critic do so in the past. They could not then and cannot now admit the fundament of subjective rationalisations from which they emit their decrees. Certainly, stupidity and fraud make for circulation, profit, and ego. And the public, for the moment inept at articulating against the stupidity and fraud, reject or buy at the sign of the critical wands. The public, then as now, could not know that the severe and exhaustive intellection and creativity which go into the making of a valid work of art have never to any extent been paralleled by the making of a work of so-called criticism; and that it is for precisely this reason that the ancient criterion of time passing remains the sole

arbiter as to whether or no there has been the event of a work of art.

A radical therapy is available. We propose, no matter the rampant confusion which may initiate it, that critics content themselves with the simple description of the works they are handed to review. This, of course, may involve some years of preparatory instruction which the student critic should be happy to undergo. For example, with a book of poems, the reviewer should be competent to recognise the various forms utilised, not how, if he will be so good, because he must grant immediately that he knows only how a poet in the past used them. He should note the influences, but never render judgment on their absorption, function, or seminality. He should go on to report the subject matter, but at no time opine it condign or no. And, at last, he should tell us about the presence or absence of metaphor, sound, and rhythm, but refrain from commentary, and yield to the prospective buyer of the book.

In the case of a novel, similar steps should be taken. Is there a story? Good. What sort? Is it told circularly or in the form of a rhomboid? Again, he will hold back from declaring it tenacious or tedious, since a newspaperman assigned to cover, for example, a meeting of foreign ministers, is not paid to inform us about his boredom or entrancement. Should not comparable journalism be exacted for news stories on the appearance of fiction? Was the plotting intricate or unencumbered? — not: was it successful or no? Was the motivation implied or explicit? The style complex or simple? We will assume that the reviewer by now will be privy to the remainder of the components.

There will be the rejoinder that that state of aesthetic affairs will throw the field open to the blandishments of the ad men. One can only retort that the situation would improve, at the very least, by virtue of the fact that the forestation of excerpts from reviewers, by which the

advertisements are hallowed, would instantly vanish. Imagine the purity and peace which must ensue when the consumer will cast relieved eyes upon the commercial pitches no longer sullied by such as: 'Powerful indictment', 'Supple insights', 'Sensuous reconnoitring in the field of love', 'Not since Balzac', 'Putrid but prescient', 'Guileless Gehenna of the unwary lucidly limned', 'A lyric avowel of very nearly Whitmanesque proportions', 'A subtle appraisal of pre-Freudian perception in a matrix of shifting focus which stamps the author as possibly the sole heir to the Jamesian — zoologically speaking — imago! Undergoing this purification, it is barely possible that the mediocre mind of the critic will find its equitably operable level, and no longer seek to project its limitations, limitations which have quite logically celebrated the exhibition of the mediocre in novels and poems. What more splendid security than to find a stranger's mirror reflecting without flaw one's own uncriticalness — and just as logically condemned, vilified, and truncheoned the exhibition of the original and the unique? What greater horror than to behold in a stranger's mirror one's runtish stature?

EDITORS WRITE

Joseph Joel Keith (formerly, Borestone Mt. Awards):

I was interested also to see your statement about Karl Shapiro: his letter to POETRY, in which he was critical of the giving away of mss. While championing the causes of poets, he might have gone a bit further: explained why the quarterly which he edits, PRAIRIE SCHOONER, does not pay one penny to contributors, while other university press periodicals do pay poets. SOUTHWEST REVIEW, for instance, and THE COLORADO QUARTERLY. The latter did not pay in the beginning, but it does so now. And other magazines in the quality group, such as MODERN AGE, pay \$25 per poem. I don't think payment is based on circulation—do you?

I've helped the causes of poets a bit; I wonder if others have interested themselves in the problems of their fellow writers. When I placed a pair of poems with a monthly magazine and received less for the two than for one previously published, I sent a polite note of inquiry. I sent it to the poetry editor, not to the publisher. The magazine now pays a larger price for each poem. And I wrote the literary editor of a national weekly—not, God forbid, SEP or LHJ! I said politely that \$5 per poem seemed not sufficient for such a journal, the literary editor replied: "I agree fully that our rates could well be increased, particularly when a poem is of some length. Our Editor-in-Chief is away at present, but upon his return I intend to take up this matter with him . . . I do agree that we might do something with our poetry reimbursements." I wonder if Karl Shapiro has ever gone into action with the powers-that-be behind PRAIRIE SCHOONER?

Charles Bukowski (former editor of Harlequin):

‘. . . In this rifacimento are we deliberately manufacturing a lozenge that the public will swallow? Who is the poet that will dance before the serried mob? Jazz should not hold hands with poetry. Jazz can be vital, stimulating. It may be folklore and it may be ingested—at times—into art, but jazz is not a proper art.’

Jazz is beat, jazz is surface, jazz is suggestive of sexual rhythms and the act; jazz is congo, jazz is good, jazz is bad; but jazz, for all its claims is thin and confined and tenuous—it borrows tricks from the classics, but it never learns. Poetry? Poetry is good and bad and great—most of it bad—and going to bed with jazz is not going to produce strong children.

‘All right, you get an audience. But is it an intellectual audience or a gang out “for kicks”? And who is getting kicked? What eremite, what Ivory-Tower personage is going to sing their tune as the very nereids drown? It would seem to me that a poet who would put himself into this position must be somewhat the actor and extrovert, and more or less hungry for immediate acclaim: the applause of those close enough to give him the warmth of being recognised as at least alive, whether or not they perceive any of the concepts he may still retain after levelling his work to suit their genre.

I am not reading-down poetry audiences—I am reading-up poetry. When poetry becomes popular enough to fill cabarets and music halls, then something is wrong with that poetry or with that audience. Either the audience looks upon that poet as a freak, a clown jiggling to jazz, a moment to be remembered as something-odd-between-drinks, or that poet is deliberately reading down to that audience in order to captivate it. We deserve the bearded vulture for sitting with the croupier, and two or five or ten years from now, when we look back upon ourselves for taking the bait, those who are now in most luciduous crowing, I’m sure will then be most

inarticulate in phrasing their contribution to prostitutions and the gelding of the muse.'

