

TRACE

A CHRONICLE OF LIVING LITERATURE

Featuring Some Previews

No. 16

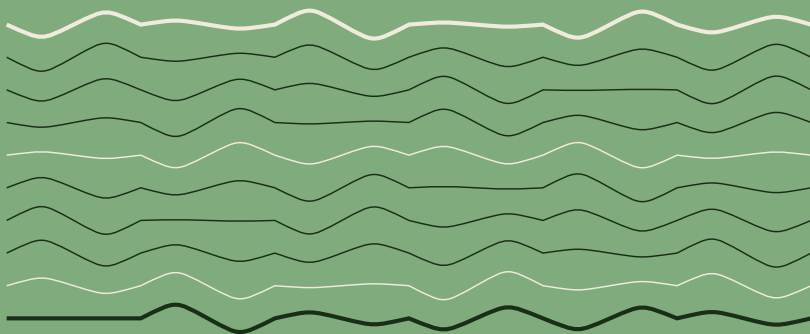
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JAMES BOYER MAY / EDITOR



TRACE

No. 16

Living Literature

Essays & Articles · Poetry · Reviews

April 1956

Edited by James Boyer May

A READING EDITION

ABOUT THIS EDITION

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

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

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PREVIEWS FOR MAUVE MANDOLIN

Parting from precedent, TRACE prints selections from material for a projected new journal of explication and criticism under editorship of Lawrence Gurney, of Los Angeles, California. This is humor with serious purpose, focused on a hindrance to today's literary development second only to the problems of getting original work published at all — what Kenneth Rexroth boldly has labeled 'gimmick criticism' in a recent NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE article. The distortions in the mock samples and pseudo-commentaries are slight enough to emphasise the validity of the underlying thesis. First, a piece more appropriately titled than perhaps even the 'poet' realised:

THE TROUT BY JERQUES H. KRINGLE

trust? no — no more rippling light
of the sun's gold bowl to drink
but turns like the snap of a whip
and is gone.
trust? who — how? with the colossus of deception
towering above his stream of life
like a split-legged question mark of cloud
which threatens our noon.
but simpler in trust — the colossus lingered
in his stream of air beneath his greater bank,
dreaming, till suddenly his mind drew taut
and a hook of memory in the corner of his brain
drew him naked and quivering
from his content.

EDITORS IN CONFERENCE

D. Now in *THE TROUT* we have something slightly better than the average of what we have been receiving lately, although it does reveal certain deficiencies.

G. Yes.

D. Particularly striking is the inverted pyramid pattern of imagery, ranging from the minute concerns and simple distrust of the trout, up through the man and his more abstract problems, to the cloud. It brings to mind Yeats' symbol of the gyre, although the straightforward path of the stream would conflict with this impression ; unless, of course, it meandered.

G. I think something should be said about the integration of the imagery. Although superficially discreet, many of the images do combine at depth, such as those of the fish and bait.

D. True, but before we can give adequate consideration to the overall effectiveness, we must examine some of the structural weaknesses. A glaring example is line 3, with its description of the earth turning, which is the weakest in the poem. Presumably the time of day is sunset, in order for the sun to be at the edge of the water like a golden bowl to pour forth its ripples of light. Frankly, I don't think Kringle knows much about the habits of trout, because they don't float half out of water in such a way that they could drink the ripples of light ; and besides, it's a bit fortuitous that the stream should point straight west in such a way that it could intersect the sun horizonwise. Be that as it may, the main defect is still in line 3 where the sun sets because the earth 'turns like the snap of a whip.' The turning of the earth is a slow and steady motion, and this is all out of scale, with its implication of sudden starting.

G. Possibly what he has in mind is the action of a top which is already in motion and being whipped. But of course this poses a difficulty in making the top go even faster. But I am willing to grant it as an expression of kinetic hyperaesthesia which is in keeping with the velocity of the times. However, it is still difficult to reconcile the time of day with the image in the second stanza of the towering man-like cloud at noon. Unity of elements like these is important, and I think it is slovenliness or incomplete visualisation of this sort which robs much poetry of its value.

