

JOHN HALL WHELOCK

The Black Panther. SCRIBNER.

A lyrist of somewhat classic tendencies, he has acquired the use of Keatsian imagery that makes his poems, while contemplative, occasionally very beautiful. Yet there is a note of passion and a zest for sturdy living that adds magic to his quieter measures.

John Hall Wheelock is tall, dark, brooding, a quiet man in whatever mood you may encounter him. He was the class poet of Harvard the year he was graduated. Later, he studied at various German and Austrian universities. He is now on the staff of one of the large New York publishing houses. Born on Long Island, with his education distinctly academic, it is not to be wondered that his passions are for beauty and for form, that his verse savors of the aristocratic.

"It is this sense of intimacy and awe that transmutes his glimpses of reality; more than a few times the note struck is as

dominant as Henley's. Wheelock has something of the vision which uplifts sensuality and enough of the realist's passion to save mysticism from itself by humanizing it. Sometimes his unfettered exultations overleap themselves and the poem becomes a welter of uneven lines and inchoate music; frequently his rhapsodic eagerness extends his verses into rhetoric and verbosity. In an effort to invest old phrases with new glamor and hoping to emphasize his attitude, he overuses such striking connotations as 'dear, ridiculous' 'tawdry, pathetic', 'sane and sensual' (a special favorite of Wheelock's). He is even so intent on his song that he uses, again and again, such outworn poetic platitudes as 'fierce and flaming suns', 'luminous heavens', 'the boundless blue', 'radiant loveliness', 'vague alarms' and others of a similar, worn-down rubber stamp. But, even at its worst, 'The Human Fantasy' is an amazing first book; at its best, it is clear and distinctive, reflecting that high realism which is the color of life."—*Louis Untermeyer in "The New Era in American Poetry"*.

REFERENCE:

The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.