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# The Saturday Review

## of LITERATURE

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

VOLUME I

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 1925

NUMBER 35

### Heroes and Hero Baiting

THE ill-stomached wielder of invective and prince of rumbling rhetoric, Thomas Carlyle, in a book now little read, made one fact so indubitable that it should not have been again forgotten. The great poet may be attacked where his defenses are weakest, he may be aptly described as cantankerous in his private life, mistaken in his greatest projects, sown with faults in his literary style; he may be jeered at, compared to his disadvantage with lesser men; but deny him greatness, and a line, the memory of some star ypointing verse, sweeps over the peevish critic and leaves not a print on the sand.

In a recent number of *Harper's Magazine*, Mr. Ernest Boyd, an Irishman who remembers Cromwell, has undertaken "A New Way with Old Masterpieces" which proves to be not new at all, but an assemblage of old complaints against the sour austerity of John Milton, concluding with the astounding argument that a puritan can never be a poet, the proof thereof being that Milton dropped poetry for the "Biblical brawls" of the Civil War, and tried to verify Calvinism in "Paradise Lost." As well say that you cannot be an Irishman and a critic.

Milton, it appears from this new way of disposing of greatness, emerged from his seven years at Cambridge with to his credit a poem on an infant dying of a cough. If Mr. Boyd had read more Milton and fewer commentators he might have remembered the "Hymn to the Nativity," and those lines in which an infidel might take joy—

Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,

Hath took no print of the approaching light,  
And all the spangled hosts keep watch in squadrons bright.  
He then retired for five years of "unruffled" meditation where he wrote some few poems in which nature is "impaired" (the reference is to "Comus," "Lycidas," "L'Allegro," and "Il Penseroso"), and occasionally "realized the impulse to poetry" in the more Lydian portions of these poems and presumably in Comus's defense of the rites of Venus. He marries and squabbles with his wife (the sonnet on his later, happy marriage, "But Oh! as to embrace me she inclined, I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night," is irrelevant to this critic's picture and so omitted). And then the great conflict of King and Parliament being toward, he wrote the "pithy platitudes" of "Areopagitica," and sacrificed his sight over "scurrilous pamphlets" in a contest

In liberty's defense, my noble task,  
Of which all Europe rings from side to side,

in which Mr. Boyd, a little scurrilous himself, asserts he showed himself merely a more proficient classical scholar than the most boorish zealot in Cromwell's army who ever speared a Papist in Ireland. Afterwards came "Paradise Lost," with some "intermittent respiration" of poetry in its drab expanses. The Restoration drama of Farquhar and Vanbrugh lives; Milton is dead except for the annotators.

Thus does Mr. Boyd compose a caricature of Milton every line of which is true, except for some errors of interpretation, and the whole absurdly false. For he has studied Milton without his poetry, which is much as if he had written of Keats as a druggist who could not compose epics, or Shelley as a revolutionary inclined to diffusion in political verse. The really great are particularly susceptible to such treatment. There is always a hint of exaggeration in them which if taken leads toward caricature. The second-rate—Mr. Boyd's Restoration dramatists, for example,—are safe from sneerers.

### Unnoticed

By ROBERT FROST

AS vain to raise a voice as a sigh  
In the tumult of free leaves so high.  
What are you in the shadow of trees  
Engaged up there with the light and breeze?

Less than the coral-root you know,  
That seems content with the daylight low,  
And has no leaves at all of its own;  
Whose spotted flowers hang meanly down.

You grasp the bark by a rugged pleat,  
And look up small from the forest's feet.  
The only leaf it drops goes wide,  
Your name not written on either side.

You linger your little hour and are gone.  
And still the woods sweep leafily on,  
Not even missing the coral-root flower  
You took as a trophy of the hour.