D. I am more than a little disturbed by the sentimentality of the last three lines. This strikes me as a definite dropping off from the clean-cut sense of ever widening generalisation which precedes it. To be consistent with the broadening gyre of thought, nothing less than death of the highest sort is adequate to cap this poem. A translation to a different state — perhaps something like ‘book of memory’ instead of ‘hook.’ In fact, there are bits of evidence which make me think that this is a hastily-typed copy. For instance, if Kringle had meant ‘continent’ instead of ‘content’ at the end. Why yes, this would do it. I’m sure of it.

G. We might even ask him and find out.

REVIEW

WAS HOMER SEXUAL? Research A. by Tom Peardew. (Andromyth Series, Neutrino Press, \$3.50.)

This penetrating mass of analysis by Mr Peardew was an outgrowth of the author’s alert response to the implications of the multiple-authorship, or at least individual entity, non-epical theory of the Iliad’s composition. As is well known, inadequate virility can be a decided contributing factor in a man’s incapacity for sustained, major achievement. And Mr Peardew’s searching examination of the Iliad and Odyssey has brought to light some telling internal evidence. Unfortunately, the direct evidence which would settle the question is missing: i.e., if Homer had left

descendants. At this date anyone would admit the impracticality of trying to trace any that did exist, and besides, Homer's personal life appears to have been too itinerant for satisfactory records. But this in itself shows that he could hardly have felt strongly those normal attachments which are the usual reasons for a man's becoming settled.

As Mr Peardew points out, why could not Homer bring himself to admit or describe the involvement of Troilus with Cressida, instead of leaving the story for the poets of a later age to develop? And if he had felt true heterosexual attachment, why did he inwardly rebel at the return of Odysseus to Penelope for ten whole years? Or describe disparagingly the other woman —the Sirens, or Circe who turned men into swine. Much other revealing symbolism is developed. Helen, for instance, the supreme whore of all time, reappears as the Bag of the Winds in the Odyssey, a phantasm that haunted Homer at the nadir of his creativity. In all, a valuable book.

GOETHEDAMMERUNG ; a study of the Poet's last years by Faustia McGretchen. (S. Warren Koenig Press, \$2.00.)

This labor of love by Miss McGretchen is a useful little book in many ways and one would hardly want to criticise her strongly for allowing her enthusiasm to get the better of objectivity in some of her attempted proofs. However, it must be pointed out that she does fall here and there into the fallacy which was common in the last century of being so impressed by Goethe's genius as a poet as to claim for him a pre-eminence in other fields of thought which is hardly supported by the evidence. For instance, it can hardly be said that Goethe was in any sense a true critic of music. Not only did he fail to recognise Schubert, but he ignored Beethoven during his latter years for no better reason than the fact that the composer had made himself socially impossible. But the most telling evidence is in the excessive praise he heaped upon the young Verdi, who was hardly

more than a stripling when Goethe died. He said that Verdi alone knew or could convey a true, deep sense of yearning or aloneness. The words 'Nur Verdi Sehnsucht kennt' are famous, but their meaning is usually glossed over.

I admit there is a temptation to think otherwise when one considers the deep, still movement of such a thing as his beautiful little lyric 'Über allen Gipfeln' in which he describes his own Goethedämmerung (whence Miss McGretchen's title), but at other times his rhythmic effects either sprightly or grave are really due to later composers, as in the case of the Offenbach when he set to music the PARIS POEMS in his GOETHE PARISIENNE. But even here there are trivial little effects which are hardly more meaningful than those which Cervantes achieved in his little Donkey Serenade, known to most of us as his DONKEY JOTA. Nevertheless, the power of attraction which Goethe continues to exert cannot be denied, and I am glad to see Miss McGretchen dispel the recently widespread slander that, through a French publisher in the North African town of Bizerte, he published a volume of salacious tales known as the Dirty Goethe. In all, Miss McGretchen's beautiful little book is well worth looking into.