Archie Rosenhouse (one non-editor):

'About the beat generation: It is a misnomer. It comprises only a fringe of a fringe of the generation, and only the minor half even of that. The Beats are a strictly masculine phenomenon. The women are merely 'chicks' to be used in the entertainment of their sex, and I pity them. When their time to cry will come, there will be none to care or wipe the tears from their pretty faces.'

'The authors who changed the beats from a social problem to a social order have done a disservice to both society and the beats themselves. The old nihilists were, personally, idealists. In Gorky's LOWER DEPTHS, people think and feel in terms of belonging to the human race. These beats are delinquents; decadents, without an iota of positivism about them. They are headed for the penitentiary, hospital, madhouse . . .'

Donald Factor (nomad)

NOMAD was brought into being to accomplish one sole purpose—to provide a place for new literary talent, and one for established writers with something new to say to be seen. This raises our primary problem. Since NOMAD has no reason to exist, other than to publish work of literary merit, it cannot exist without this work. Obtaining the quality of work that NOMAD needs to live is of course difficult. A little magazine, and NOMAD is no exception, cannot at first pay its contributors in anything more than contributor-copies. But writers must eat, or they must at least dream of one day living from their writing. Poetry gives us less trouble in this respect (and I am speaking now only from an editor's viewpoint). Most poets know that few meals can be obtained from poetry. The writers of prose are sure that some day their work will be recognised by the paying publishers.

NOMAD, though, can offer these writers something immediately. It is an eclectic magazine; and as such, it contains a wider variety of work than those publications with specific axes to grind. Thus, it has a potentially larger audience than those magazines whose editorial policies are more restrictive. Of course, editorial bias is always a factor. We have tried to overcome this in NOMAD by printing what we feel is the best of the various schools. We do, though, stress the modern—as we are interested in today and, we hope, tomorrow. One other point that writers contributing to a little magazine should remember is that no work can be reprinted in the anthologies if it is not first printed and read somewhere. A truism; but often forgotten.

NOMAD does not demand greatness. This would be unrealistic. What we do demand is depth, purpose, sincerity, and — of course — talent. We demand literature. I make this last point to stress that we are not interested in politics, nor are we interested in morality as such, unless these things are transcended by art. . . . The nomad travels endlessly

searching for fresh pastures. He will often cross the same paths many times; but that which is green, that which is alive, is his primary concern. Thus: the NOMAD.

Felix Singer (once, briefly, with Miscellaneous Man):

OPEN LETTER : TO MAN WANTING HELP WITH MODERN POETRY.

Dear Mr W.: You're quoted in TRACE No. 29 as "one relatively new to modern poetry" and interested in some explication, and sorry that there are no books on the subject.

Happens there are a few fairly good books; but never mind them. They won't help you much. Nothing and nobody will. You have to help yourself. "Take, don't receive," Henri told his pupils.

I'm "relatively new", too, though I've written poetry for maybe twelve years, some of it "modern". e. e. cummings was writing the stuff before I was born, but he is "relatively new", too. With art, as with women, if you ever get so you really know, look out! — you are dying on your feet and don't know it.

Doing things like the following might perhaps give you the feel of modern poetry :

‘1. Talk into a tape recorder while drunk or after taking some mild narcotic. Listen to yourself afterwards; copy and punctuate what you said; ask yourself why your belowthreshold consciousness said it that way; ask others how they feel about what you said.

‘2. Take one universally familiar source — the Bible/Shakespeare — and one newspaper or one advertising leaflet and mix well. Juxtaposition and contrast are among the chief devices of much modern poetry. How would the Song of Solomon sound in brassiere-advertisement language? How would a Hearst editorial sound in Miltonian blank verse? How would Eisenhower platitudinise the Sermon on the Mount?

‘3. Study headlines. Extreme condensation is used in most headlines and in much modern poetry. I once wrote a poem : "bach will bop that lollypop cop / or it's t.s. for j.s."

But this, I meant, approximately : “Those forces, disciplines and states of minds that may be symbolised by the art of J. S. Bach, will, in time, but in a rather casual fashion, overwhelm the forces of ignorance, crudity, childish hedonism, and authoritarianism ; or otherwise art and mind will be eradicated, and that, by people expressing only bogus regret for eradication.” And VARIETY’s famous STIX NIX HIX PIX meant approximately : “Motion picture theatres in rural U.S. communities are refusing to rent motion pictures dealing with rural life or characters.” Ask yourself why is it, how is it that a man’s fifteen-word telegram that he is arriving on this train and at that time seems to suggest to you (is it choice of words? arrangement? what? couldn’t be punctuation) that he is very tired and discouraged?

‘4. Listen to music, of course. Try Schoenberg’s experiments in which the human voice is used as a sort of musical instrument. Or Duke Ellington’s. Just listen.

‘5. Listen to the rhythms of children chanting, repeating the same meaningless sounds over and over. Which sounds when, how, why? Listen to foreigners grabbing for English words . . . sounds of people in pain or under stress, verbalising wordless emotion. And to curses. I never will forget one magnificent curse (worthy of Shakespeare, I do believe) an otherwise-undistinguished soldier once hurled at me. All sorts of fascinating things about my ancestry and sexual habits, which he did not remotely mean ; but eight magnificent cursing sounds (four K sounds, three Gs, four Bs, one P—no strong Ms, no Ls, no long Is). We all talk modern poetry all the time, without being aware of it.

‘Thus, like the man said, by indirections find directions out. The best way is always patient, spontaneous-intense reading of the poet. And re-reading.

‘But as long as one remains any good at this sort of thing, one remains “relatively new.”’

Carol Ely Harper (EXPERIMENT) : EXPERIMENT PRESS, which also publishes the magazine, is looking for oneminute religious drama, brief poetic plays, on religious themes, for publication in a book collection in 1959. (Adaptations from the Bible are welcome.)

'This is one of a series of book collections of these oneminute plays, also called chamber dramas. The volumes will be under the general title, EXPERIMENT THEATRE, plays in verse for production in "at homes" or arena style. We have our first volume of these plays already at press . . . This is a book of non-religious plays, and includes dance drama in the one-minute play form. It is catalogued and will be distributed (sold) by Alan Swallow, Publisher, and member of our Experiment Group. . . . In addition to the magazine, we have a number of books coming out this year, by members. . . . We particularly would like to see religious one-minute plays at the moment—also children's plays and dance drama—but all one-minute plays are welcome for consideration for future book collections.'