### This Week

New Light on Lincoln. By *L. E. Robinson.*

A Forthright Man. By *Arthur Colton.*

Revolutionary Letters. By *James Truslow Adams.*

Jonah the Jew. By *Walter F. Kohn.*

Reality or Romance? By *G. D. Eaton.*

New Russia. By *Abbe Niles.*

The Bowling Green. By *Christopher Morley.*

### Next Week, or Later

Literary Independence. By *Frances Newman.*

John Muir. By *Hamlin Garland.*

Published by Time Incorporated,  
Publishers of TIME,  
The Weekly News-Magazine

They are too cautious ever to be absurd, as Milton often was. You cannot make fun of a clever man, but a great poet, especially a great religious poet, is at the mercy of "the sons of Belial, flown with insolence and wine," who taunt him. Dante's Beatrice will not stand flippant scrutiny; Wordsworth's "high seriousness" can be laughed at by one who tells the story of his dalliance in France; a caustic wit could make even Christ absurd—how much more then John Milton who was as human in his egotism as puritan in his high resolves.

Mr. Boyd's irreverence is of a different kind, and consists not so much in his caricature of the puritan

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### Robert Frost

By GORHAM B. MUNSON

How about being a good Greek, for instance?  
That course, they tell me, isn't offered this year.

—Robert Frost

FOR once American criticism has said true things about a poet and practically nothing but true things. It has been established and reiterated that Robert Frost's poetic craftsmanship is not only serviceable in conveying the significant points of his experience, but that it is actually good in itself to look at. His simplicity and economy are always noticed, and his ability to project a dramatic narrative by means of dialogue often praised. Sometimes, too, it has been mentioned that it is the clear thought which Frost leaves unuttered that gives depth and spinal strength to his poems. But most of all has he been hailed as the poet of New England. Edwin Arlington Robinson takes for his materials the death that is creeping over old New England: Frost chooses for his the life that still persists in that little section of our rampant country.

Critics, therefore, have made much of Frost as a lyrical perceiver of the beauties of the New England landscape, an intimate knower of the stable and delicate laws of necessity which govern its inhabitants, a quiet master of the simplified, sturdy, and settled lives of a part of its people. They have not neglected to make due praise of Frost's integrity and indigenous character. In brief, he is, as they suggest, the fine articulation of an important part of our experience. For are we not, most of us, but one or two generations from the New England soil and community, and have we not at least kept up an acquaintance with them in vacation time? And if not, there has been at least the former hegemony of New England in our national letters to furnish some sort of ground in us to receive Frost. In Frost's poetry we find our impressionism clarified into experience.

But though these things have been verified as true, the fact is that they are all secondary. The essence of Frost lies beyond them, for they are merely characteristics of a substance which has not been defined. We must push farther to reach the heart of his work.

\* \* \*

At first we were surprised when the poet told us in his last book, "New Hampshire":

I may as well confess myself the author  
Of several books against the world in general.

We had noticed no protest, no satire, no revolt in his poetry. On the contrary, there was quietude, good humor, and a certain manly acceptance therein. What, this author who never whines, who never seems to resent savagely the present state of affairs, this author considers himself to be writing against the world in general! The surprise was salutary, for our recovery from it brought to light the implications of Frost's confession, the implications of his poetry *in toto*, and we realized quite suddenly that the purest classical poet of America was Robert Frost.

With Frost in the field as a classicist, T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound began to look like something else. Eliot's poetry, for example, has romantic elements: his sentimental melancholy and wistfulness, the dandyism and obfuscation that cut him off from a more general appeal. Pound likewise seemed to be hewing no closer to a norm of thought, feeling, and conduct: he did not appear to be making a bridge from the special to the general experience, to be achieving the "grandeur of generality":

he was given up to the irritations and discomforts of a sensitive being. Yet a romanticist tinge does not make a romanticist and *au fond* Eliot and Pound are nearer to classicism than they are to romanticism. Still there is an important difference in kind between them and Robert Frost.

