

Review

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intimates. Occasionally he drops remarks upon such matters as the Chorus or the use of technical language in poetry, but we are worlds away from the arid discussions of the preceding century. It is with actual literature that he chooses to deal, and we of a later age can commend his hoe-work as he wages war with the weeds of undue personifications and descriptions and meaningless diction in poetry.

Dr Northup, then, is not seen at his best in the sections which deal with these particular matters, though that does not seriously detract from the value of his work. To have given to the student in a handy form the material for forming his own conclusions would in itself have been a useful piece of work. Presented as it is here with much scholarly care, that material becomes yet more full of meaning. And it may confidently be said that his volume will be appreciated by more than one class of reader, and will help to throw light on a none too familiar side of Gray's literary activity.

J. W. H. ATKINS.

ABERYSTWYTH.

The Oxford Book of Victorian Verse. Chosen by ARTHUR QUILLER-
COUCH. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1912. 8vo. xv + 1021 pp.

Lovers of poetry must ever be grateful to Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch for inaugurating the excellent series of Oxford Books of Verse by the best anthology of English Verse ever made. Now he has added to our debt by compiling a volume of Victorian poetry—gracefully dedicated to his future friends and pupils at the sister university. The difficulties of such a task must necessarily be sufficient to stagger the stoutest courage: as the editor himself confesses in his most disarming of prefaces, it 'is less of a difficulty than an impossibility: since he who attempts on his contemporaries such assaying as these pages imply, attempts what no man can do.' Moreover Professor Quiller-Couch was confronted by the further problems, first of determining the exact limits of the 'Victorian' period, and secondly of deciding whether or no to include in this volume poems which had already found a place in the earlier anthology. In both cases he decided boldly and wisely. He has used the term Victorian as freely as we use the term Elizabethan, and with the same fundamental soundness of judgment; and he has refused to exclude poems which he had used before, and so to condemn himself to anthologizing the second-rate and clearing the ground for an 'Oxford Book of Worst Verse.' The result is a catholic collection of poems, ranging from those of Walter Savage Landor, whose first volume of poems was published more than forty years before Queen Victoria came to the throne, down to those of such 'Georgians' as Mr Masefield and Mr Alfred Noyes. Wordsworth and his immediate circle are omitted, as belonging to the former age.

The love of anthologies is no new thing. From King Alfred downwards men have delighted in collecting passages from their favourite authors, and there is always a certain interest in seeing in what

directions lie the tastes of others. We like to have the hall-mark of a scholar's approval set upon our own favourites, and the omission of some poems which we should have included, and inclusion of some which we should have omitted, is no more than the addition of that personal equation which gives a living interest to all forms of criticism. To wander round so rich and varied a flower-garden with 'Q' to call our attention to this blossom and that, to point out a delicate rock-plant there and a bed of lilies here, is an ideal occupation for a summer's day. These are not fields of asphodel trodden by the immortals, but pleasant paths winding among the freshness and fragrance of an English garden in May. Never since the great outburst of song in the seventeenth century has there been so large a number of poets—minor poets it may be, but with lips that have been touched by a coal from the divine altar. Victorian lyrics lack something of the directness and spontaneity of the Elizabethan songs; nor have they the intensity of awe and rapture which marks the hymns of Vaughan or Crashaw; but their delicacy of workmanship, their obvious sincerity and tenderness have a peculiar charm of their own. Now and then we find a song of frank happiness such as Dean Beeching's *Going down Hill on a Bicycle* or a call to arms such as *Drake's Drum*, but for the most part even in such as these there is a note of melancholy, a resolute courage which is determined to be master of its fate, rather than a gay delight in adventure. On the whole the selections show a rather curious sameness of tone considering how many decades they cover. The latest developments of English verse, such as Mr Masfield's narrative poems, could obviously not be included in an anthology of this sort; we cannot tell whither this new spirit is calling us, and while we feel the future full of promise we do not know what the fulfilment may be. Meanwhile the poets of the last hundred years, Irish, English, Scottish, American, show close kinship one with another. Imperialist and socialist, lover of nature and cockney-bred, they are all sons and daughters of one age, an age which cares intensely for accuracy in little things, which loves to dwell on the beauty of

