

**THE PALL MALL GAZETTE
LONDON, ENGLAND
31 DECEMBER 1913**

BOOKS OF THE DAY.

VARSIITY BARDS.

"Cambridge Poets, 1900-1913." Chosen by Aelfrida Tillyard. With introduction by A. T. Quiller-Couch. (Cambridge: Heffer.) 3s. 6d. net.

"Oxford Poetry, 1910-1913." Edited by G.D.H.C., G.P.D., and W.S.V. With Introduction by Gilbert Murray. (Oxford: Blackwell.) 3s. 6d. net.

Anthologies of Oxford and Cambridge poetry suggest comparisons. But in this case they would be uncommonly odious. For the Cambridge book covers a period of thirteen years, admits women, and includes work done recently by men who took their degrees near the beginning of the period. The Oxford book covers only three years, and consists almost entirely of work published at Oxford. Its chief attraction is the introduction by Professor Gilbert Murray. This is a masterpiece of liberal and judicious criticism, beginning with the statement that "whatever gifts Oxford may bring her children, she is apt to bring steeped in the poison that is fatal to poetry, the poison of satiety," and advancing to this notable opinion:—

In poetry the important thing is to understand and feel something, anything, as intensely as possible, and whatever helps you to do so is good. No doubt your balance of mind matters also. Sanity can add extraordinary charm to a poem; and a bad summing up may lead you to cultivate sensitiveness towards things that are not really repaying, and deaden your understanding of those that are. Still, in the main, the poet's first business is not to sum or judge, but to feel and see and understand. Consequently I welcome this realistic and indiscriminating period in poetry.

The volume contains, however, only a fair proportion of "realistic and indiscriminating" work. Quite a number of pieces are of the common university type, parodical and topical. There is a follower of Mr. Belloc as well as one of Mr. Masefield. The greater part shows the tendency of the age towards the

frank or personal or brutal, the local, minute and particular, and against the idealistic, the loose, and the rhetorical. Messrs. Bewley, Childe, Cole, Elton, Meyerstein, are among the most interesting contributors, Messrs. Guedalla and Knox are the cleverest.

The Cambridge book excludes almost entirely the peculiar products of universities, and is entirely serious. Many of its names are already well known. Such are Mrs. Cornford and Sarojini, H. O. Meredith, J. C. Squire, James Elroy Flecker, and Aleister Crowley. There is attractive work also by Messrs. John Alford, Francis Békássy, Archibald Young Campbell, Martin D. Armstrong, Richard Buxton, Frank Woodyer Stokoe, and E. N. da C. Andrade. Every mood of deliberate rebellion or reaction is to be found here, from the love scene on a motor-bus, by Mr. H. O. Meredith, to Mrs. Cornford's "Hans Anderson Song":—

Come away, you fools, you fools,
From your scented wine and meat,
Now the elves, with splashing feet,
Dance among the reedy pools. . . .

and Mr. Andrade's "Student Song":—

For God's sake, let us laugh a little,—
All our days we strive to seek
Things the world calls worthy, brittle
Bubbles breaking while we speak.
Half-believing old pretences,
Fearing censure from the wise,
Down we bow 'fore what our senses
Tell us are inanities.

The sun's out—damn their teaching;
The sun's out—damn all preaching!
We are wise, but we will prove
We are not too wise to love.

Let us hope Mr. Andrade's teaching will be exempt. For those who prefer milder novelties, Mr. Flecker's poems are to be recommended. His "To a Poet a Thousand Years Hence" is the most accomplished thing in the two books.