

Love on a Tour of Time

THE BRIDGE OF TIME will undoubtedly find a large amount of the traffic of popularity passing over it. This, because its central arch is one of the eternal yet never answered questions of the human heart.

Even the first pair of troglodyte lovers—for Adam and Eve are really too recent to be considered when we are dealing in these vast sweeps of time—gazing into each other's eyes probably murmured troglodytically, "Through all the ages, thy soul and mine shall be side by side." (See frontispiece.) It is a perennial, tormenting wonder, this question. For it always is a question in the soul, no matter how firmly the lips repeat it as a most positive affirmation. "Shall I live on? And will this spirit, whose kinship with mine is so marvellously complete, live, too, and find me again?"

Mr. Warner is sure that it can be done. Ancient Egypt of Rameses II. is his starting point. There Prince Rames, beautiful as a sun god, of course, and his equally beautiful fiancée, Teta, swear vows of eternal fidelity. The time to prove them comes swiftly, for Teta, journeying into the desert to make offerings at her mother's tomb, is swept away by a Bedouin band. Rames is plunged into the resigned despair of a lover of that day without the resource of wireless or airplane or motor.

But Hotep, the High Priest of Amn-ra, has other plans for him anyway. Deep in a vault in the Libyan hills, "the cradle and treasure trove of Egypt's wisdom," he divulges his plan to send the soul of Rames as far into the future as this collected wisdom has come from the past. There he is to spend a year and then return to tell the sages of Thebes what lessons those ages to come can give Thebes to guide her along the path of history. "Lead me to it," says Rames, only, naturally, in the grand manner of the Pharaohs. One gulp of the magic potion and he is off.

He wakes in 1914, staggers forth from his deep vaulted slumber to find his Thebes in utter ruin and, equipping himself with the wherewithal in the shape of ancient coins and precious stones, he makes his way to Luxor. How he attaches unto himself a retainer who becomes his faithful secretary and general eyeopener is vividly told. Then begins a brisk, highly condensed Cook's tour for Rames. Cairo first, then the ruin of ancient Greece, unthought of in his day; then Rome, where in the Catacombs he glimpses a face that he knows is Teta's. On to Venice, where he finds her again in the

guise of an American girl, Iris Waverly, who somehow doesn't remember him at all or that she used to be Teta.

He pursues her ardently to New York, but even though she acknowledges her love for him in the face of a very stern papa he is loyal to his vow to Hotep and returns at the end of his year to lay his amazing knowledge of the progress of man through these wonder ages at the feet of his ancient gods; intending, of course, to drink another magic potion after that and come back hastily to the waiting Teta. He goes to the vault, drains the phial that will reincarnate him again and wakes up in his own remote Theban day to find the city in flame and ruin under that Assyrian conqueror who was menacing it at the beginning of his sleep. Death and destruction everywhere and, alas for Rames, no extra magic draught to waft him forward through the ages again to his waiting beloved. And so he has only one course open to him, to set his foot forward "on the long path that joins my world with thine. Love's beacon light shall light my way, and though ages pass I will come to thee!"

Mercifully these ages pass without our being led through them step by step, and the last scene is in that western world of war where the modern Assyrian beats at the gates, where Iris is still waiting. How they finally find each other can and should very properly be left to the reader.

It undeniably does add a romantic intensity to lovers' vows to imagine that they are only a renewal; that the passion of the moment holds within it the infinite, haunting richness of other meetings in the wide gardens of Time. Cynics who have never felt the touch of affinity in another spirit and disillusioned lovers who have mistaken theirs may smile at the ingenious belief. But, after all, there is something of beauty, if much also of futility, in this unending cry of the human heart for some assurance of continuing life. And Mr. Warner is not equal to the possible subtleties of the theme. He can write vividly. There is broad pictorial effect everywhere, too grandiose often, yet with a certain romantic and even beautiful quality. But as a whole the thing is altogether too much like a selection of excerpts from an unusually literary Baedeker. The character drawing is both elementary and anæmic.

For the enthusiastically touristic mind of the author is evidently much more at ease with scenery than with human beings, especially of the variety known as lovers.

M. P. A.

THE BRIDGE OF TIME. BY WILLIAM HENRY WARNER. Scott & Seltzer.

Poetry and Mr. Masters

IT has always been your reviewer's contention that Spoon River was a town on the flatlands, that no hills or mountains lifted their heads (hoary or otherwise) above its epical preoccupation with the infinitesimal. The natives of Spoon River may have spoken of hills, one or two of them undoubtedly yearned for mountains; but those deluded egoists, hyprocrites, broken dreamers and marionettes strangely troubled with the old malady of the soul had no high exalted places to aspire to. No concrete examples afforded them opportunity to lift up their eyes from the gutters of Spoon River. Often the desire seared them; nearly always the reality was lacking.