It is this: Pound and Eliot are loyal to the principle of authority, whereas Frost depends entirely upon personal discovery. Pound and Eliot give allegiance to literary tradition as a governing body, seeking only to produce work that, while molded by tradition, still has sufficient novelty of conception and style to alter somewhat the existing body of letters. Frost is unconcerned with such a theory of dictatorship, adjustment, and modification: he does not set up a literary authority to serve. Like the intelligent Greek, he is simply by nature a positive, critical, and experimental spirit. If he manifests the classical virtues, if he achieves a nature, an imitation of it, a probability and a decorum which can match with those cultivated by the classical world, it is because he has discovered them in, through, and by his own direct experience. In comparison with him, Eliot and Pound appear formalists, and the distinction between them and Frost is the distinction between neo-classicism and classicism.

It is important to see that the classicism of Robert Frost has been evolved in a simplified world, the world of the New England farmer. Such a farmer has a settled routine of living dependent upon the regular processions of the seasons. He leads a village life in which most of the human factors at work are tangible and measurable. The intricacies of commerce and industry, the distress wrought by machines, the flow of vast crowds, the diversity of appeals of a great city, do not reach him. Churches are what they were, intellectual currents do not disturb, and science, arch-upsetter of former values, finds no opening to intrude. Frost tells of a huggemugger farmer who burnt his house in order to buy a telescope with the insurance money. He gazed with the ancient wonder at the heavens. But for science at large the attitude is indifference.

"You hear those hound-dogs sing on Moosilauke?  
Well they remind me of the hue and cry  
We've heard against the Mid-Victorians  
And never rightly understood till Bryan  
Retired from politics and joined the chorus.  
The matter with the Mid-Victorians  
Seems to have been a man named John L. Darwin."  
"Go 'long," I said to him, he to his horse.

In Frost's New England then many of the complex tormenting questions which have arisen since the small city and agrarian communities of old Greece have been lopped away from the problem of living.

"Me for the hills where I don't have to choose."

With this simplified world given, Frost has built his art upon the foundation of observation, so much so that he is very sparing in the use of the image or even of the simile and metaphor.

When I see birches bend to left and right  
Across the lines of straighter, darker trees,  
I like to think some boy's been swinging them.  
But swinging doesn't bend them down to stay.  
Ice storms do that. Often you must have seen them  
Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning  
After a rain. They click upon themselves  
As the breeze rises, and turn many-colored  
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.

This is the poetry of observation and the reader will follow a hundred lines of observation to every five or six that break out into comparison or imagery. Now observation as distinguished from apprehension of relations (metaphor, image, intuition, religious insight), is the principal method of the classicist, and it is by positive and critical observations of things conceived as separate that Frost has discovered his Nature.

The end reached by observation as a method, whether it is a poet or a scientist who employs it, is dualism,—that is, a set of axioms and laws founded on distinctions. The distinctions are based on appearances and both they and appearances are treated as reasonably final data. Of course, something inscrutable remains beyond, "something must be left to God," as Frost says, but the fundamental truth or error of dualism is not plumbed. Whether or not the real world is dualistic, certainly the apparent world is. We all begin as dualists, and this dualism the classicist accepts, whereas the religious writer renounces it in order to probe beneath appearances for unifying principles.

So in Frost's poetry we are consistently struck by his acceptance of the dualistic world and his real contentment with his lot of joy and love "dashed with pain and weariness and fault." Nature we feel as a sort of friendly antagonist, dangerously strong sometimes, but on the whole a fair opponent. In combat with her one cannot laze or cheat: but honest struggle brings fair returns. Especially is the line between Nature and Man always present in Frost's mind, though never insisted upon. For example, he spends no time dilating on the aloofness or indifference of nature to the fate of man. Such a poem as "The Need for Being Versed in Country Things" illustrates very well the sense of demarcation between man and nature which Frost preserves, his acceptance of nature as lovely and fair, and his awareness of her unconcern for man's disasters. In this poem we hear of the burning of a farmhouse and the decay of its barn. The birds nest in the latter.

Yet for them the lilac renewed its leaf,  
And the aged elm, though touched with fire;  
And the dry pump flung up an awkward arm;  
And the fence post carried a strand of wire.  
For them there was really nothing sad.  
But though they rejoiced in the nest they kept,  
One had to be versed in country things  
Not to believe the phoebes wept.

