

TRACE

A CHRONICLE OF LIVING LITERATURE

Sixth Annual Directory

No. 20

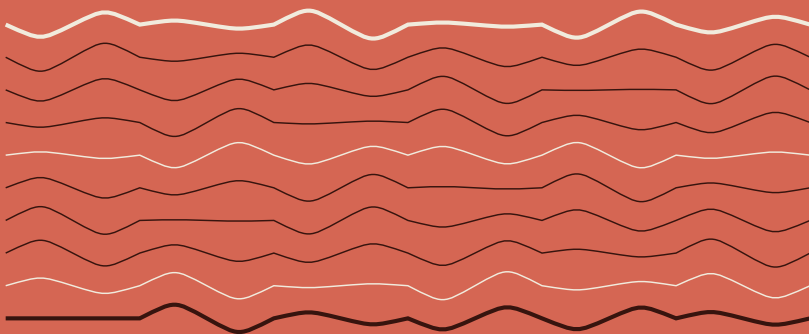
ISSUE

February, 1957

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JAMES BOYER MAY / EDITOR



TRACE

No. 20

Living Literature

Essays & Articles · Poetry · Reviews

February 1957

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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THE AMERICAN WEAVE PRESS (AN EFFORT TO CROSS-SECTION AMERICAN POETRY)

by Ellen Edelman (U.S.A.)

*'We can hope for a blossoming of American poetry
only if we encourage and stimulate the younger
poets. And an enthusiasm for writing can be kept
alive only by a chance to reach one's public — no
matter how small that public is. That is why
AMERICAN WEAVE publishes the work of the young
and the growing poets ; and that, too, is why
AMERICAN WEAVE works with persons who submit
manuscripts, criticising, encouraging, and always
attempting to stimulate the writing of
craftsmanlike poetry.'*

This, the credo of Loring Williams, editor of AMERICAN WEAVE, furnishes the dominant thread running through the magazine and the other efforts of the press. Currently the work of the press centers on the magazine, which is the

result of years of editorial trial-and-error and readjustment of policy so as to more effectively fulfil its purposes. The guiding credo has changed little in the magazine's twenty-one years, but the format and policies have been adjusted as need demanded.

The present format of this 'little magazine' or quarterly is pleasant, paper-bound, pocket-sized, and appropriate to the dignity and quiet tone of the content. Soft pastels are related to unite ink, paper, and paper cover ; they differ with every issue but are not much different in feeling. Although details have changed from the original, the general appearance is much the same ; the measurements have increased from vest-pocket to coat-pocket size.

The young poet looking for a market would be pleased to see his work in AMERICAN WEAVE. Although there is no payment for work included, there are annual prizes. Each poem is set off with sufficient margins ; there is no effort to squeeze a certain number of poems in, although about forty are included in each issue. And the general quality of the work included meets a surprising number of the standards set for poetry. The total of these is the result of Williams' effort. ' . . . to encourage young writers, rather than to bring out the best poetry only. These are the writers who must be published now in order that we may encourage the best in poetry.' How—and where—to furnish these young poets with stimuli; this is the quest that started Loring Williams in the activities that led to developing the American Weave Press to this point. As a poet, he found the situation distressingly lacking in adequate markets and outlets for his own work. He refused to have his work published in magazines which squeezed poems into odd corners as 'filler' or used little sound judgment in selecting companion poems. He wrote in indignation to an editor who was doing these injustices to poetry, and was surprised to find that the magazine had no poetry editor, and was further surprised to find himself with

the job of poetry editor— of HOME MAGAZINE. After several years' experience with HOME MAGAZINE, Williams took over some of the editorial duties of EMBRYO. Not affiliated with the little magazine which is currently publishing under this interest-catching name, EMBRYO did not survive the depression. During this time, Loring Williams had become interested in printing as a hobby. Could he, he reasoned, print his own poetry magazine and thus escape the tremendous printing bills that doomed many little magazines? A small press in his home, his home address as an editorial office, and his experience with EMBRYO and HOME MAGAZINE stood Williams in good stead for his project: The Press of America Singing. 'We may define a private press in a wide sense, with the French bibliographer, M. Claudin, as one "set up in a monastery, a palace, a residence or a private house, not the residence of a professional printer"; or, in a narrower sense, with Mr. C. R. Ashbee, as one "whose objective is an aesthetic one, a press that, if it is to have real worth, challenges support on a basic standard, caters for a limited market, and is not concerned with the commercial development of printing by machinery.'" We ourselves are content to define it simply as a press set up and worked by a private person for some purpose other than commercial profit. That purpose may be manifold. It is sometimes the service of religion, sometimes that of letters . . . sometimes dilettantism, sometimes the cause of liberty . . . Presses have often been set up for the special purpose of printing certain books—sometimes for the mere ambition of producing books. In our own days especially, the purpose of the private press is often an aesthetic one, to wit, the joy of fine craftsmanship.¹

The Press of America Singing fitted well this attempt to define the private press which preceded its genesis by but a few years. And the 'service of letters' is an apt summary of the guiding principles of this press dedicated to serve as a

voice for American poetry. In 1930, the first anthology published by The Press of America Singing and edited by Williams appeared. This, one of a series of yearly anthologies that appeared through 1939, drew on the little magazines and quarterlies for most of its material. All except the last two were commercially printed; these two were hand printed on Williams' press and were bound commercially. Some were illustrated with block prints by Gaston Burrige. They are cloth bound, printed in laid India Antique paper, measure six by nine inches, and were printed in editions of 500 copies. There is unfortunately no list of these anthologies which would give further details than I have given here. They were all titled America Singing; and though Loring Williams has copies of many of them, I doubt that there is anywhere a collection of all nine volumes.

