

# NEW VERSE

No 25

6d. every two months

May 1937

## IN THIS NUMBER

Poems by W. H. AUDEN, K. J. RAINE, FREDERIC PROKOSCH, GEORGE BARKER, KENNETH ALLOTT, PHILIP O'CONNOR, GEOFFREY GRIGSON and RUTHVEN TODD.

THE OXFORD COLLECTIVE POEM.  
DAY LEWIS AND THE BOOK SOCIETY. CAUDWELL'S  
"ILLUSION AND REALITY," reviewed by W. H. AUDEN.

### **Calamiterror**

GEORGE BARKER

6s.

### **Spain**

W. H. AUDEN

20 May. 1s.

### **The Fifth Decad of Cantos**

EZRA POUND

June. 6s.

### **The Modern Mind**

MICHAEL ROBERTS

27 May. 8s. 6d.

### **The Disappearing Castle**

CHARLES MADGE

27 May. 6s.

24 Russell Square FABER & FABER London, W.C.1

## EPISTLE TO D.T.

Meeting a monster of mourning wherever I go  
Who crosses me at evening and morning also,  
For whom are you miserable I ask and he murmurs  
I am miserable for innumerable man : for him  
Who wanders through Woolworth's gazing at tin stars;  
I mourn the maternal future tense, Time's mother,  
Who has him in her lap, and I mourn also her,  
Time whose dial face flashes with scars.

I gave the ghost my money and he smiled and said,  
Keep it for the eyeballs of the dead instead.  
Why here, I asked, why is it here you come  
Breaking into the evening line going to another,  
Edging your axe between my pencil fingers,  
Twisting my word from a comedy to a crime ?  
I am the face once seen never forgotten  
Whose human look your dirty page will smother.

I know what it was, he said, that you were beginning;  
The rigmarole of private life's belongings.  
Birth, boyhood, and the adolescent baloney. So I say  
Good go ahead, and see what happens then.  
I promise you horror shall stand in your shoes,  
And when your register of youth is through  
What will it be but about the horror of man ?  
Try telling about birth and observe the issue.

Epping Forest where the deer and girls  
Mope like lost ones looking for Love's gaols,  
Among the dilapidated glades my mother wanders  
With me as kid, and sadly we saw  
The deer in the rain near the trees, the leaf-hidden shit,  
The Sunday papers, and the foliage's falling world;  
I not knowing nothing was our possession,  
Not knowing Poverty my position.

Epping Forest glutted with the green tree  
Grew up again like a sea wood inside me.  
I had the deer browsing on my heart  
This was my mother; and I had the dirt.  
Inside was well with the green well of love,  
Outside privation, poverty, all dearth.  
Thus like the pearl I came from hurt,  
Like the prize pig I came from love.

Now I know what was wanting in my youth,  
It was not water or a loving mouth.  
It was what makes the apple tree grow big,  
The mountain fall, and the minnow die.  
It was hard cash I needed at my root.  
I now know that how I grew was due  
To echoing guts and the empty bag,  
My song was out of tune for a few notes.

Oh, my ghost cried, the charming chimes of coincidence !  
I was born also there where distress collects the rents !  
Guttersnipe gutless, I was planted in your guts there,  
The tear of time my sperm. I rose from  
The woe-womb of the poverty-raped mind,  
The empty hunger large with air's thunder.  
Remember the rags that flattered your frame  
Froze hard and formed this skin my rind.

So close over the chapter of my birth  
Blessed by distress, baptised by dearth.  
How I swung myself from the tree's bough  
Demonstrating death in my gay play,  
How the germ of the sperm of this ghost like a worm  
I caught from the cold comfort of never enough :  
How by being miserable for myself I began,  
And now am miserable for the mass of man.

GEORGE BARKER

# BLUES

(FOR HEDLI ANDERSON)

Ladies and gentlemen, sitting here,  
Eating and drinking and warming a chair,  
Feeling and thinking and drawing your breath,  
Who's sitting next to you? It may be Death.