E. V. Griffith : HEARSE, with its subtitle, "A Vehicle Used to Convey the Dead", seems a logical magazine to follow in the wake of the fallen and carry out the commitments they left behind on the dying. . . . What we have in mind is, we think, a fair and honourable trade : i.e., when a publication folds, we will send HEARSE to all of that publication's subscribers whose subscriptions still have issues owing after the suspension—in exchange for the use of the suspended publication's subscription lists, past or present.

'We are aware that there would be certain duplications with our own subscriber lists ; but we would let the same extension apply through added issues of HEARSE. This arrangement of "death with honor" would cost the suspending publication nothing whatever; and we are convinced that our own costs would be absorbed in the long run.'

David Lyle (on behalf of NEWSPAPER, Special Issue No. 6, devoted to TO THE END OF THOUGHT, by Jack Jones): 'Whitman called it the "all feeling", Freud, the "Oceanic Feeling", James, "The moment of pure experience", Ankar Larsen, "the openings where the policemen of time and space loosen their chains."

'Jones makes it appear on the large scale as "drift", on the small scale (in H. G. Wells quote) . . . drift becomes a "rushing".'

'Combine all of the above from the Jones Quoted Name, Physiologist Sir Charles Sherrington. All the above are commonly unitary in form to Sherrington's "Main act of attention, in which the mind can even DRAIN OFF part of the mind into itself."

"Drain", as a distinction between zero-ing drift, and making a scale for "rushing", necessarily calls for creation of a common formal element, as in the distinction between petty and grand larceny, or the specific zero-ing in from which the decibel scale begins.'

"DRAIN" is simply the old writer's device of synesthesia, the Shakespearian "to HEAR with the EYES of love's fine wit", hence . . . calls for . . . use of what Langer calls "The most powerful INSTRUMENT known to man, ABSTRACTION".'

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BY FRASER DREW

WHAT CYPHER-SCRIPT OF TIME . . .

OF HART CRANE . . . A MEMORY

EIGHT floors up from Gramercy Park, I turned sleeplessly in my bed. Then I switched on the light and took my watch from the chair. Three o'clock, it said. Fully awake, but moving like a sleepwalker, I got up and began to dress. It was a crazy hour to go out, but there was no hesitation in my mind. I turned out the light again, locked my door, and took the unquestioning elevator to the lobby, walked through a quiet lobby to a quiet street. A cab cruised close, and I told the cabman: 'Brooklyn Bridge.'

At the entrance to the Bridge, he stopped, and I paid my fare and stepped out. I walked out onto the Bridge as deliberately as to a summons and found it empty, with only the winking of the tail lights of another cab at the far end of the span. The lines of a poem I had loved and partly understood came flooding into my mind.

Again the traffic lights that skim thy swift Unfractioned
idiom, immaculate sight of stars, Beading thy path
— condense eternity:

There was no moon, but the stars and the lights of Manhattan and of Brooklyn blinked distantly. A little way ahead of me lay a patch of smoke, or fog, and the salt breath of the river and the harbour was in my nostrils.

O Sleepless as the river under thee, Vaulting the sea,
the prairies' dreaming sod.'

I walked perhaps a quarter of the Bridge and stopped to light a cigarette. From nowhere, a match flared and flickered to the end of my cigarette, and I offered the pack to the man who stood beside me. He was of my height and build,

bareheaded but wearing the trousers and pea-jacket of a sailor. His face was sharply familiar in the flare of the second match. We walked in silence, perhaps another quarter of the Bridge, before he said :

‘Under thy shadow by the piers I waited;
Only in darkness is thy shadow clear.’

The voice was curiously flat, and the breath of the harbour blew closer, cold now as we passed through the little patch of fog.

When I took another cigarette from my pack, there was no proffered match. The sailor was gone, and I took the flame from my lighter with a surprisingly steady hand. I walked to the Brooklyn side and back, with no company now but the passing of an occasional cab. Before I had reached the Manhattan end of the Bridge, light had come into the east.

‘How many dawns, chill from his rippling rest
The seagull’s wings shall dip and pivot him,’

I said; but the seagull circled only once and sailed away seaward. I hailed the next cab and drove to the hotel. Back in my bed, it was as if I had never left it.

I spent the day in bookshops, and in the last one before train time, I found a copy of *THE BRIDGE*. Halfway up the Hudson, I took it from my brief-case, lighted a cigarette, and began to read. As I turned the second page, a card fell out, a postcard with a faded picture of Brooklyn Bridge. For a moment, the characteristic train smell disappeared and the tar-and-salt breath of river and harbour filled the car. I looked at the other side of the postcard where the stamp was still intact, the postmark New York, Nov. 2, 1930. The address was smudged to illegibility, but the message was clean and clear.

'Dear ——,' it read . . .

'Here at the waters' edge the hands drop memory.

H— C—'

At my elbow, a sailor paused to light a cigarette. He was
bare-headed and of my height and build. As I
replaced the

*postcard in my book, he moved down the lurching
aisle and passed, without looking back, into the
next car.*

*The quotations from the COLLECTED POEMS OF HART CRANE (1933)
are used with the permission of the LIVERIGHT PUBLISHING CORP.,
New York.*

SOME ITEMS RECEIVED

by the Editors

REMARKS on criticism, differentiated from reviews, are called forth by several recent books. And without contradicting the Associate Editor's guest feature berating reviewers who review scarcely at all, but presume to render value-judgments (often neither with training nor insights) and to elaborate benighted literary theories, or to present dubiously-relevant mishmash on quite other writings, other arts, amateur psychology, or pseudo-philosophy (see *TOWARDS PRINT*, by Gil Orlovitz). In the first place, this *ITEMS* . . . seldom ventures even condensed reviews, but merely reactions to publications the Editors wish to stimulate others to read. By coincidence, five books amongst them this time are critical or deal with criticism.

