

Autumn—because the extracts were chosen for broadcasting with some idea of suitability to the season. Then, within the sections there are groups of a few related pieces, with comment. For example, Coleridge's musing by a winter fire, in which he considers the future of his infant son, is followed by W. B. Yeats' "more exact wishes for his daughter." These are two lovely things. The Yeats remind us that each age produces its own literary greatness, and leaves to posterity material for the judging of a classic.

No Violence

The third and over-riding pattern is one of general selection. It may be indicated by what is left out or put in sparingly. Though the broadcasts were given in wartime, there is no war, no violence. There is little passionate love, an emotion not calculated to compose the mind. True, we have Marlowe of the "cannonading lines"—his praise of and lament for Zenocrate—but even here the beauty and majesty of the lines may soothe. "To entertain divine Zenocrate": the music of consonant and vowel may move gently in the mind and lull one into content—"To entertain divine Zenocrate," "To entertain divine Zenocrate," "To entertain " until drowsiness deepens. There is a great deal about nature and human nature, including children. "From yon dark wood, mark blue-eyed Eve proceed"; "Summer ends now; now, barbarous in beauty, the stoops arise around"; "Most lovely dark, my Aethiopia born"; "He that of such height hath built his mind"; "For infants time is like a humming shell, heard between sleep and sleep"; "His golden locks time hath to silver turned"; "Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content"; "The infinitude of life is in the heart of man"; "Where slanting banks are always with sun." These are a few of the openings, ranging from the Elizabethans to our own time. You may amuse yourself by placing them.

Writers popularly called pessimists are not excluded. Here is A. E. Housman's "Be still, my soul, be still; the arms you bear are brittle"; and Hardy's "When the Present has latched its postern behind my tremulous stay." D. H. Lawrence, much better known as a novelist than as a poet, is represented by a poem as well as by a piece of prose.

"The Ship of Death" opens the section on autumn, and draws from that season a poignancy not found in more familiar treatments.

Value of Anthologies

Every anthology brings up the question: what is the literary value of such collections? There are critics who think that the anthology habit is akin to the ways sparrows feed. We should not be content with scraps. But no ordinary reader can form a library containing all the works of all the writers whom the anthologist admits. If he were able to do so, he could not carry his library about with him. A good anthology is a library in a tiny compass. I have a pocket edition of the *Golden Treasury* that has been round the world with me. One reason why a collection like this is good for bed-reading is that it is moderate in size and light in weight. Moreover, anthologies are potent in widening horizons. The great accepted writers of the past we know by repute if not through our reading. They are always more or less available. It is mostly smaller men and women we discover through anthologies. In the same way, the *Dictionary of National Biography* is more valuable for its information about lesser folk than for what it has to say about the giants of history. I have one or two anthologies which I value especially (they are among the books I don't lend) because they contain verses by minor poets which I could get only by going to a library, and I might not always be successful. There is also the personality of the editor, expressed in his choice and sometimes in his comment. A conspicuous example is Lord Wavell's collection. There is real intellectual excitement in following the impacts of poetry on this great soldier's mind. We enjoy comparing another man's choice with our own. The contact has the flavour of good talk.

Edward Sackville-West's present anthology is a witness for the defence in every respect. He presents us with a wide range in a small space; he leads us back to familiar things and introduces us to new delights; and he has a point of view. His book will be read by many long before bed-time. Poetry has all hours for its province, save perhaps the most prosaic—breakfast-time.

—A.M.

Meteors and Meteorology

SOME recent developments in the science of weather forecasting were described by Ian Hamilton in a BBC broadcast a short time ago. "Making clear to the public what the weather is going to be like to-day or to-morrow—weather forecasting, in fact—has long been taken rather badly by the people of Britain, he said. "One reason is that, in weather forecasting, with the ever-changing island weather we have in this country, it is human nature that we should keep in mind its shortcomings rather than its successes.

"Another reason, and a more basic one, why weather forecasting sometimes falls short is, of course, the great extent of the air, and the fact that, except at ground level, very little is yet known about it. But radar is now coming to help in this work—and in two different ways. The first comes from the direct use of radar sets to follow, to

greater distances, the small balloons which are set free from time to time at special weather stations; these balloons, of course, point out the movement of the upper air. With the use of radar it is now possible to follow these test balloons when it is impossible to see them.

"The second development is newer; it is the use of radar to record meteors when they get into the atmosphere near the earth—at heights of, say, fifty to sixty miles. But the important thing here is not the meteor itself, but the drift, or the free movement of the trail which the meteor leaves behind it. Most of this trail does not last long; after a very short time it can no longer be seen. But there are times when it does last long enough to make it possible to record the rate at which it is moving; this, of course, represents the movement of the air at the height in question."

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