As a high-stepping blondie with eyes of blue  
In the subway, on beaches, Death looks at you;  
And married or single or young or old,  
You'll become a sugar daddy and do as you're told.

Death is a G-man. You may think yourself smart,  
But he'll send you to the hot-seat or plug you through the heart;  
He may be a slow worker, but in the end  
He'll get you for the crime of being born, my friend.

Death as a doctor has first-class degrees;  
The world is on his panel; he charges no fees;  
He listens to your chest, says—"You're breathing. That's bad.  
But don't worry; we'll soon see to that, my lad."

Death knocks at your door selling real estate,  
The value of which will not depreciate;  
It's easy, it's convenient, it's old world. You'll sign,  
Whatever your income, on the dotted line.

Death as a teacher is simply grand;  
The dumbest pupil can understand.  
He has only one subject and that is the Tomb;  
But no one ever yawns or asks to leave the room.

So whether you're standing broke in the rain,  
Or playing poker or drinking champagne.  
Death's looking for you, he's already on the way,  
So look out for him to-morrow or perhaps to-day.

W. H. AUDEN.

## THE FESTIVAL

The cello sobs, the symphony begins,  
The fever flutters in the violins,  
A hundred earrings tremble in the dark,  
Sleek in their velvet squat the seven sins.

And sauntering down the river you and I  
Discern the baffling planets in the sky,  
Through the tall branches watch the tell-tale feet  
And hear the vices of the summer sigh.

The castle fades, the distant mountains fade,  
The silence falters on the misty glade,  
The ducal lanterns hover on the hill,  
The cathedral moves into the evening shade.

Softly upon you falls the casual light.  
Your hair grows golden and your eyes are bright  
And through the warm and lucid Austrian air  
In love our arms go wandering tonight.

Far to the east extend the ancient seas,  
The dear Danubian banks, the archaic trees  
Among whose pillars still the restless dead  
Dispel their homesick odors on the breeze;

Crete blows the night across her wicked floors  
And Sicily now locks her little doors,  
And up the Adriatic leap the clouds  
And hurl a shadow on her sucking shores.

And northward through the benches of the park  
Stealthily moves the thin conspiring dark :  
The thieves and fairies huddle by the bridge  
And hear the sickly hounds of Brussels bark.

In Norway demons dwell among the caves  
Whose walls are bitten by the haggard waves  
And on the emerald Carpathian slopes  
The rancid wolves explore the village graves;

Each hungry orphan climbs into his bed  
Afraid to face the usual midnight dread;  
Across the cobbles past the pock-marked church  
The hags go hustling with their crusts of bread,

The cripples stumble slowly up the stairs  
And toss their curses on the stuffy airs,  
The cellar-eyed, the sleepers in the ditches  
Mutter their simple paranoiac prayers.

Listen, the rhythms of the night begin :  
The little lamps are flickering in the inn :  
Out through the door into the garden glides  
The fretful elegance of the mandolin :

The night flies on, the coming tempest flies,  
And all our lovely neighbours close their eyes.  
Silent the paths of longing and regret  
Which all our learning taught us to despise.

And you and I look out upon the stream  
And by the lantern's mild and mirrored gleam  
The inverted figures on the shore perform  
The silly baroque postures of a dream.

O who is there to answer you and me ?  
The sky, the summer, the prolific sea ?  
The ground is shaking and we must not wait  
Who one more moment feel alone and free

And hear the angels with their wingèd fears  
Like serpents hiss their carols in our ears  
And rediscover on this festive night  
The hatreds of a hundred thousand years.

FREDERIC PROKOSCH

# FATA MORGANA

While those were on the march to their desires  
Through painful brilliance of Iberian day  
These arguing remained by their homefires  
Still living in the old, unhealthy way.

## I.

I have experienced little in the past  
That can entitle me to reconcile  
The haven of a rentier indolence  
With theories that I have endured the worst.

Books, idle books, and hours, unfruitful hours,  
Weigh on my genius and lay waste my will,  
While heavenly wings are without power to raise  
Me from beneath the stone with which they kill.