TOWARDS PRINT BY THE EDITOR

A question often asked — if not directly, then by roundabout — concerns the readership and cash support of TRACE. How many copies actually are sold each issue, and to whom? The Editor knows the U.S.A. situation personally.

And this opens a subject which maybe should have been opened two or three years ago; for, while TRACE is generally credited with having formed an international 'bridge' between Britain and the U.S.A. and Canada, besides communications with other parts of the English-speaking world in the creative literary field, with having 'saved' many small independent magazines and made feasible establishment of new ones, and with having assisted thousands of publications which otherwise might not have been — yet its own actual paid U.S.A. circulation (where support should be best) never has exceeded a thousand copies.

The cause — in addition to fact that about half the sales are singles, not on subscriptions — has been a tremendous turnover each five issues in the list of private readers. Here, as in Europe, is a solid phalanx of libraries, none of which has failed to renew. They have been vital, as have been between seventy and eighty individuals who also have subscribed since the start, and most of whom pay far in advance. These in truth finance the project.

In the sense that 'angels' are widely distributed, this isn't perhaps a narrow foundation; however, it's far from positively ensuring continuance at this end of the 'bridge'; and the expense of acquiring new subscribers and selling enough single copies each issue has, rather than cost of TRACE, itself, kept the magazine from paying its way. The publishers have decided on a campaign to try whether renewals cannot be lifted to a higher level. The results well may be decisive.

Meanwhile—again looking backward—despite comparatively small paid circulation with any one issue, TRACE has reached many thousands who have made practical use of it. Besides all the one-time casual buyers (many more of these for Directory issues than for those intervening), correspondence has indicated large numbers have gained access to TRACE in libraries and schools (where likewise is a steady, if small, support). This now may justify display advertising in larger periodicals, IF better results are obtained on renewals. Such advertising is largely wasted, unless the product already is widely known—and in this case TRACE has been sufficiently seen that there's a fair chance of meeting promotion cost. And still, increased circulation by this means could be fatal without renewals. This has been the experience of many.

Which leads to considerations for the reflection of all who read this. Concerted assistance is needed, providing such has been earned—providing TRACE has really guided serious readers, educators, librarians, and writers, and has facilitated circulation and consequent recognitions of new talents. For if this is so, all have a stake here even where individual notions conflict; yet, by no means all have been assisting, despite that their valuable help would involve slight financial contribution and comparatively little time and energy.

Getting to details—first, the most interested persons, the publishers and editors of magazines. At very least, every one should keep TRACE informed of changes to be recorded in the directories, and should send periodicals regularly on exchange. Some will be shocked to learn that after these years, a sizable percentage do not exchange and that a few even have failed to respond to queries containing stamped returns. Another thing — at one time or another, each editor should contribute at least a paragraph for EDITORS WRITE. And finally, though direct requests never will be made,

decency would seem to demand that they should reciprocate for publicity afforded them through listings, by giving at least an occasional few lines of mention to TRACE. Many have donated display space, without asking exchange for same — quite a contrast to those who literally have ignored the existence of this project!

Next, authors and publishers of many books have tangible interests too. Review copies should be supplied as a matter of course; and each publisher should co-operate promptly and fully with information. Besides with printed announcements, they should supply relevant news notes tied with their authors.

And many more readers could send useful information, in addition to giving occasional word-of-mouth promotion amongst acquaintances; and those with ideas for articles should try contributing more often (advance queries advised, however).

