

THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL

Volume 13 - Number 4

Summer 1963

CONTENTS

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | DEREK WALCOTT | <i>Rivers</i> |
| 2 | GALWAY KINNELL | <i>Tillamook Journal</i> |
| 7 | PHILIP HOBBSBAUM | <i>Three Poems</i> |
| 10 | STUART DODDS | <i>Eliminations</i> |
| 13 | SOL NEWMAN | <i>How Nice of Pope
Sulzberger to
Grant Germany
Absolution</i> |
| 20 | KHWAJA SHAHID HOSAIN | <i>Three Poems</i> |
| 27 | BUDDHADEVA BOSE | <i>Two Poems</i> |
| 29 | OTTONE M. RICCIO | <i>Makeshift Rationale</i> |
| 30 | RUTH BERRIEN FOX | <i>Three Poems after
Ch'u Yuan</i> |
| 32 | PARIS LEARY | <i>Two Poems</i> |
| 35 | JACK ANDERSON | <i>Portents</i> |
| 36 | EVE TRIEM | <i>Nativity Poem</i> |
| 37 | HAROLD WITT | <i>As I Was Walking</i> |
| 39 | | <i>Books in Brief</i> |

THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL

Volume 13 - Number 4

Summer 1963

RIVERS

(for Wilson Harris)

They roll as deaf as logs through foliage swollen
With elephantiasis to the screeching of macaws;

This is their second death, and they have fallen
All over, overboard, swirling like oars.

Do clouds of pirhai shred them of their flesh
Again, boiled in the tide-race,

The scaly cayman heaves its hulk and flash
To halve their limbs in the original place?

On that vague expedition did their souls
Spawn, light as butterflies, in resurrection,

Or the small terrors multiply like tadpoles
Below a mangrove root or a headstone?

Stillborn at death, their moment is not ours
In whom the spasm of birth

Begets oblivion: to chart endless savannahs,
Rivers, even with a guide, conceives an earth

Without us, without gods: Guiana or Guinea,
The aboriginal fear, like Orinoco

Debouching from a mouth brown with tobacco
Deaths that cannot discolour the great sea.

Derek Walcott

TILLAMOOK JOURNAL*

1. I have come here
From Chicago, packing
A sleeping bag, a pan
To melt snow for drinking,
Dried apricots, tea,
And a great boiled beef-
Heart for gnawing on.

Two loggers drove me
As far in as they could get,
They were two of the gunnysack loggers
Of the Burn, owning a truck
And a dozer, a few cables
And saws, who drag out
The sound heartwood for money.

They turned around
Where a rockslide had dumped itself,
One got out
And reached in the erosion.
And showed me a handful
Of earth, it was
More black ashes than it was earth.

*Editors' Note: the Spring 1956 issue of the Journal carried the original version of this poem. We now print this revised version because we feel it is of considerable interest to show how a poem evolves—how it can be, in the author's word, "very changed, yet very the same."

2. A few years back,
They said, there'd
Been a prospector here,
An old man past seventy
Who believed the land,
Being otherwise worthless,
Should yield precious metal.

They used to run across him, they said,
A little, swaying heap of gear
Traipsing across
A logging road, or thrashing up
Avalanching gravel, or
Mumbling about metal while staggering
From some vegetable gulley.

A full year
He hunted uranium or gold,
His Geiger-counter lashed on
Like an extra heart,
Around January he'd have
Settled for anything at all,
When spring came he disappeared.

3. I set out walking
From where they turned,
Underfoot the terrain spews
Loose rock and gravel,
Every step rattles and gives way,
Gigantic tree trunks
Barricade all the directions.

I wondered that a man
Of seventy-odd years had been able
To put up with one of them
On this breast, the ear

Pressed to the metal heart hearing
Only his bloodbeat
And that getting fainter.

As the hill grew steep,
Up to my ankles in gravel
And grappling at roots and rocks
I traversed and wound along,
At last I came climbing up
On my hands and knees
As though I'd come here begging.

4. On top of Cedar Butte
You can see the whole compass:
To the west the Pacific
Lies flat and shiny,
Everywhere else there are
Only hills
Plunging across a saw-toothed country.

I looked back south
Where the hills have been logged off:
Except for a few clumps of snags
Out of reach
Or too burnt
Or decayed for profit
It is a total shambles

White stumps,
White logs washing
To the valleys, eroding scarps,
Lopped spurs, old streambeds,
The whole land split and cracked
Under the crisscross of logging roads
And oozing down its ravines.

5. It is twenty-five years
Since the first blue-white puff
Kited up the wind:
The Douglas fir is an intolerant tree
Potent only in fits
And likes to breed
In the open, such as the aftermath of fire,

Convicts have put saplings
By the coast, schoolboys
Have planted by the highway,
Rain and sun continue falling.
Nothing catches.
A little fireweed, vine-maple, grape. . .
Ants, skinny black spiders. . .