The younger ones do better on the whole,  
They still are free, they lie with whom they please,  
There is no good in living on my dole  
And leaving freedom, with its price, to these.

Stupidity, preservative of honour,  
And idleness, the crowning joy of home,  
Incompetence, a woman's highest favour,  
I know that they will try to suck me down.

But I, who have no words, nor heart, nor name,  
Can still suppose how it would feel to march  
Guided by stars along the roads of Spain  
Because of what I learn, but cannot teach.

Can words invent gorillas, sweats, and murders ?  
Can breaths of local breezes set us free ?  
Or the great tempest of invading soldiers  
Redeem us from our own captivity ?

## II.

Is it a rape, when God begets in virgin  
A pure unhallowed embryo, himself ?  
Is it forbidden tree for us to sin ?  
Sin ! with the tempter at the source of life ?

And can a woman still be heaven's chosen ?  
Impartial planets bear the godly names ;  
And I, unstable as the changeless ocean  
Cannot resist the places and the times.

I have had beauty, children, home and friends,  
Culture and snobbery and food and wine,  
And all are wasted in pursuit of ends  
That others urged, but were no ends of mine.

But even now reproaching stars can sound  
From death's horizon into which they dive  
And the hated northern seas resound  
Upon the pebbly shore, provincial grief.

Oh was it I who found the earth still green,  
And was it I in natural rapture went  
A child that saw and yet was never seen  
Through days with privacy and wisdom spent.

Now far away from there, music, in vain,  
Travels the railway journey to my brain.  
The sleepers are so numerous and so old  
I do not try to count them from the train.

Oh railway journey to the holy wells,  
Oh train, where somewhere I will find my love,  
Oh many doors, partitions, stops and cells,  
Give way for me, and make me force to move.



### III.

Last night as I was marching on the road  
That leads my unknown comrades to the wars  
I was more free and happy as I trod  
White dust between the dark and shadeless trees.

There was a village with no people left  
It was like England, but it was in Spain,  
The awnings were in ribbons on their posts,  
We paused to look, and then marched on again.

The villagers had learned to know defeat,  
We were not sure that vengeance could prevail.  
The enemy was safe in his retreat,  
And our advance was pretty sure to fail.

Did I then hope to reason with the guns ?  
Or did I hope to pass the bullets by ?  
And did I pity the old men whose sons  
Upon the white plains are about to die ?

No, I had fear enough to keep me silent  
And hope that soon the face of things might change.  
It was an ordinary and dull event  
To shorten mile by mile the rifle's range.

I am no longer, alas, a charmed life,  
One whom the gods will favour, ill can spare,  
But target for the bullet and the knife  
Like any other soldier, wolf, or hare.

Yet it was brave to keep our secrets close  
That we had once had egoism to lose.  
We swallowed back our pride, obeying orders  
From leaders that in wiser days we chose.

It is remarkable to dream so much  
And yet wake up to spend another day  
With all the people we can only touch  
With tales of long ago and far away.

K. J. RAINE

## IN MUNICH, CITY OF ART

In Munich, City of Art, it is true that the cherry trees  
Are not attentive: the buds still populate  
the black branches.

But in Munich, City of Art, is a street where the Hand  
Shoots out (under penalty), where sentries and lamps  
Sanctify hatred

And in Munich the growl of soft Adolf comes  
In heated thunder from the pure mountains  
Of the foolish peasantry

(Odd that in Munich the bolts of rain which follow  
And flush the streets hit even the frequent and  
Important Nazis)

And in Munich, City of Art, Matisse and Delacroix  
And Constable have left the Pinakothek for painters  
The thunder approves

And in Munich, City of Art and Opera and so on, Rubens  
Is remaindered with his broad landscapes and ladies; and  
*Mein Kampf* is expensive,

And in Munich City of Art etc., Adolf, Adolf on  
a billion p.c.'s, smiles like a female, and pats  
the nordic Backfisch.