Though not to indicate full accord with all the ideas advanced, *CARDINALS & SAINTS*, Arlene Zekowski and Stanley Berne (*METIER*, \$4.75) offers the most healthfully-provocative examination of attitudes toward the arts to have reached *TRACE* in its entire seven years. Not to affirm either that the authors convincingly bring off their own syntactical innovations (endeavouring to do as they say, in advocating 'reborn' expression for every creation); yet, this book deserves careful attention. It shines with fresh flashing statements of neglected basic wisdoms. And rare humour, sword-sharp attacks, and cool lucid reasonings are here, along with — true enough — some overdone suasions and outright distortions; if only for underlining the fundamental world-old theme poetically condensed in the title — the vital distinction between the reciters of dead rituals and the living makers and movers (apologies to Harry Hooton) — the book is a jewel. In line with the authors' remark that this subject

is too large to 'choose', any comprehensive commentary on what they have nevertheless chosen to say, would prove 'colossal' (apologies to cinema blurbists). The book must be read.

Chiefly looking at poetic techniques of younger Americans, COBRAS AND COCKLE SHELLS (by Frederick Eckman — SPARROW, Vagrom Chapbook No. 5, \$1.50) quotes a Northrop Frye dictum which phrases the over-all animadversion upon this study itself, limited as it is by failure to inquire into validities of writings with relation to writers' purposes. Alleging Frye is 'arrogant', the preface notwithstandingly reveals this author's fairness of (subconscious) mind; the quotation is an intriguing confession by denial, maybe stemming from his underlying dissatisfaction with a semi-reformed 'New Critics' stance, and from regret not to have appraised these poets through direct comparisons with their exemplars.

Revealingly too, Mr Eckman addresses an 'apology' to the professional critics, about whom he should not have been speculating as he wrote. You see, the Frye sentence reads: 'The poet speaking as critic produces, not criticisms, but documents to be examined by critics.' How true! The implications hit all of us who tend to rationalise and systematise, to allay the anxieties attendant on creativity. And when this priestly urge doesn't find outlets in explications of the poet's own methods (actually afterthoughts), it seeps out in comments about others . . . fatefully disclosing that the acceptable-nonacceptable boundary lies precisely where spontaneity finally gets smothered by order.

To detail weaknesses of deductions from equivocating surface treatments through the timeworn resort to 'modes', would take much space; but, avoiding vagueness, to refer to a contrasting approach in last September's JOURNAL OF AESTHETICS, by Clyde de L. Ryals, who pointed out : 'As long

as romanticism maintained its ideals it was a positive force and a creative element ; but stripped of its ideals, it became merely a method of escape from the world, destroying the ties which bind man to the universe.' Now — note that Mr Eckman says little more about a recent work of 'howling' reputation than to observe its obviously sensational effects and the device of parallelism, suggesting that trite reproduction of an 'incantatory' quality may equate it with Whitman's best !

But Mr Eckman asserts no positive preferences among the poets themselves. Exactly the same neutral pose devitalises the pale non-criticisms from the sorts of literary morticians deservedly condemned by Mr Eckman, in his half-recanting conclusion : those rigidly lecturing on styles and those fussily cutting and prettily arranging bouquets of neat anthologies.

Of another order, is a scholarly solid perceptive study of Rainer Maria Rilke, by Frank Wood (THE RING OF FORMS, U. of MINNESOTA PRESS, \$4.75). Though based on close textual analyses, the successive 'frames' of the poet's life as he had himself illuminated them, plus well-correlated references both to his predecessors and to his contemporaries in many arts, not just literature — and socio-political influences besides — all are taken into account. Whatever the reactions to the resulting deductions, the author provides adequate insights of his route in arriving at them, and adequate materials from which dissenting readers may evolve their own theories. This also holds for the metaphoric 'ring', by which the title introduces the main structural theme. Though the ultimate importance of all studies such as this may remain debatable, at least fundamentals are probed here. For students, this book should take precedence over everything written to date, not only because it is the first comprehensive survey of Rilke, but because Dr Wood breaks down the artificial partitions others have manufactured to

make this important poet appear to have been a virtual schizophrenic in his different 'selves' during the periods of his life. The over-all unity of Rilke's production is shown, and the text itself is more organic than in most books of criticism. If there is such a thing as a worthwhile analysis, this unquestionably is one, in spite of what may be judged over-emphasis on 'post' observations of the subject's uses of language and structure. Theodore L. Shaw has risen again, attacking 'positivist' critics in a new CRITICAL QUACKERY (STUART ART GALLERY, 719 Boylston St., Boston, Mass, U.S.A. . . . \$1). But, salutary as his castigations indubitably were, back when he first merrily jangled forth with his scales for weighing degrees of boredom (the pleasure-to-fatigue principle spelled out) and his brazen quotations-out-of-context of the pundits, Mr Shaw's act is itself becoming terribly boring. More so, because it was a pretty obvious bag of tricks, at the start. Even somewhat naïve —as he declares we all must stop being about art. And— seriously—his wittily-juggled half-and three-fourth-truths score by an ancient dodge : nimble flashing frontstage movements to distract the audience from seeing that the principal's conked out. He ignores the very source of the artistic act . . . has all along (again, perhaps naïvely?) committed gross critical sin himself, and manufactured a new absolutism in the game of relativism ! His performance has been rehearsed upon erroneous assumptions how any play deserving the name of Art happens in the first place. Surely, at this late point of repetition, his observations can no longer be intended for exaggerated jocularities? The joke, such as it may have seemed, has been exhausted, long over-demonstrated in the semantics of Mr Shaw's special legerdemain. He goes on treating paintings, sculptures, symphonies, poems as if masterpieces were deliberately concocted. Are all men of such crass intelligence they may not guess there's more to

genius than this? The definition of any worthy art is inextricably involved with what can be described in short space only abstractly : the realisation of significance in the universe through achievement of something close to pure integrity of expression, by some one of the uniquely differentiated beings composing the universe. Mr Shaw would call this definition mystical humbug ; and incidentally confirming that he is a scientific materialist drumming up a reputation by unveiling those with mental limitations identical to his own, those who find their pleasure in badgering creative artists. He drew large support at first; people thought he was defending art. But this is becoming a kind of donkey-happy exhibitionism—which carries its own rewards. Having brayed himself to the longed-for height of his own self-esteem in this superficial repetition of his act, may he not at long last simply be—forgotten?