Now Edgar Lee Masters aspires at the top of his voice to mountains. He bites off chunks of the cosmos, chews them voraciously and then spews them forth. It is not his fault if a rather callous world, educated down to the harsh realities of Spoon River, finds his projections to be paper pellets. *Starved Rock* was an ambitious label; it has made the author's failure all the more patent. He has been going toward mountains all his life. Occasionally he has blundered on a clear perspective down the highway and seen their snowy caps looming against a far horizon. Now and then from small hillocks he has hailed their distant rocky battlements. And there was the never to be forgotten day that he stumbled into Spoon River. If no mountains were there the spectral mountains of Mr. Masters' aspirations vaguely made themselves manifest through the dull vapors of reality.

It has been the custom to speak of the *Spoon River Anthology* as a first effort. But Mr. Masters had published four or five books before that remarkable accident. While reading *Starved Rock*, the phantasm of a long tragedy called *Maximilian* obstinately thrust its cadaverous face over your reviewer's shoulder. Erase *Spoon River Anthology* from Mr. Masters' career and we venture to assert that his entire output will travel along a rather level line. There was just as much poetry in *Maximilian* as there is in *Starved Rock*.

There are times when an uneasy suspicion arises that Mr. Masters is a disguised uplifter. He is apparently engaged in a terrific battle with hypocrisy, but his weapon is not a rapier. He does not pierce the very heart of his foe by nice accord of sure eye and iron wrist. Rather does he slash about him with a knobbed club from the Fiji Islands. Rather does he throw cobbles at his adversaries. After which one may imagine him snorting, "It's a rotten world!" and going into the house, slamming the door behind him.

This may all be a personal antagonism of your reviewer's toward an aspect of American letters. But *Starved Rock* is quite open to the reader. It is easy to step in and look about. Three characteristics are perceptible. Death is a great protagonist; starved rocks are thrown at Sabatarians and their ilk; the dramatic monologue is brought up to date from a half forgotten British poet whose name was Robert Browning.

First let us view Death through Mr. Masters' eyes. He cries:

O realm of the Dead,
Black Mountain, if you be,
Which darkens heaven,
And shadows earth,
Round which our spirits flutter
Like startled moths.

and then
Realm of the Dead! Supreme Reality
All hail!

In the *Epitaph for Us* he writes:
Come to us where the secret lies
Under the riddle of the skies,
Surrender fingers, speech, and eyes.

Sink into nature and become
The mystery that strikes you dumb,
Be clay and end your martyrdom.

In other words, the easiest way out has a tantalizing appeal for this writer. He is the rather raucous singer of futility. At times an astounding vigor seizes him in his most earnest moments. It rarely lifts itself to that authentic height which we call poetry. Naturally it fails to carry conviction. Mr. Masters' incisive attitude toward life is nullified by the dullness of his tools. One trembles to think what he might have done if the blinding flashes of poetry had transfigured him. But still he sees his mountains in the distance; he does not climb them.

Then there are his attacks on Sabatarians, on hypocrites, on reformers, on all who would straitjacket the soul, the individual expression and the precise

rights of Self. It is to be gathered that he is not a prohibitionist or any other ist. These pieces are to be applauded for their soundness, their dynamic vehemence, their uncompromising avowals. None of those qualities, however, makes them poetry. The divine lift is not there. They are polemics of no small value, but they are not the productions of an inspiration.

Coming to the dramatic monologues, we find Mr. Masters' nearest approach to poetry, also quite his farthest remoteness from it. *The Dream of Tasso* at times borders on inspiration. One reads in suspense, hoping that the writer's Daedalus wings will suddenly lift him from earth and a bit nearer to his mountains. But when we come to *Lord Byron and Dr. Polidori* and *Washington Hospital*, hope sighs and takes it leave. In rather pedestrian blank verse Mr. Masters offers an obvious Byron without the slightest touch of subtlety and an amateurish picture of Poe that is ridiculous. It is hard to conceive of any writer of Mr. Masters' prominence including such an inefficient, rudimentary thing as *Washington Hospital* in his volume.

Some of the other dramatic monologues and characterizations are interesting in themselves as representations of pieces of human nature. Among them might be mentioned *The Barber of Sepeo*, *The Negro Ward*, *The Christian Statesman*, *At Sagamore Hill* and *They'd Never Know We Now*. These at least retain an interest while under examination, but except in occasional lines they do not approach poetry.

Some few shorter bits might be called Mr. Masters' vague glimpses of his mountains. Such are *Creation*, *Botticelli to Simonetta* and *Neither Faith Nor Beauty Can Remain*. Here he approximates a lyric touch that is sometimes almost delicate. One piece in the book, *A Lady*, deserves a second reading. This picture of a woman who is

beginning to be sick
Of the incurable disease of age,
And the weariness of futile flesh

is as much poetry as anything in the book.

Glancing back through *Starved Rock*, *Toward the Gulf*, *The Great Valley* and *Songs and Satires to Spoon River Anthology*, one is troubled. Was the *Anthology* worth the publication of the four books which followed? Occasional pieces of merit may be found, perhaps enough in all four books to have made up one small volume. But when Mr. Masters left Spoon River he left his strong if shapeless individuality behind him. The town is his contribution to American letters. H. S. G.