In Munich, City of Art, in the Botanic Gardens, I  
was, I must say, surprised: round the Poison Ivy is still a fence,  
And a placard.

In the Deutsches Museum the hand anyway can be  
held in the drip of goaty rosewater, in the scented  
room, for nothing.

GEOFFREY GRIGSON

## POEM

From this wet island of birds and chimneys  
who can watch suffering Europe and not be angry ?  
for death can hardly be ridiculous,  
and the busking hysteria of our rulers,  
which seemed so funny to our fathers,  
dirties the newsreel for us.

The small boy finds his jerseys small for him :  
and we have outgrown our patriotic fauna  
with their St. Vitus behaviour,  
seeing beyond our noses  
a land never to flow with milk and honey,  
but winter a stonethrow off and no more roses.

And I imagine sometimes at night emerging  
the stunted pasty wonder of the slum,  
like a cracked bicycle frame  
on which a short vocabulary is hung,  
to lift transparent hands to the amazing  
sky and blow full-time.

For he is mocked both in and out of season  
on this and all the other silly shores,  
and for this sin without compassion  
the sea shall have our heirs,  
and the nebulae climbing nowhere in the dark  
know that this rural world is dead like Greek.

KENNETH ALLOTT

## PATCH

Caught into a brown study with the stars  
tonight the foreign bodies of the hills,  
as innocent of every care  
as the old lovers in the garden were,  
shrug at our vehement blood :  
the wind clamps the ice on the random fells.

Tomorrow we may rub our eyes and cry,  
the livestock perish in the floods,  
the timepiece cease to item in the weeds,  
and one of us be sent incognito  
beyond the last peak and the flurried snow,  
and no philosopher discover why.

Meanwhile the timbers creak and the lake blows white  
against the lost circumference of the shore,  
yet like the comfort of the Israelite  
even the wolvish pines tonight  
queerly affirm as more than rumour  
the meticulous sweetness of the indifferent year.

KENNETH ALLOTT

## “ BLUE BUGS IN LIQUID SILK ”

blue bugs in liquid silk  
talk with correlation particularly like  
two women in white bandages

a birdcage swings from the spleen of ceiling frowning her soul in  
large wastes  
and a purple sound purrs in basket-house  
putting rubies on with red arms

enter the coalman in a storm of sacks  
holding a queenly egg-cup  
the window stares and thinks separately her hair  
impartially embankment  
to the flood of her thought in motionless torrent  
roundly looking the ladies

there is no formula for disruption of pink plaster  
nor emotions to bandage the dead

PHILIP O'CONNOR

# AUDEN

The next number of New Verse will  
be a special double number on the  
poems of W. H. AUDEN. It  
will cost one shilling,  
and will appear in  
September

## MEETING BY THE GJULIKA MEADOW

He had in his hand a red plant  
Picked near the snow under  
The suspicious frontier, when we met  
By the Gjulika meadow.

And he spoke slowly in English,  
And the black thunder bucked about  
And the hard rain decidedly hit  
Round the broken hut,

And he made a fire, the Slovene  
With the off-white face,  
Where it was still dry under  
The pines; and he took

Out a black and bent copper  
Coffee-pot, and sugar, and  
Some bread, with garlic. The rain-drops  
Fried in the fire

And we were warm and wet,  
And sipped at the very hot  
Coffee (the Slovene learnt his  
English at Boston)

And talked under the thunder  
About Europe, about dealing  
In furs, about thunder, about rain  
And the invisible trout

In the silk-blue Sava, and  
About Europe again, and frontiers.  
His Zagreb boots were thin; and  
He was taking the plant

Picked by the snow under the  
Nervous frontier to his lovely  
Daughter underneath in the farm,  
Who was crippled

By her mother's sin (what sin ?),  
He said. We talked of Europe,  
Europe; and the immature frogs  
Slipped in the wet grass.

The thunder was sneering, and  
In the lower woods we enjoyed  
The lemon sun again, and the scent  
And magenta of cyclamens.

