

certain cadence of her verse, do not certainly understand her meaning. Yet, to me, there are few poets who speak so movingly of the subtle cadencies of love, its ardors, its languors, its disillusion. Nor of all those who are confessedly or unintentionally Imagists, is there one who is so sure of color, so unfailing in the selection of the image. Take one of the shortest pieces in "Heliadora", for example. It is complete, it is not only a nature but a soul picture:

OREAD

Whirl up, sea —
whirl your pointed pines,
splash your great pines
on our rocks,
hurl your green over us,
cover us with your pools of fir.

This is the singing of a pagan, a pagan who finds gods in fire, and their chantings in the movements of the sea. "Centaur Song" is a superb piece of music. I quote the opening, only:

Now that the day is done,
now that the night creeps soft
and dims the chestnut clusters'
radiant spike of flower,
O sweet, till dawn
break through the branches
of our orchard-garden,
rest in this shelter
of the osier-wood and thorn.

THREE ENGLISH LYRISTS

By John Donelson

IN these three small volumes is a striking commentary on modern poetic moods. I have called "H. D." English, although she is in reality a somewhat expatriated American; but she is even more truly Greek, ancient Greek, in background and in desire. She is, in my opinion, one of the few living poets who speak with absolute accents of genius. Many of you are doubtless impatient of her mannerisms, do not catch the slow but nevertheless

They fall,
the apple-flowers;
nor softer grace has Aphrodite
in the heaven afar,
nor at so fair a pace
open the flower-petals
as your face bends down,
while, breath on breath,
your mouth wanders
from my mouth o'er my face.

For W. H. Davies's new book of lyrics there is far less to say. They are cerebral, a trifle remote, with moments of music and of beauty, but with moments only; and I think there is no lyric in the entire collection that is not spoiled by some curious and unreasonable cadence. Robert Frost uses this

same type of cadence with good effect; but in Davies I find it both annoying and prosaic. Take this stanza, for example, from a poem called "One Token":

But what I want I cannot have:
One token from beyond the grave,
That hour I neither dream nor sleep,
To prove death but a veil to hide
Another life on the other side.

The thoughts are some of them exquisite, there are lines of power and of beauty; but there is not an accent of real musical worth. I find Davies far more satisfactory in his dramatic lyrics.

As for Edith Sitwell's "The Sleeping Beauty", it is a lengthy narrative or interpretative poem, interspersed with lyrics, which is silly, remote, difficult to understand, and yet filled with a certain magic of stanza and phrase. It is a great pity that Miss Sitwell did not choose to construct her poem so as to provide a reasonable setting for such lovely lyric pieces as:

Oh the pomp that passed those doors;
Trains still sweep the empty floors,
Pelongs, bulchauls, pallampores,

Soundless now as any breeze
Of amber and of orangeries
That sweep from isles in Indian seas . . .

However, as a whole she chooses to employ elaborate and silly images, and to make the enjoyment of what was really a lovely conception almost impossible.

Miss Sitwell's book annoys me particularly because it seems to represent a state of mind dangerous to modern poetry. She is, judging from the poem, a most sentimental person who is afraid of showing it and tries to cover her sentimentality by indirection. She is unsuccessful. Her mere choice of expressions is often sentimental. It is as though Elinor Glyn suddenly tried to write a novel in the accents of Ber-

nard Shaw. W. H. Davies, at least in these later lyrics, is sincere, even when not melodic; but Miss Sitwell is always a little self conscious, always a little odd. Hers is a most annoying book.

Heliodora. By H. D. Houghton Mifflin Co.
Secrets. By W. H. Davies. Harcourt, Brace and Co.
The Sleeping Beauty. By Edith Sitwell. Alfred A. Knopf.