

Selected Poetry

Days

We are the marchers,
Marching endlessly,
Marching tunelessly,
Marching raggedly,—

Column and column,
And column and column,
Clad in gray. . .

We shall never double-step,
Never run—
But quietly, quietly,
Forever, forever. . .
—WILLIAM NEWMAN, in a contemporary.

Lost at Sea

[An elaboration of a recently found Greek epitaph from Sinope, the birthplace of Diogenes and Mithradates, now in Constantinople. See *American Journal of Philology*, 1922, No. 1.]

No grave is here! only a slab, a stone, a mound
To mark Narcissus fair. Far from this hallowed ground
The Euxine vast doth roll his wand'ring grave along,
But chiselled words shall fix him in enduring song;
In him to goodness there was added charm and grace,
A fine nobility shone in his acts and face,
His soul full charged with wisest speech took rank beside
The very eloquence of Nestor, Pylos' pride.
O sullen Envy, thou grim-visaged hateful Power,
That lov'st to drown the good and great before their hour!
Came there no sudden flush and blush of shame to climb
The evil ladder of thy narrow corrugated brow,
Mounting from wrinkled round to redd'ning round, what
time
Thou saw'st the young and brave Narcissus die, and how?
—DAVID M. ROBINSON.

Ireland, 1922

Betwixt the hills of grief and death,
She moves upon her thornclad road
For others peace and wealth, God saith,
For her the rod, the Cross, the load.

"Oh Holy Mother, bloody dew
Drips down your cheeks for us who sinned.
Hear you not Mary calling you,
And God's own anguish in the wind?"

Dark women touch your robe of gold
And kiss the silver dust away,
Who keened by Calvary Hill of old
And watched through Crucifixion Day.

"Oh black-robed women, widowed ones!
Who sit at every river ford,
You wring the shrouds of brothers, sons,
You washed the Body of the Lord!"

The ghosts of all the starved and slain
Rise from their graves about her head,
With martyrs, prophets in their pain,
And phantoms of her lovers dead.

"Oh Ireland, thou art set with few
To bears world's woe like Sorrow's star,
How faintly Heaven weeps for you
And Mary cries unheard afar!"
—SHANE LESLIE, in the *New Witness*.

The Irish Mother

Long years have passed since when a child I heard it,
Sweet Irish tongue so full of melody
Yet memory oft like strains of sweetest music
Recalls my mother fond "A gra ma chree."

When pain or grief oppressed me, how caressing
How soft "Alanna" as she stroked my hair;
What other tongue hath terms of fond endearment
That can with these in tenderness compare?

"Acushla"; sure the hurt were past all healing,
That was not soothed when that fond term was heard,
"Ashore"; the pulses of my heart, receding,
Would thrill responsive to that loving word.

"Mavourneen"; time and place and distance vanish,
A child once more beside my mother's knee;
I hear her gently calling me "Mavourneen,"
And in her eyes the tender love-light see.

What matter whether dark my hair or golden,
She greeted me her 'colleen bawn' most fair;
To other eyes I might be all unlovely,
I was her "colleen dhas" beyond compare.

Long years have passed, alas! since last I heard it,
That sweetest music to my listening ear;
My mother's voice, I hope, when life is ended,
"Cead mile failte" once more I shall hear.
—FATHER FITZGERALD, in the *Irish World*.

Two Roads

Life held her hands behind her back
(I knew that Life was rich),
And as she faced me, starry-eyed,
She simply asked me—"Which?"

A Road she held in either hand—
A Road where I must go;
But which would prove the better one
Not even Life could know.

Like greedy children who must choose
Of treasures, I was loath
To take the right and leave the left,
Because I wanted both.

And who shall say what spirit rules
When Contradiction goads
Some part of us toward either choice
Of Life's two different roads?

But life was urging me to choose
(The ways of Life are swift),
And so I closed my eyes and reached
A hand for either gift.

And as I walked, sometimes alone,
I questioned Life one day—
"What fairer things might I have found
Along the other way?"

And Life assured me with a smile—
"Some thoughts will always yearn
To know the still untasted joys
Down Roads we never turn.

"Some sad regret is sure to come
For ways we did not know,
But something worth the finding lies
Whichever way we go."
—NAN TERRELL REED, in the *New York Times*.



Are Your Eyes Troubling You ?

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