GEOFFREY CRIGSON

## P O E M

I walk at dawn across the hollow hills,  
Throwing egg-shells at the little moon.  
Explosive for my bombs are puffball spores,  
Measured out carefully, with a silver spoon.

Up there the heavy artillery is banked  
To resist the bee that booms along the valley;  
Machine-gun nests are placed among the crags  
In case the eagles dare to make a sally.

Single-seater planes engage the curlew  
Circling above the peat-moss and bog-myrtle.  
The wound the old tup got an hour ago  
Has since, I regretfully state, proved fatal.

Luckily the blind-worm does good work  
And dodges past the enemy's best scout;  
He rallies the wethers and attacks their rear,  
Turning their predicted victory to a rout.

I walk at evening on the shattered moors,  
Placing tea-leaves on the ancient cairns  
In memory of the old tup and the dead plover.  
I walk at midnight on the trampled ferns.

RUTHVEN TODD

## OXFORD COLLECTIVE POEM

The document that follows gives another angle on a possible connection between MASS-OBSERVATION and poetry. As explained in the last number of *New Verse*, the main function of the Observer is to *describe* the components of social behaviour in an objective, scientific fashion. This is, to paraphrase Pavlov, "an attempt to elucidate the activities of complex structures in their fullest range directly, seeking for rigid laws governing this activity, or, in other words, trying to define all those conditions which determine the form this activity takes at every instant and in all its variations." But as soon as the Observers begin to *describe* this activity, each one uses a style and each style incorporates a certain amount of fantasy—not necessarily individual or literary fantasy, because he is instructed to keep these out, but social fantasy representative of his class environment. Every report is a landscape with figures: the sharp focus is on the figures, and the landscape retires into varying degrees of subjectivity. In order to get focussed onto this hinterland, the background of social fantasy, we have been experimenting on what for lack of a better name has been termed the "dominant image of the day." The 12 Oxford observers whose report follows took this experiment a step further, and they have produced what is virtually a "landscape" for their Oxford environment. It is a well-known fact that poetry has an intimate relation to social landscape: this quality has been deliberately exploited in the Oxford experiment.

It can in fairness be called an experiment, because, like Pavlov's experiments on conditioned reflexes, it can be repeated at any time and as often as desired, with any number of variations. It therefore differs from the individualist poem, which can only be written once, under an exceptional stimulus (love, alcohol, political passion, etc.), by an exceptional person. It requires no stimulus of this kind. There is nothing to prevent this kind of collective poetry from being turned out continuously—like daily journalism it is a non-stop record of events.

Technical improvements have been devised for future work along similar lines, but these preliminary results seem to deserve publication.

C. M.



## METHOD

Twelve undergraduates, all interested in literature and the writing of literature, co-operated in the Oxford collective poem, which took just a month to produce.

The first stage consisted of collecting "images." At the end of each day a member of the mass would note in a log the scene, event, subject, or phrase, which had most occupied his mind during the day. This predominant image we preferred to be indicated by external rather than internal evidence; the image might present itself in the form of a photograph in a newspaper, then an incident in a film, thirdly perhaps an encounter in the street; in other words, the image was expected at least to verify itself through the medium of coincidence. This practice was maintained by each member over a period of three weeks: on some days we found ourselves unable to sort out an image or else we cancelled our choice as artificial; at other times we found the images to be too private because we had failed to find an external confirmation: but each observer supplied on average about a score of images. Listing these we examined them to find if any overlapped and recurred in different persons. A few of them did. For example, "floods" occurred twice; so did "shoes." We had the much more interesting case where there was a strong common feature in a whole series of slightly-differing images: "washing and mending red clothes," "red plums," "a red dress," "red hair," etc. In these cases we tried to abstract the essential details and so form a single image. We selected the six images which appeared most. In order of frequency they were

The red garment of a woman.  
Stone steps leading to a stone building.  
Shoes.  
Trees against the skyline.  
The ticking of a clock.  
Smoke issuing from a pipe.