To the north
On hills the loggers can't reach
The great virgin stands
Of nothing except snags,
Burnt clean and bleached,
In the distance keep
Appearing as motionless smoke.
6. All day the big,
Immaculate flakes of snow
Come down, melting
On touching. All night,
Wet through, trying for sleep,
I had to hear Kilchis
River grinding the stones and boulders.

The ravine is a mass
Of slash slippery
With rain and snow. Uprooted
Trees cross and lock each other

Blocking the water,
Tan, beautifully
Grained rims for the waterfalls.

At last a little
Mule-deer joined me,
Leading like a scout,
When I turned off and climbed
He stopped, and sadly,
It almost seemed, watched my going.
Some birds began wrangling and chirping.

7. At the sound of surf
I scramble to my feet
And climb again—from where I sat
Under the last knoll,
Gnawing the heart,
Looking back at the Burn
As it went out in the twilight,

Its crags broken,
Its valleys soaked in night,
Just one more of the
Plundered breasts of the world—
And hearing my heart
Pound in the air
I come over the last summit

Into dark wind
Blasting out of the darkness,
Where before me the tempestuous ocean
Falls with long triple crashes on the shore
And where behind the snow is putting down
A thin, saprophytic blossoming.
It is only steps to the unburnable sea.

Galway Kinnell

THREE POEMS**Old Bachelor**

Twenty-odd years of teaching taught him nothing.
True, he could gloss a text, index his lectures,
Footnote and file, smile past a rival's strictures,
Retire into his balding dome, sit tight
Behind thick glasses and a sort of learning.

His voice, too, seemed to have deadened. In spring,
he noted

The classroom murmur spread, echoing laughter
Break out beyond his study door soon after
The tousled bowed-down boys and girls, mute
In his cadaverous presence, had departed.

One girl he avoided as much as, he thought, she did.
And yet her downward smile drew his dull gaze—
He found his gestures aimed at her, his eyes
Grappling for hers. He told a joke or two,
And when she laughed he found that he was needed.

Twenty-odd years of teaching, all so even.
Senior lecturer, man of many committees,
How can this unschooled girl whose only wit is
A smiled-down murmur quell your practised speech?
But when she accepted him the world became heaven.

"Withdrawn" old friends say. True, from words and
meaning.

"Finished" some say. But not, he feels, with life.
In a fresh-painted maisonette his wife
Shapely in slacks breathes a perpetual summer
Betraying him from learning into learning.

Philip Hobsbaum

Bulldog Drummond Fights Again

Huge, often swathed in black, cheerily shouting
 "Come on, boys" as you crash through the closed
 windows

Into the drawing-room packed full of crooks,

See how you seize two Chinese by their pigtails,
 Smashing their yellow skulls together, then
 Duck mysteriously a knife from behind.

"Not done to fight with knives," you say, and so
 You lash him to a chair, then with a whip
 Chastise him till he weeps. Justice is done,

Is done, and done again. Caught on dark stairs
 Arms of prodigious length around your throat
 You slash an artery somewhere—that's all right,

The man's a chink or wop or wog or boche.
 The jews are worst. "What are these Hebrews here?"
 (A henchman comes and whispers.) "Is that so?"

Out comes the whip again. They squeal with fear,
 Not unnaturally. **You** don't, of course—
 Batter you into the mud, you'd come out singing.

And how you'd hate me! Intellectual Jew,
 Reading books, disliking sport and games,
 I couldn't join your club, you'd brain me with it.

You're an old has-been now, dust on your shelf.
 Time was they'd crowd around the letter S
 On the off chance of Sapper coming in.

We've other things to give our hate release.
 The TV Marlowe, pulped and broken-toothed,
 Peter Cushing torturing young girls,

And, of course, our own science fiction. We've a
device

Would scorch you up worse than Carl Peterson.
Even you never filled the rain with death,

But your sons are trying hard. The bruisers' faces
Of young M.P.'s, those puffy brigadiers,
Voices deceptively mild, assure us we

Can give the Enemy worse than he's got.
Who is the Enemy? They hardly care.
I read to numb my uttermost despair

Till Bulldog Drummonds us from off the earth.

Philip Hobsbaum

In London

In London again, my nostrils seal with soot,
My clothes afflict my skin, my hair my scalp.
Crowds jostle my Northern unimpeded walk,
A man treads down heavily on my foot,
Doesn't say "sorry", merely curses me.

Old friends seem older, lined brows growing through
Their well-groomed greying hair. Their talk, too,
seems
More full of themselves—their jobs, their pals, their
schemes.

The films are poor. I thought I'd see a show,
But seats have gone up. And the beer tastes worse.

When I got home a bus-conductor picked
My case up for me, didn't kick it off.
Tied up and blindfolded, a plane could drop
Me dead in London streets, I'd know my pitch.
Those hurrying feet would trample me to soot.