With relief, turning to chortle over the stylistically non-‘literary’ *A POCKET FULL OF WRY* (Francis Merchant, *THE PILGRIMS*, \$2). The author, here astonishingly baring himself of disguises, is a university professor, lets his honest self pull forth rich little candid grains of satire—which, when planted in most any reader’s mind, oddly sprout in straightly unstraight rows of disconcerting reason, in this finical, yet barbaric, weedpatch of dubious contradictions misnamed modern culture. His treatments are anything but subtle. They are often over-extended and grossly exaggerated. But they are shockingly identifiable, in at least some parts of their greening, without strain to any but moronic minds. Yet, after a few pages, the non-sophistication registers as a clever and deliberately ‘square’ kind of irony-by-denial-of-example. No one with any part in lunatic civilisation can read the book through without some guilty indignations nudging him with the handle of the hoe to take a vicious chop or two at Merchant’s ‘sry’, here super-cornily fertilised by honest old manure. These are prize grains, rashly sown in reckless

disregard of worldly scorn; and disrespectful also of the writer's own shared guilt. One of the more uproarious pieces is: THE PH.D. PROGRAM : INCUBATOR OF INTELLECT.

Four new poetry books and booklets definitely cut above the surface of the large stream in recent weeks. The significance of their buoyancy—in the Editor's eyes, to be sure—is from their individualised, integrated spontaneities, utilising today's language and modes of reaction, while bearing forward well-defined knowledges of the past. This gives them validity both at levels of meaning and structure. These particular reactions are coloured by romantic bias, of course, together with an anti-traditional attitude which concedes tradition cannot be ignored, but that it should be utilised in creations of whatever unique differences may make the poetry live. In other words, neither pseudo-poetry embracing dead rituals, nor the poetically-unmeaning stuff inchoately unidentifiable as any sort of composition at all, and yet (for all its 'modernity') carrying more hackneyed triteness than many a formalised piece on an ancient metred frame. The four publications are : A MAN OF VISION, Geoffrey Johnson (ROBERT HALE Ltd., 8/6) ; THE ROSE AND THE PURITAN, Alden A. Nowlan (FIDDLEHEAD, 50c.) ; PASSAGE AFTER MIDNIGHT, William Pillin (INFERNO, \$1) ; THE DEATH OF VENUS. Harold Witt (Golden Quill, \$2.50).

Another GOLDEN QUILL book might have been included below, had it comprised more of the poet's less-contrived work : TWO LAUGHTERS, Joseph Joel Keith (\$2.50). Surely included would be two, of which only the mss. have been read here. These are due soon, as this TRACE appears : PROFESSOR BOLD, Gil Orlovitz (HEARSE) ; THE LEAVES STILL TALK, David Kalugin (VILLIERS).

Elements worse than regrettable in the present U.S.A. publishing situation are simultaneously illustrated by a self-published paperback, not a reprint and not a translation, by an author of reputation with numerous books

to her credit, and a paperback reprint of a translated miscellany of early work by a Russian just awarded the Nobel Prize for a new novel. The point is that the latter was brought out by a commercial house which has nevertheless made a reputation upon dubiously-fulfilled intentions of printing worthwhile 'advanced' or new writers whose sales projects may not prove convincing to the outrightly money-hungry houses. These are : SOLAR BARQUE, Anais Nin, illustrated by Peter Loomer (from : 35 West 9th St., New York 11, N.Y., \$1) ; SAFE CONDUCT, etc., Boris Pasternak (NEW DIRECTIONS, 333 6th Ave., New York 14, N.Y., \$1.35). It is excellent to have the Pasternak restored to print at this time, and in neat economical format ; yet, the case of Miss Nin is just one of several such cases on the American scene, where authors who have contributed largely to a diverse new literature and influenced many important contemporaries, are the victims in effect of a 'business censorship'. True enough, freedom of print does exist, to a debatable degree, for those who can pay for it; but the mere publication of a book means exceedingly little, unless there is adequate promotion and the kind of distribution writers themselves cannot ensure.

Walter Lowenfels' AMERICAN VOICES (ROVING EYE PRESS, \$2.50) arrived after deadline for this TRACE. Too late for review; but a partial reading indicates this new poetry by this major contemporary (1953-57) deserves to be highly recommended.

AND INDIVIDUAL REVIEWS

POETRY LOS ANGELES (VILLIERS — obtainable through TRACE, \$1.25).

Fresh from the press! a co-operative anthology of eighteen poets living in the L.A. area; a variety of pleasures from very various writers. Thus Gil Orlovitz's strikingly original and luscious satire :

I am a very testicle of young finance, thy
 breasts are as my twin expense-accounts, thy
 neck as of the Waldorf Towers, thy
 navel as of a rough diamond
 mined by a South African
 Black and withheld from
 the Market, thy
 thighs are as of near-East oil
 coveted by Stereoslav and Jazzamer, thy
 rumps as of the rocket-launching
 platforms of the
 diplomats, love

is the preferred dividend, the very homewrecker of the Communist State Comrades, I confess I loved, Gentlemen, the Small Business of Love cannot be tolerated in our Industrial Reflex, THE SEXUAL CONGRESS MUST BE ADJOURNED . . . (a swinging section of M'SIEU MISHIGA : 7). And in Lawrence Spingarn's sophisticated ways (first of three stanzas in JACK OF DIAMONDS) : 'Be nimble, Jill. The legends in your purse Drug me for slumber like the autumn rose That stings and pricks us both while budding out. Each boy invades your cavern with a shout: Each fails, but still assumes the martial pose When garments scatter and your guardians curse.' There are fine pieces from the skills, also renowned, of James Boyer May, William Pillin, Ann Stanford, Curtis Zahn, and Thomas McGrath (a delicious, bounding sensual hymn

to loved women). Among those less known outside the area, I was most engrossed by Stanley Kiesel, his unusual sensibility and melodics : Shine lemon moon On the rhetoric vehicle That rode on the mailman; For hours my hackle Was raised, grazing in her letter Who's neutral? Not I from the treble I hear, declaring, scribble, beloved, I'm better. (second of three stanzas in ON FRIDAY AND ON MONDAY) ; difficulties in integration will be obvious, however. Melissa Blake's usages of haiku quantities (i.e. three lines of five, seven, and five syllables) as a stanza-form for fifteen- and thirty-line poems are also particularly interesting. The book in no way presents a 'school', but apparently is intended to announce the L.A. area of poets as one of special interest, with a number of craftsmen, skilful and diverse, and a sense of neighborhood ; and to sample the people. In manners, a great variety is shown : stanza and line conventions, visualities, melodics, moods and functions (lyric and satiric are most common). In subjects also, great variety ; a man of English letters of another age would note, however, the percentage of poems on sex, and on ideas which imply a strong concept of nation ; these things represent our culture, however, and are not locally L.A. Several of the best-known poets in the area are not presented, and a book with a title so sweeping (and nearly justified) should explain their absence. Should a second anthology be made, I also suggest that space allotments be equalised ; it is here quite unequal, and not on grounds of excellence. The widely-read will notice that some contributors give current work, and others some of their best-ever ; pieces a decade old might be dated for the casual reader's orientation. The physical book — paper, typography, impression, etc. — is satisfactory, but facing pages should have carried work of the same author, if at all possible ; and the cover, while striking, will attract few passing hands, I expect. As an anthology, it is also subject to the fundamental criticisms on mixtures of snatches as such. These counters

don't detract, however, from the book's real and important values.