Next we met and composed each a single pentameter line dealing with each in turn of the chosen images. As the twelve were completed in each instance, having been printed in block capitals to ensure anonymity, they were pasted together on one sheet and handed round. We each put a mark against the line we preferred,

provided it was not our own; and so took a vote to select one line for each of the six images. Of the sets of twelve, it was instructive to note that the best efforts were made in connection with the images that headed the order of frequency. "Mount those steps towards that stony eye," "Steps which lead to the stone end of love," "The curling steps whose stone is beggary." The lines which emerged were

Lying in red and labouring for the dawn  
Stone kings irresolute on a marble stair  
The tongues of torn boots flapping on the cobbles  
Trees with their fingers feel towards the sky  
It ticks, and stops, and waits for me to tick.  
Smoke rises from the pipes whose smokers die.

The task now was to integrate these lines and their ideas into a unified poem. A week-end was allotted for the work; and the stipulations made that the poem was to be in pentameters, not being less than twelve lines, not exceeding eighteen. One or two people chose to use a stanza form, some wrote in rhymed couplets, and there was one unrhymed poem. When the members re-assembled with their poems (still kept anonymous) they proceeded to submit their work to one another for alteration. Each poem went round the circle and we were all expected to make any alteration we thought fit; no one was allowed to delete an alteration made in his own poem. The criticism of this process is that the emendations proved insufficiently radical. Single words alone received any real attention; the alterations of one man were often rejected by his successor; and the consequence was that the traces of the individual were not removed as thoroughly as they might be. And when a vote was finally taken on the best of the final versions, the original was still too visible under the corrections, and it was on the original that some members really voted rather than on the new synthesis. When the next mass-poem is written more time should be allotted for this stage, so that each poem can be entirely remoulded if necessary.

At the same time, the poem which emerges is much more a collective account of the Oxford than of any single person in the group. It has the Oxford scene with its stone buildings, its situation in a valley, and its associations and history, with a moral.

It has the sense of decay and imminent doom which characterises contemporary Oxford. It expresses a feeling of a responsibility together with a sense of that responsibility being neglected now and in the past. This reflection of the immediate scene is what is looked for in a collective poem. The experiment which ought to follow is the synchronous composition of a collective poem by bodies in different places and then a comparison of results.

### THE POEM

Believe the iron saints who stride the floods,  
Lying in red and labouring for the dawn:  
Steeple repeat their warnings; along the roads  
Memorials stand, of children force has slain;  
Expostulating with the winds they hear  
Stone kings irresolute on a marble stair.

The tongues of torn boots flapping on the cobbles,  
Their epitaphs, clack to the crawling hour.  
The clock grows old inside the hollow tower;  
It ticks and stops, and waits for me to tick,  
And on the edges of the town redoubles  
Thunder, announcing war's climacteric.

The hill has its death like us; the ravens gather;  
Trees with their corpses lean towards the sky.  
Christ's corn is mildewed and the wine gives out.  
Smoke rises from the pipes whose smokers die.  
And on our heads the crimes of our buried fathers  
Burst in a hurricane and the rebels shout.

## BOOKS NEWLY PUBLISHED

*Illusion and Reality.* By Christopher Caudwell. (Macmillan. 18s.)

We have waited a long time for a Marxist book on the æsthetics of poetry. *Axel's Castle* was a beginning but it was about individual matters, not fundamentals. Now at last Mr. Caudwell has given us such a book.

*Illusion and Reality* is a long essay on the evolution of freedom in Man's struggle with nature, and of the parts that art and science play in that evolution since both are concerned in their different spheres with making man conscious of necessity, of the necessity of his affective instincts and the external forces of Nature, without which knowledge he is a slave :

“ A mathematical demonstration cannot be said to persuade. It appears either true or false; if true it simply injects itself into our minds as an additional piece of outer reality. If false, we reject it as mere word spinning. But if we accept it we are no more *persuaded* of its truth than we are persuaded of the truth of a horse standing in front of us. We do not accept it, we see it. In the same way, in art, we are not persuaded of the existence of Hamlet's confusion, or Prufrock's seedy world-weariness. . . . We feel so-and-so and such-and-such. We are no more persuaded of their truth than of the truth of a toothache.”