In the early 'twenties there were still many people who thought that "beautiful" printing could be done by hand, and that commercial printing must always be inferior.²

Unfortunately, the anthologies of America Singing bear out this impression. The commercial printer and the commercial

¹MONOTYPE, 'Private Presses in England,' IX (January-February, 1923, 3.

²Ruari McLean, MODERN BOOK DESIGN; Longmans, Green, London, 1951, p. 29. binder did not succeed in creating the tone suitable for the content of these volumes; and although the later efforts of The Press of America Singing to print its own material fall short of what some of the larger presses dedicated to quality printing are able to accomplish, they certainly surpass these first anthologies. The Press of America Singing originated and belonged to an era when Americans were learning to be proud of America. Folk arts and folkish arts were coming to the fore. We were proud of our heritage, our patriotism, and our bright-coloured pioneer emotions and history. The government, seeking to alleviate a

depression, furthered this trend by encouraging the American in art and related arts. And *The Press of America Singing* was caught in this avalanche of Americana: it mirrored the ballad-feeling, the Whitman-enthusiasm, the regional genres. Even the name of the press echoed the voice of the country that was trying to establish its individuality, its personality.

And the ballad-like verses, the imitation Whitman, and the studied regionalism found their way into the *America Singing* anthologies. But Williams selected carefully; he tried to guide his young writers; and he stayed by his principle 'to encourage poets rather than to bring out the best poetry.'

It was during this period, in January, 1935, that *AMERICAN WEAVE* was born. Titled to indicate its genre-bias, this magazine reflected the same trend, the same enthusiasms, that *America Singing* reflected. We have already described the physical characteristics of this quarterly. Suffice it to say that after the anthologies ceased Williams centred his efforts on the magazine, and changed the press's name to *The American Weave Press*.

As with any private press, this one does other printing assignments. One, in association with the University of New Hampshire, is the printing of an annual chapbook of the poems of a participant in their writers' conference. This, the Durham Poetry Award, combines the printing of a chapbook with a thirty percent royalty on all sales. The following list of these chapbooks also includes those which are of combined authorship. 1. Anna Beatrice Murphy, *SONGS OF TWO WARS*; Richard Dent, *HERO'S TOWER*; Isabel Wilcox, *DAILY THE CLAY*. 1944.

2. *DURHAM CHAPBOOK NUMBER TWO: An Anthology*. 1945.

3. Mary Newton Baldwin, *HERE IN THESE HILLS*. 1946. Foreword by William E. Harris.

4. Donald C. Babcock, *FOR THOSE I TAUGHT*. 1947. Introduction by Rolfe Humphries.

5. Margaret Cobb, *THE ROOT AND THE LEAF*. 1949. Introduction by Rolfe Humphries. (No award given in 1948.)

6. Peggy Coffin and Vernon Ingraham, *TWO AGAINST TIME*. 1950. Foreword by Loyd Haberly.

7. Pearl Lunt Robinson and Blanche Gile, *TWO POETS*. 1951. Introduction by Robert P. Tristram Coffin.

8. J. Keith Miller, *TALL TEXANS*. 1952. Foreword by Robert P. Tristram Coffin.

9. Ralph L. Kinsey, *SAND AGAINST THE WIND*. 1953. Foreword by Loring Williams.

10. Kelsie Ramey Osborne, *FROM LYRIC FIRE*. 1954. Foreword by Loyd Haberly.

11. Kate Brackett, *THE LONELY GUEST*. 1955. Introduction by John Holmes.

One of the satisfactions of his editorial work is being able to 'discover' and encourage promising writers who go on to make a name for themselves. Byron Herbert Reese first had poems accepted by Loring Williams. However, *KALEIDOGRA PH*, being the second to accept Reese's work, published it first. Reese, whom Williams considers 'our foremost ballad writer of serious folk style verse in this country,' has had several books of poetry and a novel published by large publishing houses.

Another poet whom Loring Williams gave early encouragement to is Jeremy Engle, who was later chosen to be included in the Yale Series of Younger Poets. *AMERICAN WEAVE* also encourages poets by publishing annual chapbooks—a plan similar to the Durham Poetry Award. A partial list of these includes:

1. Mae Winkler Goodman, *FOAM AGAINST THE SKY*. Cover design by Margie Howells. 1945.

2. Virginia Moran Evans, *WHEN MARCH SETS FREE THE RIVER*. 1946.

3. Clement Wood, *THE EAGLE RETURNS*. 1947.

4. Joseph Joel Keith, *THE BLUE STAIRWAY*. 1948.

5. Cullen Jones, LANTERN SHADOWS. 1950.

Williams has found that many of those first published in these chapbooks later find publishers for their work.

The American Weave Press has also published the two following miscellaneous items:

1. VERSES BY SARAH ORNE JEWETT: A Centennial Edition. 1949.
2. Rexford Edison, SOMEWHERE. 1936.

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ANNOUNCING UNIVERSE INSIDE ME BY LAWRENCE BARTH

MILLEN BRAND says of this unusual book: 'This is a fresh and exciting work celebrating the human body in a new kind of "song of myself." It is like reading Whitman in prose form.' JOHN CIARDI says : 'I like your joys and indignations . . . especially the little boy's day in Chapter 8—a wonderful and terrible scene.' Explores the human body in terms of nature and our insane human society.

96 pages, paperbound, well printed \$2 per copy

Order from Lawrence Barth, 82 West 12th St., New York City 11

IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT BOOK

by David Gunston

Samuel Pepys insisted in arranging the books in his library not by author, subject, or even date, but by size. There is, perhaps, something to be said for it. At any rate, the physical size of a book is something too little studied by book-lovers generally; and if there currently seems to be almost general uniformity in book sizes, this has not always been so, nor need it necessarily remain so.

