

## Trumpets and Shawms.

In spite of a slight turgidity Mr. Henry Hanby Hay's *Trumpets and Shawms* is not without elements of worth. His poems are painstaking, which is something, and if they lack interest

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they do not lack sincerity. A few lines will best show Mr. Hay's elements of strength and weakness:

You walk in bonds, my limbs are free;  
You deem to see the gate of day;  
'Gainst peace and proof and pedigree  
I put the conscience I obey.  
The lowest human is a sphere,  
And Holy Ghost informs the clod,  
Beset by doubts he may not fear;  
Truth is the savor sweet to God. . . .  
To you come visions of the grail,  
The still small voice it comes to me;  
You tarry near the Holy Veil,  
I stand beside the inland sea.  
Despite debate and angry hum,  
At morn or eve, whiche'er is best,  
I dream to every soul shall come  
A sense of Christ within the breast.

We do not claim that this is very great poetry, but it is not without value, and there are individuals who will care for it. We need to remember in judging poetry that the individual as well as the collective taste must be appealed to, and he whose words are winged to meet the hearts of "peradventure ten," if he really touches the heart's quick, is not without his reward. [Arnold & Co. \$1.50.]

#### For the Country.

Mr. Richard Watson Gilder's little collection of patriotic poems, written for the most part for various memorial occasions, contains much of decided merit. Many of the lines in "The Great Remembrance" are really fine, and there is a spirit of noble reverence for great deeds and great strivings which is inspiring and not too common at the present day. The keynote to the book is struck in the lines in "Pro Patria," in which Mr. Gilder says:

But, dearer still than life,  
Duty — that passion of the soul which from the sod  
Alone lifts man to God.

The best thing in the volume, however, is the sonnet on "The Life-Mask of Abraham Lincoln," often quoted. We believe it marks the highest reaches of Mr. Gilder's talent. [The Century Co. \$1.50.]

#### New Ballads.

Mr. John Davidson continues to hold his own among the present writers of English poetry. Intellectually we recognize his claims to the position generally conceded to him by thoughtful critics; but, speaking from a more personal point of view, he succeeds neither in touching the heart nor in awaking sustained interest. His protest against accepted ethical standards, as typified in "A New Ballad of Tannhäuser," rings false, since, instead of combating "the idea of the inherent impurity of nature," it asserts the divine right of passionate impulse. [The Bodley Head: John Lane. \$1.50.]

#### Etc., Etc., Etc.

John James Piatt's *Odes in Ohio* is a collection of that species of verse which is excellent for occasions, but not very interesting when the occasion has passed. The causes which Mr. Piatt's poems celebrate are the Cleveland Centennial, the opening of the Cincinnati Music Hall, Garfield's election, a public dinner to the late Judge Matthews of the Supreme Court, and so on. His ear for rhythm is excellent, and that in an ode is especially important. [Robert Clarke Co. \$1.00.]

A volume of poems, by Belle Gray Taylor, called *Captive Conceits*, is rather stale, flat, and unprofitable reading. As, for example:

The orange and black adorned his breast,  
He wore the Yale's dark blue;  
The sun was sinking low to rest,  
And down bowled the football crew, etc.

Any one who likes this sort of thing can find plenty more in this volume. [G. P. Putnam's Sons.]

That the first shall be last and the last first is exemplified in Mr. B. O. Aylesworth's *Song and Fable*. Some of the prose fables are excellent and full of thought, while the songs are feeble. We should be glad if we had space to quote his poem to Ibsen. [The Kenyon Press.]

*The House of the Heart* is a small volume largely made up of the *vers de société* for which Præd and the poetasters of his period set the fashion. They are light in tone and touch; some of them are fairly graceful; others are trivial and not as funny as they are meant to be; the more serious attempts are perhaps the least successful. "The Moon as Viewed by Different Persons" gives perhaps an adequate specimen of Mr. Irving Browne's powers. [The Peter Paul Book Co. \$1.25.]