After a preliminary discussion of how the mythology of an undifferentiated tribal economy crystallises out with the increase in division of labour and class into science, art, and religion, Mr. Caudwell goes on to trace the history of English Poetry from the Elizabethan period to our own, and to show the relation between its changes in technique and subject matter and the changes in economic production.

The second half of his book is a discussion of the subject-object relation, and of the essentially social nature of words, art and science, an approach which enables Mr. Caudwell to make the clearest and most cogent criticism of Freud and Jung, while using their discoveries, which I have ever read:

“ Economic production requires association which in turn demands the word. For men to work together, that is, to

operate together non-instructively they must have a common world of *changeable* perceptual reality, and by changeable I mean changeable by their actions; and by changeable by their actions I mean predictable change, such as dawn and eclipse, and locatable change such as 'here' and 'there.' . . . Hence by means of the word, men's association in economic production continually generates change in their perceptual private worlds and the common world, enriching both. A vast moving superstructure rises above man's busy hands which is the inflection of all the change he has affected or discovered in ages of life."

"Although there is a similar psychological mechanism at work, art is no more neurosis than thought is dream. And the difference is precisely this, that science and art have a social content. The reality around which the extraverted hysteric or cyclothermic distorts the theory is private reality, a reality that contradicts the whole of the social theory of reality in the consciousness. This contradiction instead of leading, as in science to a synthesis of the private experience with the social theory of reality, demanding a change of both, leads to conduct which denies the social theory of reality. . . . The psychological mechanism of science, because its reality is public and true, produces in the sphere of theory an ego which is the very opposite of that of the cyclothermic extravert—an ego which is drained of effect and quality, which is neutral, passive, and serenely conscious of necessity. Of course this very reality, because it is without the dynamism and appetite of the instincts, requires the emotional reality of art for its completion. It is true, therefore, that a world which tried to live by science alone would deny its theory in practice and show the nerve storms of a cyclothermic, not because science is cyclothermic but because it is only one part of concrete living.

"The reality around which the psychasthenic neurotic or schizophrenic disturbs the outside world is a private ego, his own private desires and appetites. Around this he arrays a whole mock world (compulsions, phobias, etc.). But the psychological mechanism of art, because its ego is public and noble, produces in the sphere of theory a world which is beautiful and strong. This world, because it is drained of

necessity, requires the mechanism of science for its realisation. A world which lived by art alone would deny its theory in practice and live in a beautiful world of dreams, while all its actions would produce only ugliness and misery."

I shall not attempt to criticise *Illusion and Reality* firstly because I am not competent to do so, and secondly because I agree with it. Nor shall I summarise it, because a summary always reads like a strict generalisation, and this book requires to be carefully read in its entirety to appreciate the force and depth of Mr. Caudwell's argument.

This is the most important book on poetry since the books of Dr. Richards, and, in my opinion, provides a more satisfactory answer to the many problems which poetry raises. W. H. AUDEN

*Spain.* By W. H. Auden. (Faber and Faber. 1s.)

A six page poem, rather Perse-like in the beginning, which collects all human history under the climacteric of Spain. It is not very new Auden, but it is an organic, grave, sensible and moving statement, more reasonable and more free of bigotry than any other political poem written for some years.

All royalties on its sale go to Medical Aid For Spain.

*Calamiterror.* By George Barker. (Faber and Faber. 5s.)

The first ten cantos of a long poem.

*A Further Range.* By Robert Frost. (Cape. 5s.)

New poems.

*Transition No. 26.* (Faber and Faber. 3s.)

Paintings, sculpture, etc. Poems by Arp, Eluard, and particularly Raymond Queneau, *Chêne et Chien*. Final fragments of Joyce's "Work in Progress," which is to be published complete this year.