The poets from the past, whom we have found most useful, usually developed in groups. The association of writers — readings, classes, and seminars, parties, joint publications including periodicals — is necessary seedbed to our making new poets of wide, profound, and lasting appeal. I don't suggest that the finest poets will always or even often be active parts of such groups ; they may more likely be outcasts, outriggers in their productive periods, or recluses unknown. But certain functions necessary in the long run to their development can hardly be done as well any other way

to give the beginning : our views of what's finer about the finest of extant lettering (this must be done outside the academies' everywhere-and-extensive barriers and straits) ; and ideas of how it was made, both in lettercraft and life in all aspects (ditto) and those with developed skills and awareness : fresh stimulations from knowing about (and/or meeting with) others who read closely, or struggle with the problems one's also onto, perhaps most particularly 'what should we do of this do that our predecessors did not.'

One also welcomes this co-operative anthology then as indication that Los Angeles has this kind of webbing created in poets, of admirably diverse strands ; (the real greatness of the poetry by the U.S.-born in this century has come somewhat from the stimulation of vastly different ideas among them). Get this book in hand — its price is admirably low — and examine it from the view of resources-in-area as well as achievements displayed ; by both standards, you will find it of great interest. To the future ! It's L.A. here it comes. For the present ! a present for us all of much potential good-time from our southwestern cousins.

TRAM COMBS

BIRTH (SEE MAGAZINE DIRECTORY — TORONTO, CAN., \$1).

A hobbledehoy taunt of a magazine, edited by Tuli Kupferberg, has made its initial noise from Broome St., New York, with an issue titled — how appropriately, we leave to the clinicians— BIRTH. Miss Kupferberg informs us that similar gestations, involving a whole series of paternities, will take place not only in U.S.A., but in Canada and Europe. The idea is at the moment somewhat more raffish than the execution, but there is sufficient in BIRTH of the side-of-the-mouth laughter to establish hope of a satirical singularity which would van it far beyond the weary gravity of most literary magazines ; while the variety of its mockery would be guaranteed by its shifting loci. BIRTH's razzing pages sport poems, stories, photographs, and gallantly ribald quotes from irreverent personages of yore, Bohemian edition. There is one parody by Carl Forsberg that alone is worth borrowing the asking price : called FOR RENT : ONE SALVATION ARMY, the prod is inserted with painfully funny effect into one of the beatnik personae cooling off the West Coast. We anticipate continued penetrations in the spirit in which BIRTH was conceived.

GIL ORLOVITZ

ADDENDA . . .

BEFORE attacking routine condensation of the accumulation of major miscellany — an announcement of possible new shift in TRACE policy on magazine directories. Long before this eighth year, it began to seem that we might be compelled to discontinue full directories (though not of the presses) and to devote larger space to creative writing generally : more short essays and book reporting, and individual issues unified by stress on problems other than those of limited little-mag interest. If this has to be done, the magazine front will be covered as now carried forward in supplements ; that is, new periodicals, suspensions, policy and address changes — but no further comprehensive directories.

Two developments presaged this : first, letters showed that the biggest subscription support came from appreciations for more general material ; second, over half the little-mag editors have themselves been failing to co-operate, even by taking advantage of special subscription rates for partial exchanges required for data. Since TRACE never has earned profits, but has been dedicated to providing these magazines with a place for mutual contacts and with prospective subscribers and contributors, at the sacrifice of time and energy, plus money (whenever there has been a deficit) such neglects have been worse than discouraging. And too — though TRACE offers unique service to writers, the percentage of writers amongst actual subscribers (who are chiefly librarians, teachers, and nonprofessional — non-amateur also — readers) remains astonishingly small.

Not even the bare expenses of the questionnaire for the Directory herein were met by those on whose behalf it was distributed. Another sign — scarcities from non-subscription sales have occurred only in issues not devoted to magazines . . . and of which extra runs have been made, to supply gratis

copies to listed periodicals.

With a sizable number of editors failing to answer pay-or-not? — on the above form — it doesn't appear that those paying at least something (and including those giving more than a couple of magazines to their contributors and those offering prizes, along with those offering token or low money compensation) stand higher than three-to-two to the no-pay media. However, the percentage of medium and top cash rates is large, amongst the paying magazines. Also of note—that many beginning magazines have declared intentions of paying—if not at once, then after one or two numbers. There can be no doubt that more and better submissions will come to paying periodicals; and the record of experience indicates that these also will be rewarded through solidier subscription support.

Not of mere local interest to remark how Gil Orlovitz's recent San Francisco readings went unnoted by the Press (others having been publicised), and he read chiefly to empty chairs— broad implications are involved, both geographically and ideologically. The S.F. Poetry Centre is to be congratulated for inviting a poet who has never obtained the nod from its New York counterpart (adjacent his Philadelphia home), and so confirming by affirmative dissent that the Lexington Ave. Y confines itself to the Bolingen Boys, the Pulitzer Pack, and the University Unguents. And, since news of this reading had penetrated North Beach, the Bay Area deserves commiseration for confirming that those committed to the exalted status of the Cool, the Beat, and the Strip-Down-to-the-Scrotum Verse cannot be bored by live poetry done only to a voice background.

First on the winter POETRY LOS ANGELES programmes was Tram Combs, visiting San Francisco poet, long resident in St Thomas, Virgin Islands. Mr Combs' visit at San Quentin, where his father is employed, raised a rash of rumours of his incarceration there. This he happily reported entirely

erroneous. Two new books by him have just been released: artists boys cats : lovers judges priests / ceremonies in mind ; and but never mind / poems, etc. / 1946-50. The former was brought out under imprint: 'mind trammels printed, st thomas, virgin islands', \$3, and the latter, by GOLDEN MOUNTAIN PRESS, 75c.