Frost's poetry contains no trace of the "pathetic fallacy" of the romanticist which is surely a good ground for calling Frost a pure classicist.

The man that Frost treats is situated in a tamed wilderness and is disciplined by it. In New Hampshire the mountains are not high enough, there is nothing extravagant or unduly wild about nature, nor are the people of Frost's poems grandiose or expansive. Their bodies have been contracted and hardened by sweating toil, their emotions have the solidity of rocks, and their minds achieve a good dogged common sense.

For art's sake one could wish them worse  
Rather than better. How are we to write  
The Russian novel in America  
As long as life goes so untroubled?  
There is the pinch from which our only outcry  
In literature to date is heard to come.  
We get what little misery we can  
Out of not having cause for misery.  
It makes the guild of novel writers sick  
To be expected to be Dostoevskis  
On nothing worse than too much luck and comfort.

\* \* \* \* \*  
It's Pollyanna now or death.  
This, then, is the new freedom we hear tell of;  
And very sensible. No state can build  
A literature that shall at once be sound  
And sad on a foundation of well-being.

Out of a settled social framework, an honest necessary struggle for existence, and a fair amount of well-being, something like a representative man can emerge. There are balances and checks to trim down his uniqueness while at the same time there is permitted a reasonable scope for his emotional and reflective life. In such a state the acquisitive impulse gets no favoring head start and instead of haste we find reticence and deliberation characteristic.

Thus Frost discovers what Professor Irving Babbitt would call a sound model for imitation. Professor Babbitt has labored to show that imitation as the ancients understood it was a fresh and imaginative process. It is just so with Robert Frost. His choice of words, his rhymes, always escape the commonplace; we are awakened by the exact perceptions of a new discoverer. But the more important point is that this stirring-up is followed by a conviction of the naturalness of Mr. Frost's statements. Why, we murmur, has this not been said before? The question, by the way, that Poe proposed as a test question for the workings of the imagination.

One cannot be certain just what content the term, the imagination, contains today. Modern psychology has cleared away some of the rank underbrush which cluttered our view of the imagination: at least we habitually distinguish it from fancy. Perhaps by imagination we mean something not far from the total harmonized consciousness of the human unit. At any rate, Frost's imagination is the consciousness of a man who is using *more* of his equipment than most of the moderns do. I mean simply that Frost does not seem to work almost exclusively from one of three centers,—from the intellect or the emotions or the body or sense-center,—but from a sort of rude coöperation of all three. The conditions of his livelihood (farming) bring into at least partially coördinated play his body and his emotions, and in addition he is capable

of thought. In this development he is again a parallel to the ancient writers, and gives a start to the speculation as to how far the conditions of modern mechanized life throw into disuse portions of the necessary equipment of a fully conscious being. Certainly, Frost's lines give one more of an impression that a whole man is writing them than do the sharply intellectualized or thumpingly emotional lines of most of his contemporaries.

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The moot interpretation in the doctrine of imitation has always been the meaning to be attached to universals. One may rightly be skeptical as to the coincidence of the views of the idealists with the original meaning of Aristotle. But whether Aristotle is interpreted idealistically or not, Frost's use of universals arising from a welter of particulars is covered in the minimum definition that could be offered. His poems, "Mending Wall" and "The Grindstone," are prime examples. In these poems the particulars are vividly and concretely seen and they can stand the most rigid literal interpretation. Yet no less present and vivid in them is a wider significance or rather there are wider significances. Thus, among other things in "The Grindstone" we are deeply aware that a sense of the inertia of nature has been conveyed. We are aware of the aching strain of making nature malleable and the tear and wear made on the straining human spirit by time. For readers of Frost it is not necessary to add that this creation of universal significance is accomplished directly without an atom of didacticism.