*A Catalogue of English and American First Editions of Writings by T. S. Eliot.* (Compiled by Donald Gallup, Graduate School, Yale. 50 cents.)

Very useful catalogue of the Yale University Library exhibition of Eliot. It also lists essays and poems in periodicals.

## DAY LEWIS JOINS UP

Cecil Day Lewis, the poet (a member of the International Association of Writers for the Defence of Culture) has joined the selection Committee of the BOOK SOCIETY.

The Hon. Chairman of this Committee is Mr. Hugh Walpole.\* The members are

1. Professor George Gordon, President of Magdalen College, Oxford. ("In this position he is in direct succession to a line of scholars and men of letters. . . . He served with distinction in the war.")
2. Clemence Dane. ("Her play, *A Bill of Divorcement*, had a long run in London, and was followed by *Will Shakespeare*, which, in the opinion of many critics, was a yet more remarkable performance. She is regarded as one of the most brilliant women of her generation.")
3. Sylvia Lynd. ("Before adopting literature as a career she passed through the Slade School and the Academy of Dramatic Art.")
4. Edmund Blunden. ("Primarily a poet, his sensitiveness to the world around him, linked with his love of the traditions of English writing, drew him into prose.")

Ex-Committee member: Mr. J. B. Priestley.

"The Book Society system solves the problem of personal selection." . . .

"You receive, on the day of publication early each month, a *first edition* of a book which has been chosen by the Cttee from the advance proofs sent by all publishers. It may be an excellent novel, a first-class biography, or a lively, well-written book of adventurous travel."

"I live in a remote district, and one of the greatest thrills I now have is the monthly reception of a neat green box, containing I know not what book. But I do know it will be something as fresh as the first primrose."

Recent primroses :

Autobiography of Noel Coward.

News from Tartary, by Peter Fleming.

\* Now Sir Hugh Walpole, natural successor to Sir Anthony Hope Hawkins.

The Fountain, by Charles Morgan ("The Charles Garvice of the Upper Classes.")

Hatter's Castle, by A. J. Cronin.

Bengal Lancer, by F. Yeats-Brown.

Some recommendations :

Ego, by James Agate.

Victoria of England, by the Old Jane.

Shakespeare as a Dramatist, by [Sir] John Squire.

The Uncelestial City, by Humbert Wolfe.

The Friendly Tree, by C. Day Lewis.

(Also Shakespeare's Complete Works.)

The Book Society is a Limited Company pimping to the mass bourgeois mind and employing 'distinguished' members of the literary underworld, *adopters* of literature as a profession, writers each of no more real existence than a tick lost in the last five minutes of a cuckoo clock. On this Committee, Mr. Day Lewis no doubt will be Change, Revolution, Youth, the Rising Generation. But this ends his stance as the Poet writing thrillers (result : respectful, knowing reviews of each thriller) and establishes him as the Thriller Writer, the Underworld Man, the yesterday's newspaper, the grease in the sink-pipe of letters who has been posed for ten years as spring water.

Think of Hardy, Yeats, Housman, Flecker, Pound, Lawrence, Eliot, Graves, Auden, Spender, Madge—could one have gone so treasonably against what is real? Mr. Day Lewis and his Legend are now liquidated : the liquid has flowed to its oily shape and low level in the old sardine tin of Respectability. Mr. Lewis has drained himself off, a Noyes, a Binyon, a Squire, a dullard.

We can get along without him.

GEOFFREY GRIGSON

---

All communications UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE, trade, editorial and advertising, to 3, Wildwood Terrace, N.W. 3. Manuscripts, for loss of which no responsibility can be taken, cannot be returned unless they are accompanied by an addressed envelope, stamped or with an international reply coupon.

The annual subscription to NEW VERSE is 3s. 6d. (or for Canada and America 1 dollar). Single numbers will be sent for 7d. to any part of the world.

---

NEW VERSE is published for the proprietors at No. 3, Wildwood Terrace, N.W. 3. and printed by BILLING AND SONS LTD., Guildford and Esher.