EDITORS WRITE

Lachlan MacDonald (CHICAGO REVIEW): ‘James Hiner picks a lively horse to ride (see article in No. 15 — Ed.), and gives a spotty account of what he sees from his mount. Before I spur the metaphor to death, let me say that from my side of the desk there’s the challenge of dishing out stiff criticism, unasked, to those who so obviously need it, inquisitive phrases to those who are baffling, and trying to deal gently with those who are apparently on the verge of self-destruction. Of course we have many notes which plead for the most cryptic comment, so long as it is a comment. Mr Hiner’s horsemanship is showing, though, in his final comments — as I see the problem, there are too many people already writing as they read, because, I suppose, there are so many poets in the world, and such a little originality to spread among them.’

David Kalugin (a ‘silent’ little-mag associate): ‘Another article like the No. 15 and quite a few SHINERS will be howling for revenge. (Really very naughty for him to write like that, really?) . . . (The article is herein — Ed.)’

NOTES TOWARD NO DEFINITION AT ALL

by James Hiner

‘Then the thing has actually been sold?’ I enquired in a neutral tone . . . one short of approval, but this side of alienating my friend.

He waved his hands in a characteristically Latin gesture, the nails showing innocently pink above the heavy outline of car-grime . . . a natural concomitant of his regular job of gas-pump jockey. ‘Yes, yes,’ he insisted in a heavy Teutonic voice contrasting singularly with the spriteliness of his hand-waving, ‘the Producer has it now. It’s all set. Blank gets fifty percent for the rewrite and the use of his name.’ He shrugged.

‘And the high purpose . . . or the seriousness, if you’ll allow that,’ (for I could see he was about to protest) ‘. . . the indictment; did they take it that way?’ I asked, watching my friend at the same time to discover how real was his show of casualness; if there was not some elementary afflatus about to break out.

‘Oh, no,’ he replied, ‘hell no. They cut that out first thing!’ . . . The sympathy that tinged his smile, I thought, was not for the purpose of exculpating the speaker—my friend—but was rendered for my benefit, as much as to say, ‘but of course you understand that!’

Which I hadn’t at all, up to that point. I released an ‘Ah!’ with but little force; it not being my intention quite yet to make my friend squirm. I thought it unlikely that he would in any case, verging as he was on one-half of \$7,500. But still I couldn’t hold out forever. After a while I said: ‘Well, you’re a case, you know. We shall be watching you. How will this virus take, do you think?’ I’d put it to him.

‘Oh, well,’ he said with another shrug, then quickly adding, ‘how can it take? How has it? Crissake! I’m already writing another one!’

‘Like that?’ I demanded.

‘Certainly!’ he replied, this time with a broad, doubting smile, like what a water-buffalo might show emerging from a wallow . . . one that left no doubt in my mind that I was showing the rumpled trousers of innocence in as poor taste as, to mine, the pork-pie of success appeared canting on his head. I was forced to conclude that the plausible-scientific, pseudo-literary study of *My Friend’s Success* was to be vitiated at the start, principally by his reluctance to present anything like the familiar dilemmatic portrait of a person-in-mistrust-of-himself. Still, what other position could he take than this front—and a front it was, I felt certain—and retain wholeness? If his act meant carrying a wallet instead of a coin purse, didn’t it mean wearing, as well, velvet lapels and spats, a Homburg, the works? I had been rebuffed, but I couldn’t help imagining to myself the vital delight which might have animated his face—in contradistinction to its present desiccated matter-of-factness—had one of his honest little stories been accepted not too much earlier by one of the honest Little Mags.

But of course *My Friend’s Success* does not constitute a case. It is probable that every artist at last comes to accept any reward of money or recognition with utilitarian indifference . . . or with utilitarian enthusiasm, which amounts to the same thing. One man’s failure to get a hearing is no reason to damn the Little Mags. No call to cry ‘Judas!’ at certain editors merely because one man has not acceded to philosophy through rejection slips. ‘Promising writers,’ even good writers are lost every day of the year to far less of a hook than an amount equal to the annual salary of a low-grade civil servant. My Friend admitted as much,

himself. He said, in a tone which intended irony, but which struck me as basely sentimental and falsely Deistic—with the continued shrug, reduced now from promontories to foothills:

‘I always said that if this is in fact what a man does write, it’s probably all he was ever able to write.’