STARVED ROCK. BY EDGAR LEE MASTERS. The Macmillan Company.

Who Won the War in '76?

DR. ESTHER POHL LOVEJOY spent the winter of 1917-1918 doing war relief work at a social centre in France. She has written a book about it. Maternity hospitals were few, and the problems of caring for helpless mothers and their newborn children called for the utmost endeavors of relief agencies. Dr. Lovejoy makes the reader realize the immense task attempted and, considering everything, wonderfully well done.

Not all her pages are filled with the drab details of war time misery. Her account of the present day French and British attitudes toward the American Revolution is amusing. The French, she says, claimed almost exclusive credit for the capture of Cornwallis's army at Yorktown, while the English asserted that it was really the "true British blood in the American Colonies" which won.

"The outcome of the present war gave me no uneasiness," says Dr. Lovejoy. "I knew we were going to win, but there were times when I felt that as a nation we had better keep our wits about us or we might lose the Revolutionary War yet."

Tourist visitors to the front, already much censured by writers, come in for Dr. Lovejoy's condemnation. H. A. F.

THE HOUSE OF THE GOOD NEIGHBOR. BY ESTHER POHL LOVEJOY. The Macmillan Company.

A COMPLETE set of Ian Hay's works, a uniform edition, with illustrations by Charles E. Brock, is being prepared for publication by Houghton Mifflin Company.

Books Received to December 31

Fiction.
ANTI-BABEL AND OTHER SUCH DOINGS. BY WILLIAM HENRY BISHOP. Short stories and "studios" in short story form. New York: Neale Publishing Company.

THE FAT FROG OF PAU. BY KATHERINE STEEDMAN PALMER. At a glance, something between a fable and a fairy tale. New York: Neale Publishing Company.

Biography.
JOAN OF ARC. BY LAURA E. RICHARDS. A biographical story of Joan of Arc's life. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

Social Problems.
THE MORAL BASIS OF DEMOCRACY. BY ARTHUR TWING HADLEY. Some of Dr. Hadley's "Sunday morning talks to students and graduates." New Haven: Yale University Press.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF BOLSHEVISM. BY JOHN SPANCO. Analysis by a sociologist—or Socialist, if you insist—who is the uncompromising foe of the Red left wing. New York: Harper & Brothers.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF NATIONALITY AND INTERNATIONALISM. BY W. B. PILLSBURY. The author is professor of psychology in the University of Michigan. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

Travel.
WHAT TO SEE IN AMERICA. BY CLIFTON JOHNSON. Five hundred illustrations from photographs. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Art.
FOGG ART MUSEUM, HARVARD UNIVERSITY: COLLECTION OF MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE PAINTINGS. A catalogue with explanatory notes, bibliographies, &c. Many illustrations from photographs of paintings. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Verse.
THE MIGHT OF MANHATTAN AND OTHER POEMS. BY JOSEPH D. McMANUS. New York: Charles Francis Press, Printing Crafts Building.

HAIL, MAN! BY ANGELA MORGAN. Poems, chiefly lyrics, some of which had been previously published in magazines. New York: John Lane Company.

FROM THE DESERT. BY JOHN WESLEY HOLLOWAY. Introduction by the Rev. Henry Hugh Proctor. The author is a negro. New York: Neale Publishing Company.

TRENCH TALES. BY CLARENCE LUMPKIN JORDAN. Doughboy songs and ballads of the War. New York: Neale Publishing Company.

LYRICS. BY GEORGE V. A. McCLOSKEY. "Dedicated to the Unattainable." New York: Neale Publishing Company.

PRELUDE: A BOOK OF VERSE. BY MARGUERITE HOPE BRUNETT. New York: Neale Publishing Company.

Miscellaneous.
JURIDICAL REFORM. BY JOHN D. WORKS. The author is a former Justice of the Supreme Court of California and a former United States Senator. New York: Neale Publishing Company.

A FIRST BOOK IN ALGEBRA. BY FLETCHER DURELL AND E. E. ARNOLD. A textbook—as the astucious reader will have suspected from the title. New York: Charles E. Merrill Company.

MODERN SALESMANSHIP. BY J. GEORGE FREDERICK. "A practical handbook and guide. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

THE PHYSICAL BASIS OF HEREDITY. BY THOMAS HUNT MORGAN. In *Mono-graphs on Experimental Biology*. The author is professor of Experimental Zoology in Columbia University. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company.

FIRE COLLEGE EXTENSION COURSE, AND SUPPLEMENT TO FIRE DEPARTMENT PROMOTION. BY ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF JAMES A. HOFFERMAN AND DEPUTY CHIEF GEORGE J. KUSS (retired). New York Fire Department; FREDERICK LEHMAN, fireman, New York Fire Department, and others. Edited by SOLOMON HECHT. New York: *Civil Service Chronicle*, 23 Duane street.

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