Georgian Poetry 1911–22

Edited by
Timothy Rogers

The Critical Heritage

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GEORGIAN POETRY 1911–22: THE CRITICAL HERITAGE

THE CRITICAL HERITAGE SERIES

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Edited by

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General Editor's Preface

The reception given to a writer by his contemporaries and near-contemporaries is evidence of considerable value to the student of literature. On one side we learn a great deal about the state of criticism at large and in particular about the development of critical attitudes towards a single writer; at the same time, through private comments in letters, journals or marginalia, we gain an insight upon the tastes and literary thought of individual readers of the period. Evidence of this kind helps us to understand the writer's historical situation, the nature of his immediate reading-public, and his response to these pressures.

The separate volumes in the *Critical Heritage Series* present a record of this early criticism. Clearly, for many of the highly productive and lengthily reviewed nineteenth- and twentieth-century writers, there exists an enormous body of material; and in these cases the volume editors have made a selection of the most important views, significant for their intrinsic critical worth or for their representative quality—perhaps even registering incomprehension!

For earlier writers, notably pre-eighteenth century, the materials are much scarcer and the historical period has been extended, sometimes far beyond the writer's lifetime, in order to show the inception and growth of critical views which were initially slow to appear.

In each volume the documents are headed by an Introduction, discussing the material assembled and relating the early stages of the author's reception to what we have come to identify as the critical tradition. The volumes will make available much material which would otherwise be difficult of access and it is hoped that the modern reader will be thereby helped towards an informed understanding of the ways in which literature has been read and judged.

B.C.S.

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Preface

In the fairest, most scholarly account of Georgian Poetry yet published, Robert H. Ross writes: (1)

> ..... perhaps no group of poets since the Pre-Raphaelites has suffered more, or more ignominiously, from the widespread acceptance of over-simplified stereotypes and critical half-truths, even among readers who should know better.

One of the objects of this volume is to trace the history of a movement which, though 'fortuitous and informal' in its inception, (2) 'more or less casual and entirely un-theoretical', (3) came to represent for later generations a literary establishment of the most reactionary kind. As Professor Ross shows, that ambitious adjective 'Georgian' which 'had been applied proudly by Marsh in 1912 to mean "new", "modern", "energetic"' had, by 1922, 'come to connote only "old-fashioned", "outworn", or worse'. (4) It was one of the objects of his book to rescue the better Georgians from the obloquy which the weaknesses of a few had brought upon them. A similar object must have prompted two recent anthologies, Alan Pryce-Jones 'Georgian Poets' (1959) and James Reeves's 'Georgian Poetry' (1962). It is Mr Reeves's laudable aim 'to make a selection of Georgian poetry which will appeal to the unprejudiced modern reader'. (5) Un-fortunately both he and to a lesser degree Professor Ross have been guilty of further confusions by their use of 'Georgian'. A first purpose, then, of the present book must be to define.

'Georgian Poetry' is here taken literally to mean the five volumes edited by E[dward]. M[arsh]. and published by Harold Monro at the Poetry Bookshop from 1912 to 1922, and 'Georgian Poets' those forty poets whom Marsh

anthologized in them. A full list of them with some contemporary comments is given as an Appendix (pp. 395-417). Poets such as Housman (who was invited by Marsh but declined: see p. 18) and Edward Thomas (who is frequently thought of as a Georgian, but did not appear in the anthologies: see p. 19); are excluded, though each appears in the Reeves anthology; conversely, D.H. Lawrence, who is excluded by Reeves but appeared in four of Marsh's volumes, is by definition included. It may be noted that Alan Pryce-Jones departs even further from such a literal definition. He frankly admits that he has 'not stuck closely to the very poems, or even the very poets, whom Marsh either did include, or might have included, in his five volumes', (6) and prints one poem each by twenty-nine poets, of whom only nineteen had appeared in 'Georgian Poetry'.

In the obvious respect that it is concerned, not with a single writer, but with forty poets, diverse both in quality and kind, the present volume differs from others in the Critical Heritage series. The difference in subject has given rise to a number of special problems in the selection, introduction and presentation of material; and, although solutions have been sought within the general framework of the series, there have been small but necessary changes of balance and emphasis. In particular I have allowed more space than usual in the Introduction to a survey of contemporary literary magazines, especially those of the period immediately preceding the First World War, for it is in them that one can discern most clearly the currents and cross-currents of the Georgian literary scene. The poets have been considered chiefly within the context of 'Georgian Poetry'. It would have been an interesting exercise to consider the individual fortunes of a representative few as they were affected by association with the anthology. To have done so, however, would have lengthened and diversified the book, and might have duplicated (or perhaps anticipated) others in the series.

A further concern in writing historically on a subject so controversial must be to document it fully. An abundance of footnotes may not make for easy reading (it certainly has not made for easy writing); but sources are important, albeit that only a selection even of remembered ones can be included. References to them serve both as milestones and signposts in a landscape which has been despoiled by earlier travellers and often deceptively mapped. If, during my own thirty years of travelling in it, some sources have become obscured so that I have sometimes failed to make due acknowledgment, I offer apologies to those concerned.