Rose plot
Fringed pool
Fern grot—

or note how

The frost was on the village roofs as white as ocean foam;
The good red fires were burning bright in every 'longshore home.
The windows sparkled clear, and the chimneys volley'd out;
And I vow we sniff'd the victuals as the vessel went about,—

which has infinite tenderness for all things young and helpless, but tends to mingle the thought of death with that of life; and above all, an age of deep, if not passionate, religious emotion:

All dies;
Lo, how all dies! O seer,
And all things too arise:
All dies and all is born;
But each resurgent morn, behold more near the Perfect Morn.

'For my part,' says the editor, 'I rise from the task in reverence and wonder not only at the mass (not easily sized) of poetry written with ardour in these less-than-a-hundred years, but at the amount of it which is excellent, and the height of some of that excellence; in some exultation too, as I step aside and...gaze after the stream of young runners with their torches.'

GRACE E. HADOW.

CIRENCESTER.

La Vie de St Remi, poème du xiii^e siècle, par Richier. Publié pour la première fois d'après deux MSS. de la Bibliothèque Royale de Bruxelles. Par W. N. BOLDERSTON. London: Henry Frowde. 1912. 8vo. 356 pp.

La disposition générale des matières, dans cette édition, me paraît bonne. Il y a d'abord une introduction (pp. 5-38) qui comprend une courte vie de St Remi, puis les renseignements sur les MSS. du poème, sur l'auteur, sur les sources, sur la versification, sur le dialecte, le tout suivi d'une bibliographie concise et de deux appendices dont le premier rapproche les vv. 1520 sq. de la *Vie de St Remi* du passage qui lui correspond dans la *Vita beati Remigii* de Hincmar et le second contient la *Visio Karoli Calvi* d'après BN lat. 12710 corrigé en quelques endroits à l'aide de BN lat. 14117. Les 8234 vers de la *Vie de St Remi* occupent les pp. 39-338. Viennent ensuite une analyse et des notes (pp. 339-346), un glossaire (pp. 347-351), enfin une table des noms propres (pp. 352-356).

Mais si la disposition générale des matières est bonne, on n'en peut dire autant du traitement de ces matières. D'une façon générale, tout ce qui concerne l'étude de la langue du texte—et c'est pour une édition comme celle que nous avons sous les yeux un point capital—a été fait d'une façon trop sommaire et trop négligente. Je m'arrête, par exemple, à ce qui est dit du dialecte aux pp. 19 sq. et pour ne pas prendre trop de place, je me bornerai à critiquer ce qui se rapporte aux voyelles (pp. 19-21). 'A développe quelquefois un i...' nous dit-on, 'surtout devant n mouillée.' Mais l'i de *montaigne* etc. n'est pas autre chose qu'une graphie qu'on trouve aussi dans le français normal¹ et qui indique le mouillement de la nasale. 'Au devient a dans *mavais* 2660, *as* 1182, *ara* 5936.' Mais voilà d'abord des cas fort différents. Et puis *as* n'est pas pour un antérieur *aus*; c'est *as* qui, comme dans le français normal, est primitif. De même *ara* n'est pas pour *aura*, c'est une forme des dialectes du N. Est qui correspond au fr. normal *aura*. 'Ei est devenu i dans *chaïr* 4344.' Non pas: *chaïr*, *cheïr* est un doublet de *cheer* dont l'origine doit être analogique. 'E (du latin a libre et accentué) s'écrit tantôt e, tantôt ei...' C'est juste; mais pourquoi citer parini les exemples: *decreit* 1050? Les constatations faites pour les

¹ Mr Bolderston fait précéder ses remarques sur les voyelles par la phrase: 'Nous faisons la comparaison avec le français normal.'