Is there any 'best size' for a book? Dr Johnson, whose opinion in these matters is invariably sound, held that the best books for size are those that can be held in the hand and carried to the fireside, or elsewhere, for convenient reading. 'A big book is as bad as a great misfortune,' said Callimachus, and many modern readers may agree, provided the volume is not so absurdly minute as to tax the eyes. The one-time fashion for miniature books was almost as bad as the vogue for elephantine folios. As Gibbon aptly remarked, 'eyes in those days must have been stouter and clearer.' On the whole, however, the worst excesses have been in the realm of outsize books, a trend that, with today's shortage of raw materials and limited household space, is unlikely to return.

Opinion as to the value of these large books has always been divided. 'I detest a quarto,' said Jane Austen; but Horace Walpole expressed his preference for that size rather than octavo, because 'a quarto lies free and open before one.' He was always surprised 'how long the world was pestered with unwieldy folios.' But Theophile Gautier, who had unorthodox ideas about books, detested octavos more than folios, since the latter could at least be used as stools or presses. As for octavos, he is vehement: 'The Devil take me, if

I can derive the slightest benefit from them; I cannot imagine why they were ever made.’ ‘No man,’ said Dr Johnson with more practical calm, ‘read long together with a folio on his table.’

That most particular bookman, Edward Fitzgerald, preferred Shakespeare to be in folio size: ‘One has need of a big book to remember him by, for Shakespeare is lost to the theatre.’ Folios could sometimes be colossal. Trevelyan has recorded that Macaulay read Plato ‘in a ponderous folio, sixteen inches long by ten broad, and weighing within half an ounce of twelve pounds.’ It was a German edition of 1602, containing nearly 1,400 closely printed pages of antique type ‘bristling with those contractions which are a terror to the luxurious modern scholar!’

Yet the hugest books of all have vanished from the literary scene, like the giant dinosaurs themselves. Dibdin once saw two ‘Brobdingnagian Choral Books’ in the Duke of Sussex’s library at Kensington Palace, a yard long by two feet wide. But even they were dwarfed by the super-tomes that contain ‘the Denon collection of illustrations, now reposing on a vast six-ton pivoted lectern in the Escorial. They measure six feet high by four feet across, bound in yellow leather with heavy brass clamps and clasps. They almost alone remain, bizarre museum pieces, like the similar enormous Aldines, contemporaneously described as ‘enormous armfuls that require strong persons to handle them.’ One looks at this kind of book, and one returns thankfully to Johnson with his commonsense dictum: ‘Books that you may carry to the fire and hold readily in your hand are the most useful after all.’ But always gross size should not be confused with mere portliness, which can be found among the handy octavos and which sometimes adds to their charm.

At the other extreme lie the little books, the ‘cosy corner companions’ that may slip from the heavy hand and so be cursed as roundly as the older giants. Those so small that

one cannot read them at all without a magnifying-glass must necessarily remain separate from tiny books generally: they, too, are museum pieces, however ingenious. A man once entered a London bookshop boasting that he carried a complete library in his small valise, which was full of these trying but nevertheless remarkable miniatures. W. T. Spencer owned a Bible of 1600 so small that, as he remarked, 'it would not cover your fingernail.' But this was not so old as the earliest known English miniature book, the *HOURS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN* (1500), which is printed in black letter and measures one-and-a-half inches by one inch ; or the tiny Bible in the Harleian collection, that will go into a walnut shell. The smallest printed book in the world is thought to be *GALILEO A MADAME CRISTINA DE LORENA*, which was printed in Italy in 1615 and measures only fifteen by ten millimetres, or scarcely more than half an inch square. One may see a copy of this unique work in the British Museum inside a miniature Chippendale bookcase containing a whole array of these microscopic volumes.

'All verse,' declaimed Edward Fitzgerald, 'should be in a handy pocketable size,' which is sound enough, ruling out the miniature freaks on the grounds of legibility. But Fitzgerald was known to reduce the size of certain volumes of his by the simple expedient of removing pages — notably those of passages which were distasteful to him ! Strain on the eyesight apart, it is probably a loss to reading generally that so few really 'pocketable' books, decently printed and bound in permanent form, are issued today. One thinks of the once ubiquitous Pocket Testaments, for example ; or the old *DIAMOND CLASSICS* and the midget Latin histories produced in abundance in the eighteenth century. It was once, in fact, possible to be known as 'a great author of little books,' literally little ones.

The modern trend is toward long and therefore very thick books, as opposed to large or small formats. I love those

large, still books,' said Tennyson. 'Novels of character must be long to be great,' averred Lord Grey of Fallodon ; and many contemporary authors seem to agree. On the other hand, Joubert contended that 'every work of genius is too long if it cannot be read in a day.' Holbrook Jackson summed it all up neatly by saying, 'A book should be small enough to hold in the hand, and large enough to engage the eye at a single glance ; it is thus a friend and a companion.' Few readers will disagree.

TOWARDS PRINT

by the Editor of Trace

After five years, more questions on policies — some point-blank, some oblique, and some implied — are directed at TRACE than in any earlier period. Expectedly, not a few are outlined unmistakably, if not plainly and crudely framed, with not-disinterested intentions of influencing and limiting the policies. These pseudo-catechisers employ the plural, hopefully, to link their planned versions of ‘right ways’ with those they then tacitly assume also must be endorsed by TRACE. No offense has been taken at this very human tactic. In fact, most of these ideas have been approved — and even when they’ve apparently differed amongst themselves.

