

# ... With ... BOOK and VERSE

By "John O'Dreams"

"STRANGE INTERLUDE," that frank and powerful play, revealing without fear or favour the complexities of a woman's heart, is being presented in London, where one judges it will raise much comment. The American playwright limns his puppets with bold strokes, and never at any time hesitates to call a spade a spade. It will be interesting to hear what the London Press has to say anent the frankly physical nature of many of the episodes and much of the talk. The play is in nine acts; will start at six, and there will be an interval for dinner between 8 and 9. Mr. O'Neill has employed the method, for the greater understanding of unravelling of plot and character, of permitting his characters to utter their thoughts sotto voce, and interlard these manifestations of their inner selves among speech and action of the play proper. A doubtful experiment, but apparently a successful one.

MR. DEREK PATMORE, who is the great-grandson of Coventry Patmore, the author of "The Angel in the House," has just completed a life of his distinguished forbear, which will be published shortly.

"DETECTIVE DAYS" is not the latest example of the Edgar Wallace type of fiction, but a sober chronicle by Detective-Inspector Wesley of forty odd years in the police force. With his wealth of material, and extensive acquaintance with criminals of all sorts and conditions, this should be a human document of absorbing interest, especially to those (and they are many) who are interested in the evolution of crime and the tracking down thereof.

ANENT the present-day trend of much of the fiction published, a disgruntled mere man writes thus in a well-known English weekly: "The deservedly popular success of Mr. Priestley's 'Good Companions' may be the one straw that indicates the way the gust of novel reading is blowing. The modern novel has too often been no more than episodes in the lives of persons with ill-regulated passions, or of puppets whirled into amazing situations, by a tornado of improbable events. The regiment of women writers dishes up heroines who should have been shut up in lunatic asylums, or have had their ears severely boxed for being egregious egoists without an idea beyond sex satisfaction." Not perhaps very gracefully expressed, but there's something in what he says.

THE prize of half a guinea in the current competition is awarded to D.P., for "The Master," in which an idea of beauty is presented in poetic phraseology. We congratulate our contributor on this lovely fragment; and also select for special commendation "Nocturne," by R.B.C., this being an arresting impression of the mystery of night, couched in unusual and successful verse form, though not quite so artistic an effort as that of the prize-winner.

"Pauline": Many of the great ones of the earth have sought inspiration in the festival of the holy Easter-tide. A noble subject, but you fall into bathos.

"Merrie": "The Moon" is the better of the two poems submitted, and tinkles along prettily enough. "Memories" is somewhat hazy in expression.

"Weary Willie": Sentiment admirable, but something more is required to crystallise emotion into poetry. We suggest study of the achievement of more skilful versifiers.

O.M.: Your work holds a quality of originality. Of your poems we prefer "Heart of Stone," which gives evidence of creative thought coupled with certain adequacy of expression.

Dale St. Maur: "Post Mortem" arrests by virtue of gruesome subject, aptly enhanced by verse form selected. Your Triolet is not altogether a successful essay in that particular genre.

"In the Hop Gardens" goes with a will and is all for the out-of-doors, but it is not poetry. Par exemple:

Hieing batchwards, homewards, hieing, hieing, hieing,  
Soon the sleep of hoppers with sleep of babes is vicing!

Fairlie: Much vain repetition.

"Lorelei": The roseate hues of early dawn recur once more, but without success.

"John o' Groats": A rush of words signifying nothing.

"Flag-waver": Not a hope!

## The Master

*He raised his bow, the whisperings died,  
The hot room sank away, the walls grew wide.  
Across a shadowy land a faint wind blew,  
A wild bird cried,  
The silence stirred and broke,  
In meadows frothed with flowers  
Sky-larks awoke.  
Over a long blue hill  
Dawn welled, pellucid, still.  
Each hollow dreamed, a shallow pool of blue,  
Each sun-ward hill pulsed coloured fires of dew,  
And through it all a golden singing went,  
As of a heart that seemed that it must break  
For very ecstasy of beauty pent,  
"Awake," it sang, "Oh wake, awake!  
No loveliness is lost,  
It is enough to be,  
For beauty's sake."*

*Silence—a breathless pause,  
Then, like a sudden rainstorm,  
The applause.*

—D.P.

MR. RUDYARD KIPLING'S new novel, entitled "William the Conqueror," will appear simultaneously in the American "Ladies' Home Journal" and English "Gentlewoman."

THE annual prize, known as The Femina Vie Hereuse Prize, of \$40 is presented by the French magazine Femina, on the award of a committee, for the best work of imagination in English, published during the year by an author whose work has hitherto, in the opinion of the committee, received insufficient recognition. This year, we learn from the "Bookman" the books recommended by the Paris committee are: "Miss Mole," by E. H. Young; "High Wind in Jamaica," by Richard Hughes; and "Three Daughters," by Jane Dashwood. Truly this is a trio of brilliant originality and interest, and it will be interesting to know the decision of the committee in what will be a very arduous task, for all three of the chosen novels are of outstanding quality.

GIFTED with ineffable spirituality and magical power of expression, Mr. Walter de la Mare is pre-eminently fitted to write of the wonderful years when the soul is in bud. Most wisely, his publishers have now collected into one volume entitled "Poems for Children," all his writings anent the short and fleeting span of youth. Mr. de la Mare's purity of vision, psychic quality, and communion with forces beyond mundane mentality of rank and file of humanity, render him peculiarly well fitted to vocalise youth's radiance, and crystallise into poetry the sighing of sea and stars. But his verse, dewy and innocent and other-world, must be approached in the true spirit, with an endeavour to recapture the "first, fine, careless rapture" of dawning days, flitting emotions, dreams, and passionate regrets that go to make the heart of a child.

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