Philip Hobsbaum

ELIMINATIONS

1.

A book with pale green covers is always a reminder
that Death is a delicate matter.

Leave no street or square unturned until you find
the statue you have been longing to destroy.

Remember that large insects wear very heavy armor,
if you are thinking of attacking them.

Virgins are like civic buildings. They have no
ramparts or means of defense.

Never use scissors on a flower. Break it with your
hands.

Elegance is a by-word for deformity.

Do not overlook the insidiousness of small bells.

Take advantage of your moments of clarity to kill a sparrow.

When you are feeling depressed, remember that a brain is only a chestnut covered with small hairs.

All men have invisible tails to which some troublesome object is attached; the object is usually an old-fashioned alarm-clock.

No zoo is complete without the poet who has, a few minutes ago, enjoyed public disfavor.

Suspect all dictionaries.

2.

There is no reason for the birth of Man, unless cruelty could be considered a reason.

Do not be more kind than is necessary.

Dying for love and the love of dying are no longer valid; why not fill an ashtray with wine?

Abandoned houses are the best places to chain dogs.

3.

A dying man asks for something sweet to smell.

Roses are bitter because of their indecisive odor.

A glass tumbler is not necessarily a mirror.

The spaces between the lines of a poem are what the blind man's eyes reflect.

The soft astrology of the blind man's eyes is the furniture he enjoys touching.

A blind man has an entire sky in his grasp.

Do not burn yourself on the stars.

4.

It is the eyes that arrange festivals, the mouth that rides on a silver stair-case.

Machines of all kinds are obsessed by the idea of
being touched by women.

Apples in a green bowl suggest the amusement of
living.

The failing light of afternoon shares its bed with
the pomegranates.

A breast on fire is a sack of jewels.

A sign on your door instructs you to go out in
transparent clothes and look for an amber jar that
is buried in the wood.

5.

There are gate-keepers who adore the smell of
convolvulus.

If you feel like sending arrows into a heart, tear a
watch to pieces.

Bear sorrow as though it were a Greek game.

If you hear someone calling in the next room, go to
them and tell them about Carthage.

If your walls are in ruin, complain of purity and of
the chasm between the ancient world and this one.

Do not kill a nightingale.

Do not speak of the houses in which you are dead.

Speak of those from which you have flown.

Don't pass yourself off as a street-lamp or butterfly.

It is in the passages of night that you can be most
eloquent in talking to the dull-smelling marigolds.

Stuart Dodds

HOW NICE OF POPE SULZBERGER TO GRANT GERMANY ABSOLUTION

(appertaining to repeated effusions of the New York
Times over Der Alte and Von Braun)

The Prosecutor

The Jew by Rome condemned for crass pursuits
supposedly in cahoots with crucifiers
of nonexistentialist Puss in Boots . .

The Jew by pope condemned,
by flame and rope consumed,
the corpse by Gott exhumed for soap and leather:
for allegedly showing white feather, pushing dope;
for committing white slavery and what other
knavery

only God knows, for *treason* in gorse and heather,
for failure of crops, of reason, for manipulating
weather,

peddling mops, tops for blessed children:

The Jew scapegoat
by so distinguished Parnassus West immer con-
temned by rote . .

The Jew
presumed extinguished in the mass—

by *gas-es!*

Adolph Eichmann

Aber where, where might I ask, where might be der
corpus delicti?

Aber where, where might I ask, where might be der
corpus delicti?

For gibts nicht kein corpus then guilty bin ich
nichts!

For gibts nicht kein corpus then wie kann ich guilty
be,

O most noble and considerate judges? O most noble
and considerate judges, who duty begrudges ignoble
me?

I ask. Who nudges ignoble me into ignoble grave?
He who drudges away at his own thankless tasks?
Who trudges daily between workbench and hovel?
Who before his liege must likewise grovel, wouldst
he besiege me?
Wouldst he slaughter me now for mein own oath
fulfilling?
For mein Herr Liege's orders so faithfully
executing?

Der Alte

Eichmann? O Israel, how Herr Gott himself must
laugh!

Eichmann? Dieser Offizierstellvertreter the Gestapo
can spare.

Eichmann? Bitte, Israel, while I quaff this brew
distilled from a Jew long dead, a Jew even longer in
Hölle

(drea'd?) than Hitler, ein fiddler who worshipped
Schumann and Mozart and Brahms, who for the
wretched Beethoven

both arms he would have been only to happy to cut
off,

Jawohl, Herr Kennedy, whose deal gibt jetzt?

Jawohl, meiner Herren, who passes? Who bets
gegen die Reich? England? Russland? Frankreich?
Sie wissen nicht dass Deutschland immer wins?

Gott sei dank für die U.S.A.! Für die U.S.A.

Gott sei dank, grüss Gott!

Dass die Zeiten so freundlich gay und
festive sind

für die U.S.A. Gott sei dank, grüss Gott!