Which points straight to Answer No. 1: the major policy here is impartiality amongst all magazines and presses whose editors and publishers are decently and sincerely advancing their ideas of what constitutes significant modern literary expression. And yet, this Editor does also have his own ideas (too). The idea has been to let each have his say, including the writer — but for none, also including the writer, to monopolise the pages to make any sort of propaganda vehicle of TRACE.

Rarely have subscribers been antagonised by things with which they’ve been in almost violent disaccord. Some of those most disapproving of the Editor’s views about their own magazines and writings have reaffirmed their support notwithstanding. And the intolerant few who have seemed convinced that everything should be 100 per cent in accord with their special notions, have not been and will not therefore be ignored in these pages — much less attacked for what may be misunderstanding animosities.

Not in contradiction to this, another policy will continue — that of endeavouring (and concededly no one can do this infallibly — and thus the inconsistencies which from time to time have been assailed) not to use this project to promote spurious works. Without saying, unethical practices will not be condoned; and the policy of toleration can't be stretched to publicise (even negatively) works the Editor believes are meretricious (or maybe vicious). The limits of neutrality do not therewith abut anything resembling hot war; but this may be labeled a border of intentional cold disregard of offers of certain pacts, if not (even so) any actual omissions of believed-alien rights to listings.

Review comments are pointless, for example, on posturing vagaries of any who chiefly are intent on being romantic 'bums' — that it, negatively protesting, while not even indicating wishes for improvement of conditions against which the usually-hysterical outcry rises. And they often specifically deny hope for any new human order which conceivably-or-not could eliminate situations in which to wallow in sentimental avant-garde self-pity. Please note that this is not condemning any artist for avoiding identification with any reform programme, as such. This is no announcement of preference for reformers or do-gooders — simply a demand for integrity, and contra all colours of blatancy. And the most-unrelievedly bitter satire also serves purposes — just let not the sole purpose of the writer actually be to advance his mistaken ego!

Finally, a policy of anti-finality. Besides not trying to become pontifical, because perhaps sometimes-admittedly opinionated, no 'last' word ever will be pronounced. Firmly as personal opinions at any given time must be stated, they'll never be offered as final verdicts. At least we've passed the stage where personal false pride or always-ludicrous notions of self-importance cause fears of losing face by inconsistencies. Or — and worse yet in eyes of those whose

so-called self-respect makes them deluded that their individualities have identifications with incontrovertible universals — where admissions of outright error are feared will bring total discredit.

Help of everyone interested in TRACE is solicited, then, to make it more than a mere source of information, to keep it stimulating and many-sided, if also principled. The tremendous support called forth by the recent appeal for assistance in enlarging circulation demands that TRACE be broadened. With this very issue, the circulation has grown nearly fifty per cent larger. The increased pages should offer material which takes into account that the magazine is reaching groups — particularly in the U.S.A. — which never before have been introduced to little magazines. At the same time, special direction must be maintained. All projects publicised will benefit both in new subscribers and new contributors; and the so-called ‘incestuous’ condition in modern writing should be somewhat rectified.

This is the first collection of one of the most interesting contemporary poets. The poems, of a high technical standard, are evocative, witty and stimulating.

This is the second selection of poems by this author, who has also published two novels. His work has been extensively published in England in national and literary periodicals, and also broadcast. This book includes all of his best recent work.

Sales in U.S.A. and Canada from Villiers’ Hollywood office, or benny penny press.

EDITORS WRITE

William N. Robson (CBS RADIO WORKSHOP): 'I think I can best describe the WORKSHOP's requirements by quoting our opening announcement: "The CBS RADIO WORKSHOP, dedicated to man's imagination — the Theatre of the Mind." We seek to produce those properties which either cannot be done at all or cannot be done as well in the visual medium. You may recall that the original COLUMBIA WORKSHOP first produced Archibald MacLeish's play, THE FALL OF THE CITY. Our interests range all the way from such a lofty enterprise to next week's production which will be a recorded interview with a juvenile delinquent. Submissions to the WORKSHOP must be accompanied by Release Forms which may be obtained in advance by applying through me at 6121 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood 28.'

John Hoffman (WE OFFER): 'I would welcome poetry from America. But it must be virile, affirmative, creative in purpose, individualistic if necessary, and purposeful to the degree that a poet knows beforehand that he is the shaper of man's thought and life. He externalises the internal, and that internal we would know about is the highest of which the poet as seer has visions. The poet for us derives from Plato's understanding of the poet, and Shelley's and Whitman's and D. H. Lawrence's. We want his voice speaking to men here and now unfolding the vision which his integrity and devotion sees . . .'

Jay Pell (THE COLORADO REVIEW): 'We have every intention of being as big and successful as possible. We have no intention of printing articles of explication or other Teutonic impedimenta. In other words, all creative; every issue an anthology of evolving literature. And this does not mean for an issue or two, but rather as a continuous policy: no articles about literature, so long as I can help it. Creative

articles? Yes . . . Eclectic? If eclectic is used in terms of moral viewpoint — no! If used in terms of treatment, we're as eclectic as Scarlet Sister Mary. But we have no intention of espousing murder simply because the knife comes in a literary ivory case. Art is tied to life-values : truth, beauty, sex, vitality, things like that, the sort of things that the phoney sophisticates himself into contempt for. Often, to be sure, these values are revealed or intensified through their contrasts: pain, despair, fear, corruption—but never are these celebrated or philosophically implied as positive good. There are some writers, including names, that we consider as dead wrong, or even vicious, as Gerald L. K. Smith; we won't print them. Anyone else, we're anxious to read—and the more experimental, the better. Which, to my mind, does not mean anything goes ; on the contrary, writing vital experimental poetry or prose demands a mastery of language far greater than traditional rehash. So, try us.'