Definitely 'anti-beat' series, in home beatnik territories, have been held at DILEXI GALLERY, San Francisco, and COSMO ALLEY, Los Angeles, where renaissance themes have been revived. Older precedents in poetry-music combos are being accented elsewhere; and it's relevant that FOLKWAYS has put Canadian and Canadian French moderns on records (SIX TORONTO POETS, edited by Jay MacPherson . . . SIX BRITISH COLUMBIA POETS, edited by Dorothy Livesay . . . Voix de 8 poètes du Canada, edited by Gilles Hénault).

First of announced 'occasional', but plainly not casual pamphlets, has been SUPPLEMENT TO NOW (NEON, 50c.), appearing last fall; and at about the same time, Greenwich Village issued the first paper-towel poems — two sheets for 35c. (Robert Blossom, actor, and Reina Attias), about as less-considered as the title ought to warn . . . And, continuing, is the handiwork series of the New Mexico GALLINAS PRESS, featuring Lin Carr's woodcuts. Peter Carr, founder of KUSC reading series, was a winter reading guest in California. . . .

Other new items of this kind include reprint folders (and art) from SHAW-CRAFT. . . . Several other larger: SOME WORDS WITH A MANIC-DEPRESSIVE, Eugene Harsch (PENDULUM, \$1); THE FABLE OF THE FINAL HOUR, Dan Propper (ENERGY PRESS, 60c.); SANDBURS AND TUMBLEWEEDS, Arthur J. Fischer and William J. Noble (A PRAIRIE POET suppl. to subscribers); SELECTED POEMS OF CARLO GALASSO, transl. into Japanese, via English! (ONION PRESS, 100 lire); JUPITER C for the Missile Age, Kenneth McRobbie (CONTACT, unpr.).

Continuations of CONTEMPORARY POETRY AND MUSIC CIRCLE readings at Stanton Coit House are announced through May, renewing invitation to poets abroad to write in advance to Alec Craig (5 Avenue Hse., Belsize Park Gdns., N.W.3) if visiting London. . . . The Angry Young Men — a journalistic figment, Kingsley Amis has asserted in New York, echoing American denial of the Beat — have been thigh-to-thigh (lisp ing a pun) with the beatniks in many publications throughout the world, taking advantage of said 'yellow' irrelevance. Yet—recognising that some of the foregoing may after all attain some referential literary significance—it has been suggested that this bitter portion of neo-romantic fermentation be elevated by titling the entire movement the Coffee House Renaissance. And these do go on playing a vital role in the indubitable return of poetry to bigger audiences; and it's questionable that popular psychiatric interest in alcoholism and re-'discovery' of forbidden drugs could have coloured the literary era, without such 'neutral' centres. A majority of serious writers who neither write nor read while intoxicated, never would have been heard; and the 'heads' and the 'hypys' would not have been heard either, except in furtive private gatherings that could not have won mass-media attention. A very complex matter; and there's been much bigoted unfairness in many indignant quarters. The thing to be stressed is that true judgments may be rendered solely upon the works themselves—and whether produced by 'squares', 'hepcats', homosexuals or hetero-sexuals, abstainers or 'winos', the bearded or the clean-shaven. And this is not to say that all writings are not of course inevitably affected by the private lives of their formulators—but that analyses of the works should come first, and not speculations upon the personal habits and exhibitionistic performances of the authors.

A project of a kind long visualised, but never so faithfully realised, has been the voice-production of Philip Larkin's

complete (published on both sides of the Atlantic) book of poems: *THE LESS DECEIVED* (LISTEN auspices, obtainable from MARVELL PRESS, £2 10s. Od.). . . . Among new poetry recordings, one stands out, by reason of intense transmission of the poet's earnest revolt against cruelty and sham, his 'pictures' from a 'gone world' (LAWRENCE FERLIN-GHETTI on No. 7004 FANTASY—from: 654 Natoma St., San Francisco, Calif., \$4.98). However, the exhortations sometimes seem over-extended, there is a paucity of metaphorical analogic oppositions, and he has used structural departures already well-exploited by earlier French moderns; and these things raise questions both as to the definable poetry, and with 56 regard to the success with which he has in fact made valid use of the creative originality which may be in him. There's no doubt of the honesty of the reactions; but, in what degree are these expressions of them achievements in poetry? . . . And that long-awaited hoped-definitive undertaking to exploit to the full—with professional readers and top jazz musicians—the juxtaposition of poems with original modern scores, *JAZZ CANTO* (WORLD PACIFIC) at last has been widely heard and assessed. The nearly-unanimous adverse reaction has been that this is an over-exploitation, in many sections portentously 'stagey', if not 'hammy'. That is, the combinations, which many feel lack the essential spontaneity, found for instance in such less-prepared poetry-jazz 'things-in-themselves' (not considering either poetry or music apart), as in tapes with Jack Michelene and solo-horn or Tram Combs with bongo and calypso, aired recently over KUSC. On this album, the music far overshadows the poetry: John Carradine tries to make a *HAMLET* soliloquy of Walt Whitman; Ben Wright fails in imitations of Dylan Thomas's own readings; Bob Dorough reads Langston Hughes less well than Hughes himself; much better, is Hoagy Carmichael, with far less successful poetry