Notes

1 Robert H. Ross 'The Georgian Revolt', 1967, 15.
2 Harold Monro, 'Some Contemporary Poets', 1920, 150.
3 James Reeves (ed.), 'Georgian Poetry', 1962, xii.
4 Ross, op. cit., 254-5.
5 Reeves (ed.), op. cit., xxi.
6 Alan Pryce-Jones (ed.), 'Georgian Poets', 1959, 9.

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Finally to my friend William F. Gosling, teacher and scholar, I owe thanks for his proof-reading and - in the Eddie Marsh tradition - 'diabolization' of this and two previous books. Any faults remaining are, of course, my responsibility.

T.R.

Introduction

'Who were the Georgians?'

'Who were the Georgians?' asks John Press, and it is a convenient starting point. 'Some writers', he continues, 'are at pains to deny this title to any poet of merit who flourished between 1912 and 1922.' (1)

> Robert Graves, we are assured, was not a Georgian, nor were D. H. Lawrence, Edward Thomas, Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen, Isaac Rosenberg, and Edmund Blunden. Whether or not they appeared in 'Georgian Poetry' is, according to such critics, totally irrelevant. What matters is the quality of their work: if it is good it cannot be Georgian; if it is Georgian it must, *ipso facto*, be feeble.

Sandra Gilbert is only the most recent of the writers on D. H. Lawrence to find that, 'Reading the bucolic warblings of the rather cosily domesticated Georgians, one is immediately struck by the force of some of [his] verses as by an alien wind. The demon, certainly, was no Georgian.' (2) Vivien de Sola Pinto writes that Lawrence and Robert Graves 'really had no connection with the Georgian fold'; (3) Jon Silkin that 'Rosenberg was not a Georgian', (4) David Daiches that Rosenberg and the other 'trench poets' were an alien presence in the Georgian anthologies; (5) and Masefield's latest biographer, Muriel Spark, after citing Herbert Palmer's view that 'he is certainly no true-blue Georgian', (6) sets out on her first page to show that 'he is no Georgian at all'. (7) James Reeves names W. H. Davies, together with de la Mare and Blunden, as 'among those poets who are central to the Georgian movement at its best', (8) and one would not quarrel with the judgment.

Predictably, however, in his critical biography of Davies, Richard J. Stonesfier finds that even he, 'by and large, was an exception'. (9) Dr F.R. Leavis argues that Edmund Blunden deserves to be distinguished from the group 'because he has some genuine talent and is an interesting case'. (10) Edith Sitwell would likewise make exception of him ('Of the less violent of the Georgian poets, Edmund Blunden is the best'), (11) and offers special pleas for 'three poets whose work had its place in Sir Edward Marsh's "Georgian Poetry", but whose work bears no family resemblance to the other poets in that anthology': Walter de la Mare, W.H. Davies, and Ralph Hodgson. (12)

It is interesting to set beside this mere sample of attempts made by protagonists of individual Georgians to separate them from the fold, the comments of three contemporaries. Richard Aldington addresses his audience in 'The Egoist' (1 June 1914) on Modern Poetry and the Imagists: (13)

> Do you, most honourable reader, who are fed upon the works of Mr Wells, and Mr Henry James, and Mr Bennett ....., do you take no interest in the works of Mr Yeats, Mr Sturge Moore, Mr Bridges, Mr James Stevens [sic] , Mr Brooke, Mr Flint, Mrs Meynell and Mr Pound?

(Messrs Sturge Moore, Stephens and Brooke, be it noted, had appeared in the first anthology of 'Georgian Poetry', which had been dedicated to Mr Bridges; the fifth anthology was to be dedicated to Mrs Meynell.) In the same year, Harold Monro lectures to a Cambridge audience on the Contemporary Poet, by which he means 'the poet [who] has caught the spirit of Darwin, that spirit which has so altered our attitude, and rendered obsolete so many ways of talking about life'. He calls these poets, not Georgians, but 'Impressionists': chief among whom is Ezra Pound; but highly to be commended are Flecker, Gibson, and Brooke. (14) Finally, Monro's friend and assistant editor, Arundel del Re, wrote reminiscently in the 1930s of 'Ezra Pound, W.W. Gibson, Lascelles Abercrombie, John Drinkwater and others who were afterwards to form the nucleus of the Georgian group'. (15) The juxtaposition of Pound, whom del Re calls 'the Troubadour of the Georgians', (16) with poets whom Mrs Gilbert would find more 'cosily domesticated' may seem less strange when we have examined the background history.