David Ray (THE CHICAGO REVIEW) : 'Our office continues to receive a combined scarcity of really creative material and a stifling plethora of 'slick' fiction and cute poetry, written with formulae in mind. This latter type of writing is repugnant to our tastes, for we strongly believe that the writer's principal purpose should be to communicate a deeply-felt insight as movingly as possible, no matter what medium he is employing. Technical competence is essential, of course ; but technical competence of the highest sort could not save a manuscript devoid of an interesting or truly felt idea. In our poetry, we have tried to avoid adherence to any one school (this is in contrast to our own tradition, I might note), and we are now publishing what I believe to be the best poetry representative of several schools. We are trying to have an open-arms policy as far as medium or point of view are concerned, and we try to judge the artist in terms of his intentions and his success in fulfilling them. By this, e.g., I mean we are not seeking a particular kind of plotted fiction,

a particular kind of stylish poetry. We are not arbitrarily excluding certain “schools” of thought, or certain categorical media of expression. This is, I strongly believe, in direct contrast to our own tradition, and I hope it is in the direction of progress.’ (Note by the Editor of TRACE : Both to meet an obligation to give publicity to what has brought not-unjustified letters of complaint and to throw light on the foregoing, it must be stated that the new CR editors flatly have refused responsibility for material accepted by the prior editorial board. This isn’t the first time this has happened at the CR, nor is the CR the only magazine where this has happened — and we’re simply not going into discussion of the ethics involved.)

Barbara Fry (HARLEQUIN) : ‘We are interested only in experimental writing, fiction and poetry, no limit on length of content, no taboos, no partiality for “names.” In fact, the established writers may expect, with our most careful persual, our most severe criticism. We do not use printed rejection slips and will continue to offer plausible reasons for the rejection of a manuscript, although that practice has brought profanity and lawsuits upon us. We intend to publish a more vigorous and courageous literary magazine than we have seen and we will welcome articles offering a solution for what we consider the present unawakened, conformist state of publishing contemporary work in America . . .’

Gerd Stein (POEMS IN FOLIO) : ‘In January of this year we began this publication, combining the arts of contemporary poetry and fine printing in a fashion not done before in this country. Each month, by subscription, we publish one poem in broadsheet form designed and printed by one of a number of the finest presses. Our format encourages display in libraries, offices, and homes. We suspect that many people are hesitant if not actually afraid of reading contemporary poems, especially when confronted by a whole book or

magazine full of them. One poem at a time (after all, that's how they're written) attractively presented, seems much less formidable. We feel that this kind of presentation, at a cost within the means of those who are, or can be, interested, will create new audiences for contemporary poetry. Our poems will be chosen by a board of three well-known poets and editors : Stanley Kunitz, Henry Rago, and Richard Wilbur. During this first year, poems will be selected from amongst established poets, by invitation ; and after this, we will be interested in the work of lesser-known and unpublished writers. We shall also provide a specially-made portfolio for safekeeping of the broadsheets. At the end of the year, we will issue a long-playing recording of the twelve poems read by the poets, themselves.'

R. T. Baylor (danse macabre): '... to be published quarterly, that is currently accepting material in a macabre theme. Such short stories and poetry ... My ideal of the macabre is that which is found in Alexander Woollcott's MOONLIGHT SONATA ... or E. A. Poe's BURIED ALIVE. The poetry (also) must contain the macabre theme. Work must be free of cliché and it must be original. ... I hope to make danse macabre quite liberal.'

Evelyn Thorne (EPOS): 'It might interest TRACE readers to know that EPOS is considering featuring one long poem per issue. I mean, of course, in addition to other poems, and IF we can get good long poems. We feel that they are rather scarce, but we're willing to try. Also it might interest both poets and editors to know that we welcome correspondence. We think that there should be a firm basis of friendliness and cooperation between poetry journals themselves as well as between them and their writers. It is always a shock to us to learn that anyone connected with poetry publishing should think in terms of rivalry and competition. Dog-eat-dog methods still prevail in the business world. We should have better sense ...'

UTOPIA by Felix Anselm

Yes, we're dependent on machines for the satisfaction of most of our needs, including the acquisition of knowledge. In order to get an education, to learn the facts and figures, arts and skills necessary for a trade or profession, we have to turn on our TV sets, our radios, our micro-readers, home movies and linguaphones — all the wonderful audio-visual aids science and technology have provided for us. These devices are ingenious and useful, but they have also some drawbacks. In the case of microfilms and microcards, we are dependent upon the availability and functioning of the reading machines, and thus are chained to their locations; at best we have only a limited choice among the texts 'micro-canned' for public consumption. In the case of scheduled programmes, we are compelled to be passive during the whole process, we're just receivers; we have to take what is prepared for us whenever it is handed out—or leave it altogether. Individual, unorthodox tastes are extremely hard to satisfy, and it seems there are still some people with unorthodox tastes in evidence, some of them so extreme, in fact, that they refuse even to conform to the standards set up by some scattered clubs of non-conformists. And whatever we receive when we turn on our audio-visual sets, we receive simultaneously with millions of other people, just as passive and isolated as we, unable to influence the presentation by questions, comments, requests for repetition or for pauses allowing contemplation. We don't see our fellow listeners, to be sure, but we know they are there, for everything that is offered us in the way of information or entertainment is geared to the average standard which has been pre-determined by means of statistics based on scientific and almost fool-proof tests. And all this is assuming that the machines work; for if our receiving apparatus is out of order or the technicians servicing (I had almost said 'serving') the machines go on

strike, then the pressing of the magic buttons that make the milk of knowledge flow and stop is of no avail; then we find ourselves sitting before a dead object, a medium of communication that fails to communicate.