Or . . . he might have added . . . all that God wills he write.

‘Bah!’ I said. ‘That statement is below even the blinked vision of a half-successful TV writer. Furthermore you know it. Look here! I don’t want mechanical rationalisations. Give me some ammunition!’

‘Like what?’ he wanted to know. ‘Why-I-detest-writing-for-the-movies, or something like that?’

‘Un-nuh. Not that. No, I want the other side . . . I mean, supposing you had wanted to keep your, well, integrity . . . Where would you have gone? Could you have maintained it in the Little Mags? Look,’ I quickly added while he was squinting over this, ‘what I want you to say is that the Little Mags corrupted you!’ He roared. ‘Oh-ho-ho! Impossible! I never got into them!’

‘Exactly.’

He began to smell a philosophical rat-hole. ‘Oh, you mean you want me to indict those editors for not taking me up?’

‘Something like that. After all, you know the front of my mind about as well as I know the back of yours. No need to tell you my candid opinion. I think you know that I believe writing has an ethic which won’t stand the Presbyterian excuse you make for the slender abilities of an individual writer. What the hell! My opinion — standing outside the economics of your situation, I realise — is that it would be better if you never wrote, than that you should write that . . .’

‘But that’s just it. I’m not your man of integrity. I never intended trying any Poundian revaluation of the substrata. I can’t say that I would or would not have failed . . . or

whatever . . . if I'd intended something different.'

'But can you say the soil of the Little Mags is or isn't a sympathetic ground? See here,' I insisted, 'you're crawling a bit, you know. You did try at one time, and stop denying it. We talked about it plenty of times. I can remember, even if you can't, how your life hung in balance between mail deliveries, over whether or not an acceptance slip would arrive. So?'

I could see the recall forming itself beneath his close-cropped hair, his brows wrinkling simian fashion.

I went on, 'You're above it now. Out of it. Going another direction, so nobody's going to pay the slightest attention to what you say . . . perfect chance to sound off . . .'

'That's just it. You can't attack the Little Mags. Nobody would pay the slightest attention, in or out of it. You see, they don't pay; therefore they've created an a fortiori case of integrity for themselves. Any snapping we could do at their heels would only be taken as poor sportsmanship, the churlishness of the persona non grata . . . and a bum writer, in their estimation, to boot!'

'Well, we won't worry about that,' I told him. 'Let's just concern ourselves with a little destructive criticism for the time being.' It appeared he was ready to speak at last.

'You know as well as I,' he began.

'Sure . . . but you say it.'

'O.K. Here goes. But no one's going to listen — remember — especially not the subjects concerned . . .'

'That's all right,' I said, 'I want the satisfied glow of repugnance for a few minutes . . .'

'Well. Three things: the SLANT, the COTERIE, and the EDITOR'S PRIVATE CHAPEL.' He rubbed his hand across his mouth and pulled his lips out grotesquely, considering.

'There should be some cheap way of warning the young writer . . . this man of integrity you're talking about . . . away from the offending mags. Trouble is, practically all of them

are guilty of one, or all three, offenses. And the other trouble is, by the time the young writer discovers it he's hopelessly down on them, on writing, on art . . . on the whole kit 'n' caboodle. Oh hell, look . . . I'm skipping over all the petty stuff, the misreadings, the time element, the mss. that come back eight months later with no word enclosed, and those that come back in three days, interlarded with graduate criticism. Let me speak in crooked language: SLANT. I thought, when I began, that those editors were looking for a new way of seeing things. Why should it be necessary to 'study the requirement of our mag?' Wasn't it your impression, as it was mine, that that was a requirement demanded for REDBOOK? or the LADDIES HONED KERNEL?