Sie wissen nicht

dass Deutschland immer wins
irrespective of what geschrecklichkeit or sins
ist by uns committed? Sie bitten so verücht
dass sie wissen nicht wie gegen die Juden
ist alles permitted?

*Gott sei dank für die U.S.A. Für die U.S.A.
Gott sei dank, grüss Gott!*

The Press

The New York *Times*: Such pale rhymes
be our very own dear Cardinal Swiftsmeatyale
Swingingsuchgrubbychimes! By Pyrrhus,
son of Achilles, gear us, shall we, Eichmann
with a copy of upon my soul the genius of Cyrus
Sulzberger who doth truly live so well
on The Art of Dying for a swell?

In the *Times* of London:
What crimes? rants Herr Eichmann. On der part of
mein host
surely ein most unwarranted imposition.

“On the part of his host
surely a most unwarranted imposition!” similarly
chant

his counsel who thence forthwith do petition the
court,
exhort it with celestial vapors, incantations,
burn incense, tapers . .

“Manumission! Anything less
must frustrate fission, even fruition; anything less
doth constitute admission:

“For jawohl exposes this not
the vindictive law of eye and fang and claw of . . of
M o s e s ?

From Notre Dame de Kennedy
in *Our Lady's Home Journal*:

Why heavens, does my husband r-r-eally look

like Jerry Lewis? Good heavens, how true is this?

Why who spurns
 eternal youth who so yearns to attain to moon?
 to vernal Venus? Diurnal space? Why how rapt, how
 keen
 this viewer's dreamy face!

Wall Street Journal recording diurnally
 the cogent thoughts of Colonel Docent Torts und
 Liebestraum,
 market analyst of incestuous dreams of ravenous
 bishop
 positively suppurating from tithes and indulgences,
 who shall dish up from podgy knees public health
 for aborigines, hoping thusly such a premium to
 place

on choice real estate and Lebensraum
 (much as upon honest men
 didst once even so fraught Diogenes);

that realtors,
 and this we shall most gleefully relate,
 shall turn astronaut and prospects deal selves off as
 freight.

Cutpurse! Scapegrace! Cutthroat!
 Thus purseth mouth and curseth out lout
 our *Christian Science Monitor*:
 Is it your mission, Don Signor Ravenous Bishop,
 your hearse to steer to hell?

Commenting upon this most singular
 display of rudeness on the part of in this one instance
 the crude *Monitor*, Her Majesty's *Manchester*
Guardian dooth brood:
 In the surety of death of hell is there not enough
 encompassed?

For Deutschland's patron saints
 es gibt then no complaints? If so then pourquoi no

fair to make the hair crawl; despite their use of awl
and breaststroke on patron saints and painted
knights

of the sword and curb and of not quite so bright
as his anti-Semitic old man Henry Ford Two or Three
or Four;

and the bourse
and his and our coarse Old Lady of Threadneedle
Street's horses:

die aller meiner most heiliger Herren der Graf
Jerry von Very Admirable Perry Lewis von Kennedy
way down under below der slave-ocrat Plato fleeing
NATO out of Cato

for sweet sleek Dean Herr Gott Strafe Nur New
England

für der sehr Bloodthirstymary alzo Fé Sante Topeka
Toupé von Acheson

Ausgetruman Durch Eisenhower geboren (alzo so
verloren)——

All Neville Chamberlains
granting nuclear power and such *süssgeliebterlange*
*Jahre**

on the Atchison, Topeka and Sante Fé to Der Alte
Adenauer,

der Imminsee alter Holy Graf immer adding cubits
to his stature

and pay by warranty of the catcher in the wry New
York *Times*

für Deutschland's Zeitgeist Dawes-und-Young unter
der kleinige Tzung

von der little Herr Graf Sehr profound Arthur or
round stomacher

und sound investments in der Herr Cardinal
Fuglemann und Special Pleader

for a New Crusade in behalf of still ever more
ferocious Wagnerian Lieder . .

P'envoi

the corpse by Gott exhumed
 for soap and leather
 irrespective of political weather
 nordics make love in gorse and heather
 even so, whether a corpus
 by microfilm or blether
 Eichmann? bitte, Israel, while I quaff
 this brew distilled aus one Jew twice as miserable
 as Beethoven and twice as dead
 o my ghastly headlines!
 why by the nine old gruesome wives of the holy
 ghost,
 why bold as brass must they startle grass
 to dig the mucker up? wherefore let him boast
 and roar of sinister triumphs in the war? why roast
 the mimes of yore? doth squawk and with such
 peevisish indignation
 the flatulant geese of the *Times* of New York
 and in a similar vein the strain
 of his old lady of Threadneedle Street's niece
 aber where,
 where might I ask, ist der corpus delicti?
 why upon my soul
 now what an inspired thought! i say, what a pity,
 wot?
 that i could not have thought up such a nifty one
 first.
 gawd, what a thirst i might thereby have satisfied,
 the old lag reflected
 while thanks to the warranty
 of the U.S.A. such a plethora of evil goes undetected
 Sol Newman

THREE POEMS**Karbala*****1.****Martyrs**

Seventytwo thirsty saints upon the sand
 Turning towards the Euphrates which flows
 Placid forever through the level plain.
 Three tedious weeks behind these weary pilgrims
 The sanctuary of Madina lies
 Birthplace of grace about to abdicate
 In blood and anger on the waiting earth.
 They have converged on destiny this day
 Now devious polity
 Confronts them with its lances on the bank
 Of the deep-flowing and necessary river.