This, however, need not always be so. It may be a dream of science-fiction today, and the realisation of that dream may not come before the middle of the next century, but—mark my words—it is bound to come. Somebody some day will invent a way of putting thoughts into a form where they are entirely independent of a machine for their release; it will be possible for the individual person to carry a package of knowledge around with him wherever he goes; he will be enabled to dip into his private storehouse of wisdom or entertainment whenever his fancy strikes him, and he may set his own pace in doing so, he may pause to ponder and wonder, repeat, finish, and start anew; and he may have this experience as often as he wants to, absolutely independent of any schedule, any timed broadcast, any pre-arranged programme. And nobody will be able to determine for him just how deeply he may enter into any given subject, no explicator, interpreter, or commentator will be able to tell him just what to think of the question at hand. He will be left to his own devices, his own insights and errors.

More than that: he, the individual, will be in a position to pursue the most abstruse topics imaginable, to study subjects in which only he and maybe three or four other people in the whole world are interested, or for which but a few have the capacity of understanding. And he will, in consequence, be in a position to set down and convey his own thoughts on the subject to the other scattered few souls, contemporaries or yet unborn, who may some day want to know these thoughts of his. You shake your heads? You think such an invention, such a miracle, will be impossible? But haven't many of our present-day realities looked like

utopias in times past?

The consequences of this new invention for the whole human race stagger the imagination. Slavery, bondage of the mind, will be a thing of the past. All attempts at thought-control—and no doubt there will be such attempts yet—will be rendered futile in the end, for individuals will always discover a container of free, orthodox thought, a container of the truth as fearless men saw it, and they will find access to those sources, even in the face of obstacles and perils. It seems I keep using the word ‘individual’—and there is a reason for that: for this new invention will bring about neither more nor less than the preservation of the individual as contrasted to the mass man. It may therefore well be the salvation of culture from mechanised civilisation, and thus rank as the most important discovery of all times. You must pardon me if I sound like the advertisement for the latest Technicolor movie, but the beauty of my vision carries me away. The beauty — yes. For in addition to all its other qualities, this fabulous new object will be a thing of beauty. It will have a very short and simple name — it will be called : A Book.

Yes, we will retain our reading machines and microfilms and all the other mechanical means of communication, but we will use them only in lieu of the book, or in addition to the book, but never as a replacement for the book. There will be stores all over the world which will sell books printed in all languages known to man, and there will be large and small institutions in all civilised countries that will collect books and make them available to readers. These places will be called libraries, and I refer to them as institutions because they will be more than buildings for the storage of books. They will provide schooled persons, called librarians, who will be versed in many clever ways of organising the books and making them accessible to the readers. But these libraries of the future will never forget that their techniques

are only the means to ends, not ends in themselves ; that, in fact, the microcosms named books are the librarians' own professional *raison d'être*. They will therefore not be mere clerks, however skilled, but themselves be readers and lovers and maybe even writers of books. Oh, I know — all this sounds incredible and like the millenium, but it will come to pass, it will come to pass !

(The prophetic little science-fiction anachronism you've just read appeared originally in the NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY NEWS, where the author is curator of rare books, and was later reprinted in ANTIQUARIAN BOOK-MAN.)

SOME ITEMS RECEIVED

by the Editor of Trace

Inadequacies of these compressed comments are conceded ; but too much material also has forced omissions of details about several others, now just listed in ADDENDA. Because of the policy statement in TOWARDS PRINT, please note that no intentional slighting of those merely listed in this issue necessarily should be deduced.

Unquestionably of most general importance to the largest number of readers is AMERICAN LITERARY NATURALISM, A DIVIDED STREAM, by Charles Child Walcutt (OXFORD U. PRESS, about 40/-, and U. OF MINNESOTA PRESS, \$5). One obvious quality uncommon nowadays is from the author's not being one of those thin critics who have nibbled only smatterings outside what's then their truly-abortive speciality. Mr Walcutt is familiar with the history of philosophy and has read philosophers and vastly more, and even in the sciences. The volume chews solidly. Here's meat of learning, a pleasant profit to digestion, a contrast to the brittle cabbage served by typical professionals, those tiresomely-juiceless speculators on meanings, arrayers of verbalisations from minds so far superior to their own that their comments become impertinences. What this critic says often is enlightening in and for itself, and apart from the frequent bright lights cast on authors discussed.

And the poetry book which possibly may prove most valuable, both example of the period's finest creativities and influence to restore significant poetry to wider audience, is William Pillin's DANCE WITHOUT SHOES (GOLDEN QUILL PRESS, \$2.50). It's a BOOK CLUB FOR POETRY selection — yet, not to be damned for this reason. It holds the mature work of a leading lyricist in a time when to be a lyric poet is a severe

test. Here's a mind for hard-drilling thought and a generous refined pile of reading for plain joy. Mr Pillin mastered techniques long enough ago that he uses them with easier freedom than any of these callow, if inspired, lads and lasses of the more-current vogue use free-verse. Another thing — while too many of these rely on shock-effects which rereadings render soon boring, Pillin's lines stand wear. This reviewer happens to have perused most of these repeatedly, from the mss. and first appearances in periodicals . . . and they repeat wonderfully well.

Notable for other reasons is the *SELECTED POEMS* of Adam Mickiewicz (Commemorative Edition, NOONDAY PRESS, \$3), edited by Clark Mills, with critical appreciation by Jan Lechon, in new translations by leading English and American poets. Besides for making the great Polish poet better available, this merits attention for Mr Mills' general thesis — that, especially in poetry, meaningful communications and appreciations leading to best international exchanges are effected by translations which really are new poems inspired from the transliterator's contact with the personality behind the originals, for literal understandings of which he may rely on a non-poet linguist.

