

found in the eagerness with which people return year after year to go through the salutary exercises. The recruits of one year are the recruiting-sergeants of next year, and the system spreads until quite an army of retreatants is enrolled.

Retreats for women—who can more easily find leisure for them than our wage-earners can—have increased in number of recent years and bid fair to become more numerous. So loudly do the women speak in praise of

their experiences that they cannot fail to be apostles in spreading light amongst their men friends to whom the character of a Retreat is as a sealed book.

The Fathers who have given Retreats whether to women or to men in New Zealand have been greatly struck by the earnestness and sincerity which the retreatants bring to the serious duty of seeing how they stand in relation to Almighty God.

NOTES

Vigils

Aline Kilmer has published her second book of poems. There have been many of her songs published in the Poetry Page of the *Tablet*, and so keen was their personality, so brave their womanliness, that one could not refrain from sending to New York for the whole volume. It came, a slender thing called *Candles that Burn*. The poem of the name page will be remembered by *Tablet* readers. This second book is borrowed and so must be dealt with before the first, which in a way is a pity, since in this second her hush of Spring is growing bark, close bark, brave bark, needed bark; but as always one regrets the flowery spilt of Spring.

Life has gone on with Aline since the days when poor Kilmer wrote that fragrant valentine to his little woman, in the blue garment made in the manner of the Japanese, the little woman whose blue eyes "put lovely little blue reflections on everything she looks at." Kilmer went out to the wars loving deeply his wife, his home, his children, and for such valor and such love perhaps God took him, before Life could rust his sword, or weariness weaken his faith. He rode the summer blithely and the summer bore him away. But all that belongs to the first volume, that book of joy. The sorrow of losing him is in it, it is true, but not the battle and the loneliness that follows after loss.

The Poems

The thing that draws one to the second book is less its beauty than its truth. What of this?

"If I had loved you more God would have had pity;
He would never have left me here in this
desolate place,
Left me to go on my knees to the door of
Heaven,
Crying in vain for a little sight of your
face.

"How could I know that the earth would be
dark without you?
For you were always the lover and I the
friend.
Now if there were any hope that I might find
you,
I would go seeking you to the world's end.

"God is a jealous God. You have loved too
wildly,

By Eileen Duggan

You have loved too well," one said.

I bowed my head but my heart in scorn was
crying

That you whom I had not loved enough were
dead."

A bitter wind has blown out of the north
into her garden and withered her tree of joy,
but if joy is gone truth remains, and in her
search for her own faults she is almost pitiless.
She confesses that Joyce is not always
in her mind—the writing, the children, the
cares of life drive him out, but then comes
the atonement.

"When a storm comes up at night, and the
wind is crying,

When the trees are moaning like masts on
laboring ships,

I wake in fear and put out my hand to find
you

With your name on my lips.

"No pain that the heart can hold is like to
this one—

To call forgetting into aching space.

To reach out confident hands and find be-
side you

Only an empty place.

"This should atone for the hours when I
forget you.

Take then my offering, clean and sharp and
sweet,

An agony brighter than years of dull re-
membrance,

I lay it at your feet.

There are still poems on the children. No-
body tires of Kenton and Deborah and Chris-
topher, or of Michael, the flower of them all.
The poems are less light-hearted. Michael
she tells us has the touch of tears. We hear
it in many singing voices, not great voices
perhaps, but the voices that go quickest to
the heart.

"Michael, its the touch of tears.

Though you sing for very gladness,

Others will not see your mirth;

They will mourn your fancied sadness.

Though you laugh at them in scorn,

Show your happy heart for token,

Michael, you'll protest in vain—

They will swear your heart is broken."

And there is another of Michael, a lovely
thing. All the children brought her tribute
from the meadow. Kenton, the eldest, came

with buttercups, golden buttercups. The
small Christopher followed Deborah bringing
golden dandelions, but Michael loitered and
came last laying in her open hand an autumn
leaf. Some grace from a far country has
surely touched Michael.

"Death in all loveliness, fragile and ex-
quisite,

Who but he would choose it from all the
blossoming land?

Who but he would find it where it hid among
the flowers?

Death in all loveliness, he laid it in my
hand.

Poems of Self

There were few of these in the first volume.
Perhaps living alone has driven her thought
inwards. Aline has become a flagellant. She
sets down mercilessly her shortcomings. This
was surely not written of the little woman in
the blue garment—

"The heart knoweth? If this be true indeed
Then the thing that I bear in my bosom is
not a heart;

For it knows no more than a hollow whis-
pering reed

That answers to every wind.

I am sick of the thing! I think we had
better part."

Surely it is a sad rhyme, this, whoever is
its subject—"My heart will come to any
piper's calling, a fool in motley that dances
for any king." It must have been raining
that day outside the house of Kilmer.

But this next one links sweetness and
truth. It is true of all of us. Perhaps the
other is too in a sense.

"I'm glad I have a little heart,

For my heart is very small—

It makes it free to come and go

And no one cares at all.

"I give my heart for a tender word,

For a gentle look or touch,

And the one that has it never knows

And it does not hurt me much.

There is more courage than anything else
in this second volume. Everything in her life
is uprooted and has to be planted again.
Kilmer is gone, and Rose is gone, but the
others remain and for them she must live.
The blue garment is changed now for a little
suit of mail. And she goes out into battle
with Kenton and Michael for pages. Al-
ready she is making their armor, and warn-
ing them not to mind its dints and holes.
And with it all she clings to laughter, one
guesses, to hide her wounds. The poem,
"Vigils," shows best how the old Aline has
become the new. It is not a mere matter of
tilting her head, and sloping her lance.
She has tried pride and come back broken—

"Once I knelt in my shining mail,

Here by Thine altar all the night.

My heart beat proudly, my prayer rose
loudly,

But I looked to my armor to win the fight.

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