Thirst

Quietly growing in the silent tents
 And plain before their eyes
 The army of betrayers takes its stand
 A knife above the opening vein of faith.
 So the days revolve

*50 years after the death of the Prophet Mohammad, his grandson Imam Hussain and a small band of his followers were waylaid, cut off from the life-giving water of the river and, after an ordeal of 10 days, massacred at Karbala on the banks of the Euphrates by the army of Omayyid leader Yazid. Imam Hussain was on his way from Madina to the Omayyid stronghold of Kufa, invited there by Yazid himself under pretext of paying homage to him as undisputed Caliph of the growing dominion of Islam.

This betrayal is mourned every year by all Muslims. The Shia sect in particular make it an occasion for intense manifestations of grief, including processions of flagellants.

Around this tragic, recurring confrontation
 Of sanctity and power;
 But the children cry and their grave father weeps
 In simple, human misery and pain.

Now history descends upon this scene
 Now tents and horses dim before our eyes,
 Upon the resolute in Kufa falls
 The purity of power; upon their victims
 The mindless, burning cloak of deity.
 To mourn their names
 An avalanche of grief will shift through time,
 A river deep and growing to a flood
 Of comfortable and recurring pain.

2.

For ten enumerated days the voices
 Have cried their grief in endless pageantry.

Hussain! Hussain!
 shriek the whirling, tattered mourners
 Hussain! Hussain!
 fall the knives upon the shoulders
 Hussain! Hussain!
 call the young disfigured faces
 Hussain! Hussain!
 grief redeems, and grief abases
 Hussain! Hussain!
 take our bleeding flesh for witness
 Hussain! Hussain!
 release our dreams, absolve our sickness
 Hussain! Hussain!
 you who died that we may prosper
 Hussain! Hussain!
 now our annual pain we offer
 Hussain! Hussain!
 martyr, take this blood and anguish

Hussain! Hussain!
 fall again, that we may flourish.

When the tenth day ends
 The watching cars edge slowly through the crowd
 Dispersing without passion in the night;
 Incurious, their lights
 Wash over people sleeping in the streets
 Their noisy and perpetual resting place.
 (But those men died
 For principle and pity by the river;
 Their Faith lives on
 Rendered more decorous by their springing blood).

The cars drive past
 The elegance of silent minarets
 Visible even in the moonless night.

Khwaja Shahid Hosain

A Prospect of Desire

(On seeing the touring open-air brothels of Sindh)

Through the heat-enveloped maze,
 By the silent, arid ways
 Cast in changeless drudgery,
 Flaunting primal finery
 Beckoning to every thirst
 Comes the caravan of lust.

In the desert, there was pain,
 Barren frenzy roamed the plain,
 But they barricaded hate,
 Made the sterile torment wait

Till the healing waters burst
At the caravan of lust.

When the night's indifference came,
Cloaking the perpetual shame
Shadowing the alleyways,
Lancing at the unborn days,
Then the shackled dreamers grasped
At the caravan of lust.

And the waiting ecstasy
Drew away their misery,
Swept the seething agony
Into pale passivity:
So they travel, as they must
To the anodyne of lust.

When the faceless stranger comes,
And you clasp him in your arms,
Summon up the wanton eye
And the gently moving thigh,
Do you love because you must
In the caravan of lust?

Does the metronomic glee
Ever freeze to agony?
Can the furnace of desire
Abdicate its sullen fire,
Or does a never-ending thirst
Compel this caravan of lust?

Lying on the hired cot
Does the fierce and fleeting thought
Of degradation come your way
Under the censorious sky?
Or does the silver radiance rust
Into the provender of lust?

As the hungry children come
Searching for their shattered home,
Does your nimble woman's heart
Beat with more than measured art?
With the passion is there birth
At the caravan of lust?

When the village lies content,
And the patched and shredded tents
Are plucked across the shifting sand,
Who can say he understands
What the drifting, shrouding dust
Whispers at the scene of lust.

Khwaja Shahid Hosain

The Oriental Poet Comes to Tuscany

Deep in my heart a tangled garden grows
Where nightingale and jasmine live and breathe
My life is hard, but the perpetual rose
Sends through my art the perfume of release.
But times are painful; self-imagined cries
Of soothing birds have now begun to pall,
Travelling away, the restless poet tries
An alien anodyne at Fiesole.