And a second book from OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS (32/-, and U. OF MINNESOTA, \$4) deserves larger treatment. This is Leonard Unger's *THE MAN IN THE NAME*, critical essays on the reading of poetry. A top virtue lies in the readability of his fresh observations on important works, most prior examinations of which have been in pretty obscure jargons. While, for this reader, it's still largely wasted energy to try to clarify (and although in so doing taking notable exceptions, as critic-on-critics) works of others who should have been clearer, themselves, in the first instances, Mr Unger gets in good blows for betterment of criticism at large. Note that his title comes from Conrad's *HEART OF DARKNESS*: 'He was just a word for me. I did not see the man any more than you do. Do

you see him? . . . Do you see anything?’ Bravo for Mr Unger for undertaking to help readers to see, not to confuse them with the mere erudite exhibitionisms spewed by many of his professorial fellows!

The physical size and broadening policies of BOTTEGHE OSCURE demand respect. Besides evidence in the 532-page Autumn 1956 issue, plans are for enlargement, with more new writers than heretofore, and an 850-page Anniversary Number in late 1957 (issues available to U.S.A. buyers at \$2.50, and in Great Britain, HAMISH HAMILTON Ltd., 15/-). Another meriting attention is CLIMAX, the offerings of which are not only of unusual orientation (jazz influence) but of experimental literary relevance, and introducing never-printed young writers, as well as non-fiction of psychological interest, notably serial publication of a book about the creative mind, by Neil Montgomery, a London psychologist with rare insights. Many other magazines should be mentioned; but the outstanding year-end event was appearance of the first COLORADO REVIEW, which, despite the title, is entirely devoted to creative work, and covers the widest range of any project in a long while.

When Carl Larsen writes about practically anything at all, he manages to be both powerfully and distinctly frank and yet to enwrap it with essential mystery. That he could do this in a violent protest such as the pamphlet, NOTES FROM A MACHINE SHOP (an initial release from henny penny press, \$1) surely passes one of the important tests of a young talent. He works for a livelihood in this machine shop—thus, inescapably close to him. And this is another test—to compose poetry on what’s distant neither in time nor space. Need it be added, no sentiment gushes here?

Contrasting, is work of another and older, but still-young poet, Cecil Hemley (TWENTY POEMS, \$1.50—VOYAGES) in a more-elaborate pamphlet illustrated by Kahlil Gibran. And yet, the contrast soon will be found mainly superficial. He’s

another forthright image-maker, though this deliberated selection comprises a much wider range than Larsen's. More practice and skill of course are manifest; and conversely, less originality is in evidence.

In a period when practically all anthologies are suspect, if not obviously deserving condemnation, either on the one hand because they're both stuffy and literally stuffed or on the other hand because they are the come-one-come-all sorts, those issued by EPOS are happy rewards. The 1956 edition (\$2) has neither undertaken to be inclusive nor representative of what has been in the magazine, simply an honest selection of what Editors Evelyn Thorne and Will Tullos have judged hold elements of permanence. An unusual unity results; for all the pieces hold in common the qualities these editors uniquely prize. Since brilliance of texture, lucidity, and earnest concerns are among these, the book is exceptionally readable as anthologies go. NB that this isn't the sort of tiresome unity in those anthologies where with names covered, one might fancy only a half-dozen different writers offered. Distinct individuality is another quality these editors also seek.

Another pamphlet is from ORIGIN (\$1)—BJARNI, by Gael Turnbull. As any familiar with Mr Turnbull's work could guess, this isn't another mere collection of improvisations upon sagas. Mr Turnbull has not turned to Iceland for escape, but for light on matters of close personal regard. At the close, appear two short pieces illustrative of his two chief manners in his own originals, one tightly schematic and the other in the slice-of-life mode, but so specifically directed that it's also actually succinctly self-contained . . . and which last phrase is not a bad brevity on his poetry generally.

One of the first NORDIC PRESS publications has been Robert Beum's own TWENTY POEMS (\$1). All these being on a high level, it's maybe unjust to comment that he's, like many others, deliberately and self-consciously experimenting, with

more heed to methods than to what inner voices drive or beckon him. Unjust, because Mr Beum has a long future in which to let himself go, and very likely it's good for him now to be making all these essays. They are, of course, essayings, no matter well done; for, an authentic personal voice doesn't speak here.

ADDENDA

Imbalance, with more notices of U.S.A. activities and publications than of British, must not be entirely blamed to the Editor's residence, but also to what seems an American literary revival, in contrast to a rather dull period in England. Known to British air-listeners and no doubt a better-famed writer here than in his own country, is W. S. Merwin, whose interpretation of Marivaux' comedy, *LES FAUSSES CONFIDANCES*, is scheduled for presentation at the Cambridge, Mass., *POETS' THEATRE*, 18th Feb. to 3rd Mar. On the other side of the continent, varied readings of poetry, and including many from abroad, continue with full programmes at the *POETRY CENTER*, San Francisco State College. To the south, the American painter and poet, Curtis Zahn, has established two regular monthly sessions at his Malibu home, one for graphic arts and one for avant-garde writings, with readings. . . . And this is not an inappropriate spot for reminder that the University of Chicago's Charles H. Sergel Drama Contest closes 1st Mar. (entries to Marvin Phillips. UC Theatre Director, Chicago 37, please).