'What is the editor's excuse? The pragmatic argument; it works; another minaret on their mosque, another candle under the icon. Their private temple fairly stinks of benignity; overwhelms their bethel. Why the devil should a Little Mag be expected to have unity? And why should this unity always be one of such preciousness . . . when it isn't rendering Spillane in avant garde terms? They organise their mags as though all the questions of writing were already settled . . . I thought the problem was to discover what the problems of writing were . . .' I puffed on a cigarette, greatly relishing the pyrotechnics.

'What about the coteries?' I wanted to know.

'Oh, that! Now we are wasting our time! Nothing could fragment that egoistical cement. The in-group! It all comes down to the fact that most of those editors are building pastiche upon their own self-satisfied features. And that stems from the fact that too damn many editors are themselves-creators. Naturally admittance is ritualistic. But scarcely Dionysian. The dance is lacking; more resembling an Elgar parade. Solemnity is not phallic, of course, but ambrosial at the very least . . . But it's no good yelping at that group. How can they possibly recognise the unfamiliar?

They're not in the least prepared for contradictory geniuses. The most you can do is don't submit. Unfortunately, that comes to be one's attitude towards most all of them eventually. You just don't want to suffer any of them. You want them all to keep their damn psychological cat-calls over the next rill . . . You know, it's funny, but the editors most innocent of playing Partridge are the ones nearest the pedantic in fact: the editors of journals originating on campus. Especially the old, established ones. Which leads one to propose that it takes as many years to be trained to edit a Little Mag as to edit the big slicks. It's not a job for the amateur, and it's not a job for the poet-as-editor.'

My friend had been speaking to his left foot during most of the preceding speech. Now he turned to me, nodding his head like a mechanical pendulum on too tight a spring. 'Look, I know you think it's a lousy thing I'm doing,' he admitted, 'writing for so-called popular consumption. But what would you have thought if I, a semi-unoccluded, half-imbecilic reject would suddenly have burst out with my own publication; a Little Mag, say? A Semi-Emergent Sporadical?'

'Oh well,' I protested, 'you might have turned out a good one!'

'Hell no, I wouldn't have, and you know it. I would have started building a mosaic of my own features, like the rest of them. Listen! You want me to shout like a lunatic for a few minutes? O.K., here it is. It's time you editors knew ; in your present vision, cross-eyed upon your coterie or shut-eyed in dreams of Wylie or Millay, you're not wanted. There's not too few Little Mags, there's too many. You're dangerous to the traffic of ideas, a timid number . . . Wait ! I know where there's a good forty-eight-foot ketch. Or maybe it's a yawl, or perhaps a schooner or sloop. Anyway, it's all stocked, complete. Plenty of jibs, hawsers, yardarms, cleats and halyards and bully beef. Loaded absolutely. Next stop go

Borneo. Plenty Salamanders, missionaries, strombolis. All time sing, play. Make it ! You like? Tarzan . . . Jane. O.K.?’

And he laughed with a pig-like squeal.

SOME ITEMS RECEIVED BY THE EDITOR

Nothing can be more damning than faint praise — a hackneyed opening, yet than which none is more appropriate in noticing nice little books of poetry, the contents of which really are excellent in a pale and proper way, pieces meticulously constructed and even exhibiting originality of, after all, inconsequential sorts. This is poetry in which casual readers find little fault, for some of it gives new reflections to the curves of old bottles and some even presents new shapes. And still, not only no marked creative force has striven, but the elemental basis for any significance, no matter what mood or theme, is absent. The stuff lacks that underlying thesis-and-antithesis, that so-essential flash and sound of friction, if not necessarily the roaring huge impact of whatever percepts joined, to the poet's joy or sorrow, indignation or enthusiasm.

Regretfully, the foregoing supplies the honest starting-point for comment on Leah Bodine Drake's *THIS TILTING DUST* (GOLDEN QUILL PRESS, \$2). Despite this is a book club selection, it is only a couple of removes from casual verse throughout. Better may be said for Willis Eberman's *THIS, MY BEQUEST* (the same) — less honored. This work has merit for less-artificial craftsmanship, though the personal narrative, the sentimental reminiscence, and frequent use of old-echoed phrase make it seem at first glance perhaps to offer less than Mrs Drake's. And besides, there's a cumulative sincere transmission of a sensitive personality, compensating in part for the slight originality and minor themes.