But the world is hard here, hard
And sharp with definition; clear and brutal
The dazzling blueness of the covering sky
Drenches the eyes.
I shrink from this deluge
Of beauty without relief, no sombre clouds

Tainting the skies, no deadly overflow
 Tearing the Arno from its quiet path,
 No plague of locusts
 Busy among the fields of Tuscany.
 So in this painted insulated Eden
 I fly to happiness, to a forgetting
 Simpler and stupider than the dream of symbols
 Verdant and moving in my Eastern mind.

Descend from Fiesole
 Wandering about the flower-enclosed retreats
 Elegant and withdrawing from the road:
 Who lives beneath these cypresses, these stones
 Beaten and mellowed by an age of sun—
 A name occurs: Berenson
 Dispensing values from these quiet paths. Others
 Grown rich and famous of the mind or heart
 Resting their passions in this even land
 This healing, equable, benumbing land.

In Florence
 Among the ordered stones of rose and marble
 Inhaling the damp incense of the churches
 Watching a woman lost in genuflection
 Before a smiling, illuminated face,
 Crossing the Ponte Vecchio at night
 The flagstones echoing against the water
 Discerning ancient beauty on the air
 Lying on the tongue with antiseptic chill,
 What reckoning is reached?

Watch these darting, sensuous, unheroic people
 Hurrying past their heritage of beauty
 Drinking the wine but lost without the visions
 Which grew to paint and marble in this city
 Too long ago. The streets were narrower then,

The garbage lay untended by the doors,
The gutters flowed beneath ones feet, the flag-
stones shone with slime beneath the sun,
Blood was not uncommon to the eye
And perhaps the blazing blueness of the sky
Pressed less relentlessly towards the earth.
I must return to the sad, teeming home
Which lies with heat and squalor in my heart,
There is time
To find a music in that suffering land
Before peace overcomes its painful life,
The rivers dwindle to a channelled flow
The sun contracts its burning heat to warmth
The colors grow to burnished, vivid hues
Against which moves a herd of pleasant people
In undemanding safety,
And the same breathing calm of silent beauty
Descends upon my rancid, acrid country
As on this time in Florence
Where the great statues mourn
A passion lost upon the middle way.

Khwaja Shahid Hosain

TWO POEMS

Song of a Man in Love

Within me, now, the world begins to enter:
 Buildings, people, chores and quarrels,
 Fashion stores filled with smell of women,
 Rough boys, parks where old men linger,
 And those who lose their heads in temples' dark.
 Sometimes, when midnight's past, a cry
 Abruptly dying, pierces through my flesh.
 I am trodden up and down a thousand stairs.

That limping beggar girl in her simple gladness
 Picks my nerves for ribbons to twine her hair.
 The husky voices of whores
 Raise a conchshell roar within my helpless ear.

Beasts also come, crouching, dense and close
 together,
 As if they had found the final unclaimed portico.
 The buffalo, unyoked from the cart,
 Spreads his carpet of fatigue and is content:
 With lovely eyes the stray bitch speaks.

Distances come, valleys, plains, forests,
 Roads, bridges, vehicles,
 Along the telegraph wires from peak to peak
 Strike the rhythms of the big mountain-winds.

All is well,
 All firm, in tact and sound
 Like events in a made-up play:
 And only I
 Have become a flow, a stream, a motion,
 A wound

Which a deep, incurable infection
Keeps oozing away,
Gaping, stanchless and red.

Buddhadeva Bose
adapted by the author from his Bengali

A Stranger

Dead are those girls—had breasts like water-lilies;
And the pond so cool with grass and moist snails—
Small;—but beyond knee-deep water was the storm.

Dead the friends;—evenings no longer deepen,
Spacious and slow, in glad verandas,
Nor the talk is lightly tossed, like rafts upon the
waves—

A game;—but leading up to voyages.

And the animal's cave is closed. No bribes can open
the door.

Reduced to a worm is the tiger's redness.
No more the warm wet flow of the stupid child.

Only—while the rain
Blurs the trees where witches shake their hair,
And the wail of coupling cats grows sharp like
needles—

At midnight, upon the pavement
Is left a heart,

A stranger,

A raw lump of feeling slow to learn.

Buddhadeva Bose
adapted by the author from his Bengali

THREE POEMS AFTER CH'U YUAN**The Spirit of the Hills**

In her chariot of azaleas and laurel,
drawn by leaping wild-cats,
followed by swift-footed foxes,

comes the Spirit of the Hills,
dressed in wistaria, girdled with ivy,
her lips smiling.

Through my heart's memory
she trails the perfume
of many flowers—

while I stand shrouded from sunlight
in the dark grove near the hilltop,
clouds of gloom round my feet.

Ruth Berrien Fox

The Voice of the River

As day wanes, I descend from the Western Mountain
down whose sides I have wandered, bemused.