In an effort to counter what is charged has been overstress on a new group of poets known as 'The Movement', an anthology containing new work of 'also new' poets who were not in the recent *NEW LINES* has been put forth by *POETRY & POVERTY*, 8 Eton Ave., London, N.W.3. And back in U.S.A., another project of similar intentions (viz., to anthologise those omitted from other selections) is the *UNDERGROUND ANTHOLOGY* of Leslie Woolf Hedley (*INFERNO*). Yet another anthology to print comparatively-obscure authors is *PRISMATIC VOICES*, from *FALCON'S WING PRESS* (see *Presses' Reports*). Loring Williams of *AMERICAN WEAVE* reports he's been editing an anthology of Ohio poets.

Two new works from Kenneth Patchen are appearing: POEMSCAPES (JONATHON WILLIAMS) and WHEN WE WERE HERE TOGETHER (NEW DIRECTIONS). GLORY NEVER GUESSES is reported sold out; but another silkscreen portfolio, FOR THE BAGPIPE PLAYER, remains available. . . . And neighbor James Schevill's THE BLOODY TENET was produced by the San Francisco Actor's Workshop, in January. This will be one of five new plays in THE CHRISTIAN ERA (MERIDIAN BOOKS). Turning to another category, a rare source book which has been twelve years since the author's death in appearing, has been published : THE FOSSILS : THE HISTORY OF AMATEUR JOURNALISM IN THE UNITED STATES, by Truman J. Spencer (obtainable through E. H. Cole, 54 Oakwood Rd., Newtonville 60, Mass., \$5). It represents years of research by one who was the best authority in the field.

Which leads to mention of a recent amateur press project — that of Robert Greenwood, editor of TALISMAN — of outstanding typographical interest. This is a series of folders with individual and distinctively-designed quarto inserts (\$1). The first had : THE WEATHERCOCK, by Ann Stanford ; PETER AT FOURTEEN, by Constance Carrier ; LORE, by Cleo Sibley Gross ; A CHRISTMAS IN NOVEMBER, by Frederick Bock ; and NOTES ON THE CONCEPT OF RISK, by the editor-pressman, himself.

Adding to the many poetry-pamphlet series appearing lately is that from THE POET (Scotland) : THE POET CAMEO SERIES, first two of which are booklets by Eric Nixon and Hyacinthe Hill. No subsidies are required, but sales are largely through the poets, personally.

International interest attaches to the recent 1956 AVALON poetry contest. Representative entries from all English-speaking nations were received ; and judgements were not made on limited special notions or definitions — no more than the judges were geographical neighbors. Space doesn't permit listing of winners — but first prize went to

Alfred Dorn, of New York City.

An interesting magazine project is that of THE MISCELLANEOUS MAN, with a large double number (11-12) devoted entirely to Gil Orlovitz.

Out-of-the-ordinary recent publications include : THE GREAT IMPROVISATION, by Adam Mickiewicz, translated by Louise Varèse (\$1.50, VOYAGES PRESS) ; UNIVERSE INSIDE ME, by Lawrence Barth (see adv.) ; KING LEAR : Warning or Prophecy by Abraham Schechter (privately at 32-43 90th St., E. Elmhurst, N.J., U.S.A., \$1) ; and january haiku and eye-poems, by Kenneth L. Beaudoin (privately, unpriced).

Late poetry publications have been: THE OLD MAN'S ROAD, W. H. Auden (VOYAGES, \$1.50); THE LONELY GUEST, Kate Brackett (AMERICAN WEAVE, a Durham Chapbook, \$1); THE WRATH-WRENCHED SPLENDOR OF LOVE, Judson Crews (MOTIVE, \$1); SEA HORSES, Lee Ver Duft (privately, 1722 Mondamin Ave., Des Moines 14, Ia., U.S.A., 25c.); THE GREENHOUSE IN THE GARDEN, Charles Edward Eaton (TWAYNE PUBLISHERS, \$2.75); THE EXILE, Frederick Eckman (NORDIC, \$1); HOWL, Allen Ginsberg (CITY LIGHTS, 75c.); PEBBLES IN THE SUN, Margaret G. Hirdes (from Cottage Bookshop, 1424 4th St., San Rafael, Calif., U.S.A., \$2.75); SLOW FIRE OF TIME, Conrad Pendleton (ALAN SWALLOW, \$2); A MORTAL PITCH, Vernon Scannell (VILLIERS, 7/6, or \$1.50, henny penny press); THE NAMELESS SIGHT, Poems 1937-1956, Alan Swallow (THE PRAIRIE PRESS, \$3); DESIGN IN A WEB, Evelyn Thorne (NEW ATHENAEUM PRESS, \$2); WIND IN THE REED, Stella Craft Tremble (BRUCE HUMPHRIES, \$2.75); THE ARDENT WANDERERS, Bernadette V. Wehrly (NEW ATHENAEUM, 50c.); LOGARHYTHMS, James L. Weil (POETRY LIBRARY, 489 5th Ave., N.Y.C., \$2.50).

Not frequently to be reported about books of poetry — TIME OF HAWKS, by Joseph L. Grucci (reviewed in TRACE for Aug., 1955 — MAYER PRESS, \$2.50) is being issued in a second edition. And same has just been reported of Allen Ginsberg's HOWL (see above). New issues are reported in

prospect of various English translations of Italian works (available in paperbacks, with the two versions en face), by Nino Caradonna, now teaching in St. Louis, Mo.

And one other book, the classification of which is a puzzle yet-unsolved by this writer: A PIECE OF BLUE HEAVEN, by Abraham Margolian (NEW ELISABETHAN PUBL. CO., 315 Queen St., Fredericton, N.B., Can., \$3.50). This concerns the Nazi Jewish persecutions, and is blurbed as prose poetry.