Although I have deemed it necessary to dwell on the doctrines of nature and imitation as exemplified in the books of Robert Frost and have said perhaps too much for some readers and assuredly too little for others, it does not seem requisite to develop the contiguous statement that Frost is an observer of the law of probability and the law of measure or proportion or decorum. It is simply stating an easily recognizable fact which any reader may verify by going through Frost's writings that it is the probable sequence and not the improbable but possible sequence that he develops. He is a poet of the normal in man and nature, not the exploiter of the remarkably arresting and wonderful. Nor does his feeling for decorous proportion require argument beyond saying that he does not commit the mistake of the neo-classicists who have been properly accused by Professor Babbitt of confusing the language of the nobility with the nobility of language. Frost's people are humble, but they speak a language and utter feelings appropriate to them: they are restrained by conventions which are inherently noble, and the result is decorum in the best sense.

\* \* \*

The study of these considerations will explain why Frost declares that he has written several books against the world in general. For since Rousseau romanticism has been in the ascendancy. A new conception of nature as impulse and temperament has supplanted the old nature as a strict model, a "return to nature" has come to mean "letting one's self go." For imitation has been substituted the self-expression of the spontaneous original genius, for the law of probabilities has been exchanged the law of wonderful possibilities, and for decorum we have the doctrine of expansiveness. Science has abetted in the growth of naturalistic emotionalism, and neither humanism nor religion has been able to stop the tide of writing designed for the expression of uniqueness rather than generality.

Against this efflorescence of the interior world, the neo-classicists have striven in vain, for their position does not rest solidly enough upon experience and personal discovery. They have been debilitated by the blight of Scaliger's rhetorical question, why imitate nature when Virgil is a second nature?

Frost, however, miraculously takes his place beside the antique Greeks and against the modern world. He proves that a classicism resting on personal discovery is still possible.

The Newdigate Prize, for 1924, was recently awarded to Franklin McDuffee, a Rhodes scholar and a commoner of Balliol College, for his poem *Michelangelo*. The poem has been published in pamphlet form by Basil Blackwell. This is the first time in its history that this historic prize has gone to an American.

## Jonah the Jew

JONAH. By ROBERT NATHAN. New York: Robert W. McBride & Co. 1925. \$2 net.

Reviewed by WALTER F. KOHN.

LIKE his hero Jonah, Robert Nathan is the poetic Jew whose soul is sensitive to all the nuances of existence, whose ecstasies are tremendous but fleeting, whose hurts are deep and lasting; who is sensuously lyrical, impulsive, austere self-centered in his reactions to life, and an uncompromising individualist. There remains only this difference, that Mr. Nathan, coming twenty-six or twenty-seven centuries after Jonah, has a certain mellowness that comes with age, tempering his emotions, and suffusing all life with the golden softness of an October sunset.

And this mellowness is the outstanding characteristic of all his writings, dominating every one of them, and appearing even in two of his titles, "Autumn" and "Youth Grows Old." It is a mellowness that views human strivings with a tender, almost sentimental sympathy and looks upon human hopes and ambitions with kindly indulgence, knowing their puniness and unimportance in the ageless order of things. This cosmic awareness saddens and ages his viewpoint—Mr. Nathan is still a young writer—but it also gives him a certain peace which, like Jonah's, is not entirely happy. As Naaman says:

I do not need to travel; here in this quiet garden the sun sets and the moon rises; the breeze of evening whispers through the leaves of my acacia tree, and I see through the branches the stars which have not changed; I hear the voices of cicada, shrill and sad, as when I was a boy, I hear the herds winding down from the hills. All is as it was and as it will be; and my heart overflows with love and peace.

But Jonah, to whom Naaman addresses these words, is young, and fired with that fierce individualism, that rebellious discontent, that has kept his race a nation of radicals since the Egyptian bondage. So, despite his promise to stay in the desert, he goes into the world, and falls in love with Judith, the charming niece of Prince Ahab. Impulsively he resolves to marry her; but Prince Ahab has already promised her to a wealthy Tyrian merchant, and does not let a "dirty prophet" interfere with his plans. Judith has a momentary heartache, but calmly sends Jonah back to the desert with the empty consolation that she will take pride in his work.