Forgetting home, I dream of a palace
of pearl with gateways of shell.

Come, ride my tortoise and chase spotted fishes;
linger among the small islands with me.

At daybreak, the swift-flowing freshet comes
swirling
to part us. Gently bowing, you turn away.

Then wave after wave comes to greet me;
swarms of fish bid me farewell and hail.

Ruth Berrien Fox

Lament of the Lady of Hsiang

Legend has it that the lady mourned on the bank of the river for her husband, the emperor Shun, her tears so incessant that they spotted forever the stalks of bamboo. At last, in despair, she drowned herself.

My eyes ache from gazing into the river;
my tear-drops glisten on roots of bamboo.

A house in the water I'll build for myself,
trellised with iris, roofed with lotus leaves,
and carpeted with purple shells.

I'll weave hangings of split reeds,
weighted with pebbles of white jade.
Oil of angelica shall perfume the rooms.

O, scent my walls with pepper juice,
my rafters with cinnamon and camphor.
Tie over my door a small bundle of sweet herbs.

Ruth Berrien Fox

TWO POEMS

Love Lifted Me

My cousins, lean hunters,
at twenty-two shaped
by Sewanee, Kappa Alpha,
shabby affluence,
the Order of DeMolay,
Aunt Mim's and Aunt Martha's voices
(Randolph Macon
out of Hockaday) :
Bobo Randolph pissed
out steaming Jax behind
the tent; Clay Stuart
said, "Get the lead out,"
both auburn, fair,
enemies of the duck,
the rabbit, and the deer,
tall and tight, and I
at fifteen, once-removed.

Banana-glare of floodlights,
pulp of cow-pies
and sawdust, thin women
rattling in rows like a canebrake,
stiff salt denims,
and a Fat with bow-tie,
galluses, and Bible.
Cousin Bobo said,
"Hot damn! Clay Boy,
he's preaching like a nigger
I think I'll get religion."

"Episcopalians don't
get religion, Bo."

“Clay Boy, you never saw
some little old gal
all hotted up
with one of those mean low-down
Gospel choruses?
Down in Rapides Parish
last summer one
damn near got her rocks off
with *Love Lifted Me*.
God, I’m getting it. Clay Boy,
this stuff hits you
where you live.”

I once-
removed, once-removed,
heard Fat pop,
thought of Christ moving
in the silence of the Host
and his mother the Virgin
my mother with cool
hands on my forehead
and her perpetual face
an ivory of repose.

Saw Christ the Alley Cat
crucified and stretched
on canvas, vermin Messiah,
his blood noisy with multitudes,
multitudes.

Bo was saved
from being saved—by Clay
who warned him that Aunt Mim
would have a hissy if
he let the Rector down.

“Okay, okay. Let’s
you and me go hustle

us some poontang, Clay Boy.”

Outside over the tent
stars moving through
my hunting kin's drunk,
the hot-ham smell
of a cottonseed mill,
a ruined armadillo,
the instant salience of chiggers.

My mother with Mary's sword
in her heart and a quarter-moon
white under her feet
moved through the summer night
crushing the patchouli.

Paris Leary

To Seconal, on Good Friday

Push me over the edge of sleep,
past this autumn consciousness,
down to the bottom of the weather
where the black silent storm
is peace and the dreams are out of Freud
or some forgotten marriage-manual.
Kill me for twelve hours
and I will rise again on the third day.

It was easy, with the dex—
the curate with his fag tenor,
the usual Vittoria *Reproaches*,
the white free-standing altar
wreathed in the acrid blue, the decorous

ushers, the smart gold corpus
on the Florentine crucifix,
and the Junior League repenting.

But dex is Judas; the other way
quickly or the clock strikes three.
Quickly. Already I can smell
His sweat and urine; kill me for twelve
hours with the black silent storm—
the empty Saturday I can bear.
Too late. The clock. Migraine rends
your grey veil in twain. I thirst.

Paris Leary

PORTENTS

The clerks at Woolworth's are growing mushrooms.
The cash register girls at the A&P
Are treading grapes as they ring up their sales.
The garage men scribbles odes on the crankshaft.

The meekest member of the auto club
Has resolved to flood all freeway cloverleaves
And convert them into skating rinks.

The commuter bus just keeps on going.
It stops a hundred miles away
Beneath redwood trees where everyone
Gets out and has a box lunch picnic.
The market for TV dinners has dropped.

Something big seems sure to happen.

Jack Anderson

NATIVITY POEM

(for J. B.)

The egg sat up in the egg-cup,
The wings within quivered gay.
*Who will chip my pearly-whirly shell
And let me be my day?*

Not I, said the banker,
Your oboe and drum
Would shake our countinghouses
Into kingdom-come.

The egg went pale in the egg-cup
And raged with a shriek of claws.
*Who will chip the stone-boney shell
And let me glove my paws?*

Not I, said the Duchess
Tiara-ed and twirled.
You would smoothe the seams and sugar the dreams
Of our illmannered world.