The lowest level struck in Golden Quill books has been a very small collection indeed, *THE SMALL HOUR*, Evelyn Eaton (\$2.50), putting together without imaginable purpose and

with no unifying thread verses of magazine-space-filler varieties. They indicate tender susceptibilities and conscientious labor — little else.

What a contrast! turning from such to the distinguished work of Philip Larkin, *THE LESS DECEIVED* (THE MARVELL PRESS, 6/-). Here is a poet who not only has found himself (accomplished then the most difficult, yet essential *raison d'être*), but in so doing has given England one of her late-years' rare new voices. These sharp, honest lines of skillful verse transmit a unique experience only to be tasted properly by repeated readings; and while they lack tremendous power and sustainment and in fact do not pretend to sublimity, they prick with fortitude some real contemporary sores — and therewith serve more purposes than decorative syntax, though this also is present.

And from Scotland another of this infrequent category, though the poet seems not yet to have arrived at what may be his own (we trust) special expression, except in his rather clearly-defined neo-romantic view. For W. Price Turner (*THE RUDIMENT OF AN EYE*, VILLIERS PUBLICATIONS, 5/- and \$1), exhibits trials (albeit quite successfully) of several methods and forms; and without being at any stage merely imitative. Rather, not at all imitative in the sense usually intended — but utilising each in ways which illuminate more than facility. He's young, and the hackneyed 'promise' is too weak a word to convey what's already detectable at several points where he threatens to break out of one or another essayed mould and to strike his own stance.

Back across the Atlantic, in Canada, the RYERSON PRESS has presented as Chap-Book 164 in a limited edition (\$1) *THE HALOED TREE*, by Fred Cogswell. And here is an enigma, a title glowing with symbolisms on a slight book of verses none of which does in deed adequately fulfil the purposes of a metaphysical writer familiar with ancient wisdoms and skilled in poetics. One feels that the central poem, the title

poem, has been omitted. Only peripherally does Mr Cogswell touch upon what might be revealed between the pillars of that 'H,' where seems might be an immutable and ageless gateway to the tree of life. He sings of life in death, it's true — but only oblique rays suggest the halo — and one recalls in vain how 'baum,' the German for tree, also means the father sun, recalling the rich complexities for 'halo,' itself, in relation to the sacred orb. This reader also reflected on the maple, the national emblem of Canada, 'Our Lady of the Snows' and how she might be equated with Mother Carey, the center of life origins in the sea — and tied with this, that the Greek combining form 'halo-' derives from hals, the sea. But this is all by way of adjuring Mr Cogswell how, with his skill in suggesting profundities by surface-simple rhymes (here in many portions), he should be capable of a masterwork for both a limited audience of initiates and the wide audience catching chiefly sounding syllables.

One magazine new with 1956 asks more than just listing — both for physical size (140-plus pages) and for an intelligent serious programme. MANDALA (symbolising an occidental 'middle way' in the steps of C. G. Jung) appears to have been founded upon a broader editorial base than most such magazines. And yet, in spite of this, most the admittedly-tasteful contents lack depth of cogency; and just possibly this may be because, while Jung was nearer offering groundword for a philosophy than Sigmund Freud (who never intended this in the first place), he was an investigator (psychologist) not a maker (philosopher) with his own pre-vision of order and purpose. MANDALA editors proceed on a theory that a purpose may resolve itself from a comprehensive catholicity very closely akin to the scholarly fallacy of admitting every alternative and thus remaining indefinitely poised without direction. This of course by no means precludes the printing of both superficially-excellent and meaningful works. Several of their contributors are

certain to have stubbornly-anchored intentions; but the magazine as a whole—as personality, if you like, as a magazine conceived in terms this vastly embracing—cannot move dynamically in the stream (to wax Bergsonian, perhaps to the disgust of these good young editors). Among many things to be said for this project, however, is that it commences with a number of writers not hitherto found in such periodicals—to say nothing of having announced that no work by frustrated editors will appear.