The desert has no balm for his broken heart, and his prophecies bore him. Of what concern are the sins of Nineveh to an anarchist and a poet? So, in the spiritual upheaval that follows his emotional breakdown he defies the dictates of his soul—of God—and flees from his loneliness, embarking at Joppa for Tarshish.

From here on the story follows the Biblical narrative; but at this point, too, there is an important and unfortunate change in the treatment. Jonah, who in the first three-fourths of the book had been poignantly human, becomes a helpless puppet; and the reader's intimate concern with him is left in mid-air. The story is finished, of course: Jonah is defeated by his selfishness and becomes a half-reluctant servant of God, eternally inquiring "Why?" as his people do to this day. But the point of view of both author and reader has suddenly and completely changed on page 166.

This abrupt transition ushers in a charmingly whimsical fantasy as to what went on in Heaven when God decided he must give Jonah something to do to distract his mind. Yet engrossing as this whimsy is, it is out of tune with the rest of the book, and it seems to me unwarranted, particularly since it puts Jonah into the background for the rest of the book.

In his earlier books Mr. Nathan wrote perfectly of small things, working in a very restricted medium, and always just missing greatness because of the limitations he imposed on himself. In "Jonah" some of these limitations are absent, but he again falls short of the mark because of this shift in viewpoint, and because of a too-conscious irony.

The latter is already manifest early in the book, where ironical digressions in the manner of Cabell mar the narrative. Mr. Nathan's own irony is whimsical and tender, and has an indulgent mellow flavor which Mr. Cabell's Nordic incisiveness can never achieve. His light touch and delicate fantasy—quite different from Cabell's elaborate magickings—are his own, his original and individual contribution to contemporary American letters. And, saturated with his peculiarly Jewish opulence in sensory im-

pressions, his overtones in rhythms and implications, and the mellow calm of his viewpoint, these elements make his style as delicately imaginative and as finely cadenced as any that America has produced. If he will only continue to exploit his native resources, and let his material grow as life grows all about him, he will achieve the high distinction which his very considerable talents already foreshadow.

## Reality or Romance?

BLIND MAN'S BUFF. By LOUIS HÉMON. Translated by ARTHUR RICHMOND. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1925. \$2.

Reviewed by G. D. EATON

IT has seemed to me, since I read "Maria Chapdelaine," by the ill-fated Louis Hémon, that there is no modern French writer who can write so simply and directly about humble souls and yet get at the pathetic beauty of those souls so forcefully. And this belief has been fortified by reading "Blind Man's Buff" (Colin-Maillard), a posthumous work which has just been published here in translation, but which I was fortunate enough to read in the French nearly a year ago.

Hémon in English I have never read, but I imagine, from the reviews, that "Maria Chapdelaine" was most beautifully put into English. And from my reading of that book and from "La Belle Que Voilà" ("My Fair Lady") and from "Colin-Maillard" I do not see how any competent writer

who resented his methods. Then the police whistle outside and the shadows of the gallows beyond. As the blue-coats charge into Mike's hard-won castle he laughs valiantly.

There the story ends. There it *should* end. The next scene is not one to search about for Mike. Mike the gallant and romantic. Mike facing a reality, even though his last one? No, it is better to see Mike hurling himself with a resounding laugh and impact against the police than to hear his neck snapping. All this, of course, gives little idea of the tremendous pathos of the book. The synopsis sounds ridiculous, and the book would be, in fact, ridiculous, were it not for Mike. His besetting sense of romance keeps glory, for him, and pathos, for us, balanced to the end, when glory reaches its climax, for him, and crystallizes into tragedy, for us. Mike sees romance: we see the reality of romance. But lest we take too much pity on him let us remember that his author is dead, with him, and that the beauty of his tragedy is the spirit of a book—which is what, reality or romance?