The egg slipped tight in the egg-cup
And a voice began to mock,
*Who will chip my rockinghorse shell
And let me trick or treat?*

Not I, said the nurse
As she blew out the candle.
You don't know enough for an embryo
And much too much for a dandle.

The egg turned black in the egg-cup
And jumped a stormy feather.
*Who will chip my uranium shell
And let me seek my Other?*

Not I, said the Robot.
You talk like a swan.
No poets allowed unless with jazz.

You're stuck with your dying moon.

The egg blazed red in the egg-cup
 And beeped and beeped to seven.
*Who will chip the cockatrice shell
 And let my hell be heaven?*

Enough of this fiddle, said the Unicorn.
 November Tenth, and my godson's due.
 Then his horn chipped the skylarking shell:
Good-sorrow, happy doomlight, to you and you.

Eve Triem

AS I WAS WALKING THE DOG IN ST. FRANCIS KANSAS

As I was walking the dog in St. Francis Kansas
 or behind the OK Motel in St. Jo., Mo.,
 I saw the shabby backs of the fronts of glamor
 where paint peels off and garbage cans overflow.
 The hollyhocks break and trail in the dust of Kansas,
 the crickets hop through the heat of St. Jo., Mo.

My dog delightedly pees in his first real alley,
 sniffs at the fly glad heaps in a neon glow
 that winks from the neat facades; he is tired of
 riding

and likes these evil odors, being so low.
 He prefers the earth outside to the inside, tidy
 with towels and controls where air conditioners blow.

He is sick as I am of farms we never stop at
 but pass between corn and cows on the endless road.
 I let him linger and add to the rankling alley.
 Star far Scorpio blinks as I hanker for home.
 I won't come back ever this way through Kansas
 or stay in St. Jo. at the false bright side of the road.

Harold Witt

HONEY AND SALT. *By Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace & World. \$4.75.*

A new collection of Sandburg—over 85 and still going strongly in the wonderful old vein. There is the wry combination of the lyric and the tough. Poems about panama hats and skyscrapers, about free-sailing Lief Erickson and about God—putting on overalls and getting dirty running our universe “and several other universes / nobody knows about but Him.” Fortunately, Sandburg hasn’t changed!

THE BEGINNING AND THE END. *By Robinson Jeffers. Random House. \$3.95.*

This posthumous collection reveals one important thing: though Jeffers’ images changed to keep pace with the changing madnesses of the world, his subject matter and attitude never did. Here is still his massive pessimism and his moving concern for all living things. A worthy final volume.

SELECTED POEMS. *By Yevtuschenko. E. P. Dutton. \$3.*

Yevgeni Yevtushenko has stirred up more excitement in the Soviet Union than any other writer in recent years. He was hailed as evidence of the new freedom for Russian writers. Many of his poems are startling and fresh. They have sweep of ideas and brightness of image. Many will doubtless be lured into reading this book by Yevtushenko’s notoriety. They should be warned. These translations are garbled, inaccurate and wholly lacking in any of the power of the originals. They will give the reader only a mistaken notion of the poet. It’s a pity. Yevtushenko deserves better treatment than this.

WATER STREET. *By James Merrill. Atheneum. \$1.65 (paper).*

There has been a steady and impressive development in each of Merrill’s books. The first clearly showed him to be a clever technician and a witty (if

bitter) observer. In this one (the third) his technique has become far more subtle and his observation touched with compassion. There can be little further doubt that he is developing, quietly and surely, into one of our major talents.

EVERYONE BUT THEE AND ME. *By Ogden Nash. Little, Brown. \$3.95.*

There are many who hate to admit it, but Ogden Nash is one of the few really original poetic talents of our century. Here are some new exercises in his private medium—the best in many years. All bear the outrageous stamp of the master. Can one ask for more?

TWENTIETH CENTURY CHINESE POETRY.
Trans. and ed. by Kai-yu Hsu. Doubleday. \$5.95.

This is an important pioneering work which gives us a glimpse of a virtually unknown literature. It is a collection of the colloquial poetry of modern China that breaks with the traditional verse patterns and classical language of the past. They are selections to be read as much as history as poetry. But they cannot be regarded as mere propaganda. The Chinese sense of beauty is too fine to allow that to happen. There is excitement and originality here that should delight many.

POET'S CHOICE. *Ed. by Paul Engle and Joseph Langland. Dial. \$6.95.*

This is a frustrating anthology. For it, 103 poets select their "favorite or crucial poem from their own work and comment on it." Mind you, they were not asked to select what they consider their **best** poem. So, unavoidably, the collection becomes a personality hodgepodge of careful thought and nonsense, genuine self-revelation and childish showing-off. It contains pleasant surprises and serious disappointments. Finally, it leaves one wondering how many poets should be allowed to comment on their own verse.