One more book just arriving (*A BOOK OF VERSE*, by Mary Hall, BROOKSIDE PRESS, 7/- and \$1.50) provides a contrast by way of its forthright limitation of pretense. In fact, there is no pretense whatever. This volume is exactly what the title indicates; yet, though not essaying to be in the least original or different in the modern sense, conveying individuality just the same, if not thereby achieving (either) what the earlier-mentioned books intended.

ADDENDA

Both material which could be quoted at length in EDITORS WRITE and that which might make a new PRESSES DIRECTORY SUPPLEMENT must be condensed here.

Taking the latter first, imprints not yet listed and which for one reason or another should be included: THE CUPID PRESS, Barham Manor, near Ipswich; UNIVERSITY BOOKS, Inc., 404 Fourth Ave., New York City 16, U.S.A.; VOYAGES, 35 West 75th St., New York City 23; and ZERO PRESS (see magazine). And from Australia arrives announcement of unusual poetry volumes—THE RAMS SKULL PRESS, Lording St., Lower Fern tree Gully, Victoria — R. G. Edwards, proprietor. TRUE AIM editors ask particular mention of their main interest, nursery rhyme reform; and from PEQUOT PRESS comes information concerning its founding in 1948 by Dorothy Farrand Haynes and William Haynes, with ensuing publication especially of books of regional significance.

Harvey Parker, of La Crescenta, Calif., who continues his Poetry-Pageants under the name PINNACLE-PRODUCTIONS, announces acquisition of the services of George Selk, of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Films. Stagings have been presented in several communities.

A change, one title only, is reported from CITY LIGHTS POCKET BOOKSHOP—the book by Kenneth Patchen, previously announced, will be POEMS OF HUMOR AND PROTEST. Other new books are: BEHOLD THE GLORY, Chad Walsh (HARPER & BROS., \$2); THREE STRATA-GEMS and other stories, Gore Vidal (ZERO PRESS, \$3); FIRST COLLECTION by Jay Pell (INFERNO PRESS, \$2). One from prior, never listed, is THE LEGEND OF THE YELLOW VALE, Rockwell B. Shaefer (COMET PRESS, \$2.50). A definite, though not yet officially announced volume for this year will be a new collection by Felix N. Stefanile, under NEW ORLEANS POETRY JOURNAL aegis. Another not yet on hand when this

was written is by Lilith Lorraine, NOT FOR OBLIVION, consisting entirely of magazine rejects ; and since hers have been so widely accepted, it should prove of unusual interest.

Although NUMBER as a magazine is no more, a series of limited poetry editions will issue from that address under same editorship. Another item from San Francisco concerns a reading there by Malcolm Cowley (POETRY CENTER auspices).

Star Powers, editor of AMERICAN POETRY MAGAZINE, is preparing an ambitious 1957 lecture itinerary through-out the States and Hawaii for purpose of enlarging audience for poetry. She frequently has been both on radio and television.

And finally to append a summarised reply to a well-founded complaint — as re ‘accepted’ material sent back to an author on change of editorship. Under law, a signed acceptance in letter form is binding, such communications having been held to contain the full force and effect of contracts ; and whether or not there is a change of editors, if the magazine in question continues to be published, there is both a moral and legal obligation that it shall be. If the author can demonstrate damage has been suffered from return of previously-accepted mss., he has valid cause for suit and may in some instances possibly even recover on a cash judgment. However — N.B. the importance of the signed statements comprising the exact issue in which the work is to appear. Since an indefinite acceptance conceivably might mean after years, the matter then more likely is entirely ethical and without sufficient basis for court action.