by William Carlos Williams; while Roy Glenn does the most moving reading of them all with poetically-irrelevant stuff by Philip Whalen. There is no creative integration here comparable to — for example — the achievements of Kenneth Patchen and Allyn Ferguson. A great boost to the little-magazine world was the recent (largest ever) exhibition at the WALKER ART CENTER, Minneapolis. And the little magazines have been coming to the fore in continued and increasing reprintings in BEST ARTICLES & STORIES (includes David Gunston's IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT BOOK, in TRACE No. 20). Also helpful to the entire field should be TRACE's inclusion henceforth in ABSTRACTS OF ENGLISH STUDIES. Recommended new poetry publications include: THE MERRY MUSES OF CALEDONIA, Robert Burns (First ed. of genuine Crochallan Song Book, M. MacDONALD, Edinburgh, £2 2s. Od.) ; THE SINGING FOREST, Brian Cox (BHARTI ASS'N PUBL., Re. 1.50) ; POEMS OF A DECADE, Ken Etheridge (GUILD PRESS, 3/6) ; UNFAMILIAR MOUNTAIN, Carla Lanyon Lanyon (OUTPOSTS, 3/3) ; FOOTSTEPS IN THE ATTIC, Stanley McNail (GALLEY SAIL — from : MALCOLM MacNEIL & Co., 27 7th St., San Francisco 3, 50c.) ; FORMS OF EXILE, John Montague (DOLMEN PRESS, 7/6) ; MEDITATION AT NOON, Peter Miller (CONTACT, \$2) ; AN ANTHOLOGY OF WEST INDIAN POETRY (Federation Commem. Issue of CARIBBEAN QUARTERLY, Eds. Sherlock and Carr, from : The Resident Tutor of the Extra Mural Dept., Broad St., Bridgetown, Barbados, \$1) ; A CAGE OF SPINES : POEMS, May Swenson (RINEHART & CO., \$3.75) ; A BOOK OF KINDS, Margaret Tongue (STONE WALL PRESS, unpr.) ; THE NEW ORLANDO POETRY ANTHOLOGY, compiled by ANCA VRBOVSKA (NEW ORLANDO PUBLS.—or from VILLIERS, at current exch., \$2.50) ; WHAT IS IT THE MOUNTAINS SAY?, Manfred Wise (VILLIERS — or U.S.A., from Author, Box 252, Berkeley 1, Calif., \$2).

A happy phenomenon in the poetry world has been the success of CITY LIGHTS, Pocket Poets Series, of which

repeated reprints have been made, into the thousands. These include the already listed or reviewed works of Kenneth Patchen, Kenneth Rexroth, Marie Ponsot, Denise Levertov, William Carlos Williams, and Publisher Ferlinghetti himself. And now, a fine new edition of originals and translations from Jacques Prévert's *PAROLES*, also to be available in hardback, as will be many earlier 'best-selling' titles.... From *INFERNO PRESS*, announcements of forthcoming new books by Curtis Zahn, one of whose plays recently occupied an entire issue of *POETRY & DRAMA*, and Guy Daniels, as well as the projected selection of new short stories, chosen from significant West Coast writers in this form.... Bob Alexander's new *TARTALLAH* and other Stories had not been received as *TRACE* was prepared.... Another outlet for non-commercial writings appears in a request for mss. from Sydney Omarr

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(P.O. Box 1092, Hollywood 28) on behalf of JULIAN MESSNER, Inc., New York.

Richard Rubenstein, California poet, playwright, and former editor — author of the recent successful *BEER AND ANGELS* — died at Yale Hospital, New Haven, Conn., on last Sept. 24th. His widow plans a collected edition of his work, for release in 1959.

New books of prose received or to be released soon include: *IN PURSUIT OF MOBY DICK*, Gerhard Friedrich (PENDLE HILL, 35c.) ; *AD 2018*, Rev. Edmund H. Gibson (GREENWICH, \$2) ; *A DEEPER FAITH*, Carol Murphy (PENDLE HILL, 35c.) ; *A HISTORY OF MINNESOTA BOOKS AND AUTHORS*, Grace Lee Nute (U. of MINN. PRESS, 75c.) ; *ROSEMARY AND THE PLANET* (for children), Winthrop Palmer (WISCONSIN POETRY MAGAZINE, \$1) ; *THE BOOK OF PRIVATE PRESSES*, compiled by Thomas Rae and Geoffrey Handley-Taylor (THE SIGNET PRESS, 10/6) ; *AN INTRODUCTION TO WELSH POETRY*, Gwyn Williams (DUFOR EDITIONS, \$5) ; *TALES OF A TROUBADOUR*, Q. H. Wright (from

author: 18520 14th, N.E., Seattle 55, Wash., U.S.A.).

And more books of poetry: IN SYLLABLES OF STARS, Bernice Ames (GOLDEN QUILL, \$2.50) ; THIS FIERCE INFINITY, Lori Babbitt (MALIBU PRESS, 3215 Rambla Pacifico, Malibu, Calif., \$3) ; BEHOLD THIS DREAMER, Elizabeth Bartlett (Privately: 52 Wakefield Dr., Atlanta 9, Ga., U.S.A., \$2) ; THE ANTHOLOGY OF MAGAZINE VERSE for 1958, ed. Wm. Stanley Braithwaite (resumes 1920's project : Schulte's Book Store, Inc., 80 4th Ave., New York, N.Y., \$5.95) ; CANTI ESOTICI DEGLI OZARKS, Nino Caradonna, transl. by Charles Guenther (FAIRMOUNT PUBL., 5220 Shaw Ave., St Louis 10, Mo., U.S.A., \$1.25) ; A POET'S JEWELS, Bettie Rich Coleman (GREENWICH, \$2.50) ; PARADISE IS NOT A MYTH, Rose Davison (WISCONSIN POETRY MAGAZINE, \$1) ; BROWN LEAVES FALLING with Sigh or Song, Eva C. Downing (BLUE RIVER PRESS, 75c.) ; A TIME TO MOURN, Edna L. Floyd (CHAPMAN & GRIMES, \$1) ; SONNETS OF THE SHOALS, William Plummer Fowler (BRUCE HUMPHRIES, Inc., \$1) ; A WIDER DOOR, Clare Lyon Hardman (2nd ed., BROOKSIDE—U.S.A., CARL FRANCIS PRESS, 7828 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles 46, \$2) ; ONE POUND FLESH, Richard Liebow (HARLEQUIN PRESS, \$1) ; THOUGHTS IN THE GARDEN OF PRAYER, Martha Corrine Love (GREENWICH, \$2) ; JOURNEY TO PEACE, Myrta Abbott Lange (WISCONSIN POETRY MAGAZINE, \$1) ; THE POET'S HAVEN ANTHOLOGY, ed. Alpha L. Post (1255 W. 71st St., Los Angeles, Calif., U.S.A., \$2.50) ; SPIRES AND SPANS, David B. Steinman (WISCONSIN POETRY MAGAZINE, \$1) ; POETRY IN MOTION, George Stillman (BROOKSIDE PRESS, 2/3, 50c.) ; PARTIAL PAYMENT (Mary Ellen Stelling (GOLDEN QUILL, \$2.50).