Hémon seems at his best when writing exotically. "Maria Chapdelaine" has Canada for its setting. It is his best work. "Blind Man's Buff," as already shown, has the Limehouse district for its stage. The best story in the group under "My Fair Lady" is "Lizzie Blakeston," whose final tragedy is suicide from a London dock. The poorest thing Hémon has done has his native France for a background. It is the title story, "My Fair Lady." But remember that the collection of stories was brought out after his death and in Paris! I doubt if Hémon himself thought much of the tale.

## New Russia

FLYING OSIP: Stories of New Russia. By various authors. Translated by L. S. FRIEDLAND and J. R. PIROSHNIKOFF. New York: International Publishers. 1925.

Reviewed by ABBE NILES

THIS is a collection of short stories by nine of the post-revolution crop of Russian writers, compiled by Alexander Chramoff with the avowed primary intention of acquainting the reader with life in New Russia, but its news value lies in the work, not the picture presented. Five of these writers are represented by selections of little value. The brief extracts from novels by Boris Pilnyak (already introduced to readers of *The Saturday Review*) and Vsevelod Ivanov afford no basis for criticism, the stories by Kasatkin and Arosev are negligible, while in Zozulya's, a dramatic situation is so mishandled as to lose most of its effectiveness. The rest, however, amply justify the publication of this anthology.

For the most entertaining story of the lot is Vyacheslav Shishov's "A Theatrical Performance in the Hamlet of Orgyzovo." Here we have a bearded Carol Kennicott—a young soldier back from the wars and from seeing the world, inspired to bestow a cultural life on the mujiks' Main Street. His first and last step is to write his own patriotic drama, with a Red hero and White villains, organize his company from the surrounding peasantry, and put the result on in the local schoolhouse. The villagers, who hardly know there has been a revolution—much less that such things as plays have previously existed—nevertheless do what lies in them, which is little so far as concerns acting, but too much in the way of making themselves thoroughly at home as the audience. For the vividness and gusto of his writing and his broad earthy humor, Shishov stands out sharply in this volume. Let us have more of him.

Lydia Seifulina in "The Lawbreakers," and Mark Kolesev in "Thirteen," treat sympathetically of children, the former dealing with the pathetic homeless "juvenile lawbreakers," and the latter with a child factory worker. Both have distinct talent for narrative and character work, but Kolosov's prose, vital with imagery, reveals also the poet. His theme is the agonized impatience of the little boy who, alone among the factory force, must wait till he is fourteen before he will be eligible for the junior branch of the Communist Party, and his passionate devotion to that name, Lenin, with which his nurse would have frightened him had he been, say, French. Those who enjoy meditating on the influence of environment on conviction will find much material in this book.

Semen Semenov's "Hunger" occupies, and merits, over a third of the volume. Its title is its subject; it is a diary of the famine of 1919 in Petrograd,



William Blake—Songs of Innocence—1789. From "Manuscript," by Ala M. Stone and Ethel Irwin Smalley (Scribners)

of English and reader of French could do anything but put Hémon's words into crystal English, so limpid and clear is the original.

"Blind Man's Buff" is a story of a young Irishman who came to London while the Dublin police were chasing reports of him up and down Erin's alleys. He came with little else than a sense of adventure and romance and a feeling of pride in his thews and sinews. There was a great deal of life in London. That much he plainly saw when he came to and from his work dock-walloping (an almost lost phrase) and, for that matter, while he was at work. The people in Hyde Park, questioning the order of economics, the wisdom of Parliament and the chastity of the queen, puzzled Mike much more than they did the scattering of contemplative, pipe-smoking Englishmen who looked on, grunted, nodded, and shook their heads.

When romance in the form of woman fell off Mike found it always in the form of liquor. For him to live on reality was as impossible as it would be for his creator to live on faith. When he drank, Winnie, the barmaid, became a beautiful confidante and the world marched in great steps toward a gorgeous Utopia.

And finally, in the pub, he met his end, gloriously defying civilization which had had too much to say when he was sober and out of love. A fancied insult caused him to wring the neck of the proprietor and he broke a few law-and-order heads of citizens