3 Georgian Poetry 1911-1922: The Critical Heritage

The background c. 1909-12

King George V succeeded to the throne on 6 May 1910. A.R. Orage, who edited 'The New Age' from 1907 until 1922, and made it the most influential radical weekly of its time, wrote in the first issue of the new reign: (17)

> At each successive death of the great men who lived during the reign of Queen Victoria, the public has been instructed to believe that each was indeed the close of his age. Tennyson was the last, so was Lord Salisbury. Then it was Meredith, and only recently it was Swinburne. But all of these announcements of the real close of the Victorian era have been premature. The last genuine link with the Victorian age has been broken with the death of King Edward VII.

Tennyson had died in 1892, and there was still, said A.C. Ward, 'a widespread impression that English poetry had died with him'; (18) Swinburne had died in April 1909, Meredith in May. In June 'The English Review' commented: 'Mr Meredith follows Mr Swinburne into the shadows; and now indeed the whole Round Table is dissolved'. (19) Yeats said, 'And now I am King of the Cats' - 'forgetting perhaps', as John Press has reminded us, 'that Thomas Hardy was still in the plenitude of his poetical genius': (20) 'The Dynasts' had come out in three volumes in 1903, 1906 and 1908; 'Time's Laughing Stocks' was published in 1910. In 1909 Yeats published his 'Collected Poems', and, with new books by Kipling, Noyes, Watson, and Newbolt, 'The English poetic scene offered a rather spiritless Yeats, and a collection of public-spirited versifiers'. (21) The neglect of John Davidson (who drowned himself in the same year) and the overvaluing of Stephen Phillips (who seems never to have recovered from the rapturous reception of his first poems) are in their different ways symptomatic of the poetic barrenness of the time. Galsworthy could write optimistically of a renaissance in his Vague Thoughts on Art, (22) and Ezra Pound, in one of nearly 300 articles he contributed to 'The New Age', could look characteristically for a *risorgimento*, though he thought of course that it would originate in America. (23) But Orage wrote some two years after the earlier article quoted: 'If I were asked upon what I rely for the renaissance of England, I should say a miracle'. (24) And almost a half century later T.S. Eliot reflected that 'the situation in poetry in 1909 or 1910 was stagnant to a degree difficult for any poet of today to conceive'. (25)

Yet, with hindsight, 1909 might be seen to mark the beginning of a new age in poetry. Eliot, who had ordered the works of Laforgue in the previous year, was in 1909-10 writing 'Preludes', 'Portrait of a Lady' and a first draft of 'Prufrock' (though the poems were not to appear until 1915). His fellow American, Pound, dined in March at the club founded by F.S. Flint, and 'Imagism' was born. (26) 'Personae', Pound's second book, his first to be published in England, appeared in the following month, and was favourably reviewed by Rupert Brooke. In the same year Pound met Yeats, and by the middle of the year was attending Yeats's 'Monday evenings'. Although Harold Monro, writing in 1920, thought that 'Yeats had already published most of his best work' with the appearance of 'Collected Poems', (27) C.K. Stead can see in later perspective that their publication 'put an outworn style and restricted sensibility behind him, making way for the new, more robust poetry that was to emerge'. (28)

If Blériot's flying the Channel, which preceded King George's accession by some ten months, had less symbolic value for the new reign than had the conquest of Everest for the 'new Elizabethans', it had wider cultural significance. As Wallace Martin shows in his admirable study of '"The New Age" under Orage', the art and thought of the continent provided the impetus for change. (29)

> This impetus was transmitted, not through the recognition and emulation of defined artistic canons, but as an emotion, a sudden expansion of the realm of imaginative possibility, which was to find its own forms of expression in England.

Professor Martin identifies Post-Impressionism, the philosophy of Bergson, psycho-analysis, and Russian culture as among the sources of this emotion, and judges that 'collectively, they appear to imply cultural changes of such magnitude as to justify comparisons with the Renaissance'. (30) T.E. Hulme introduced readers of 'The New Age' to Bergson in 1909, (31) and two years later wrote five articles on him. (32) Hulme himself wrote pseudonymously in 'The Saturday Westminster Gazette': (33)

> There have been stirring times lately for those peculiar people amongst us who take an interest in metaphysics. We have not been able to buy even a sporting evening paper without finding in it an account of a certain famous philosopher.

Eliot and Pound were anti-Bergsonians; but an aesthetic which exalted personality was to find an impressionable disciple in the young Middleton Murry, (34) and to be a cause of dispute on that account between the editor of 'Rhythm' and the editor of 'The New Age'. This was only the beginning of an aesthetic split which found further expression in the 1920s when Murry's 'Adelphi' and Eliot's 'Criterion' continued the debate.

Diaghilev's Russian Ballet (1911), the first performance of 'The Cherry Orchard' (1911), Constance Garnett's translation of 'The Brothers Karamazov' (1912), A.A. Brill's translation of 'The Interpretation of Dreams' (1913) - although this last was at first available only to 'Members of the Medical, Scholastic, Legal, and Clerical professions' - were contributions to the 'subtle expansion of the realm of imaginative possibility'; but no event contributed more to it than the two Post-Impressionist exhibitions. It was probably to the first of them that Virginia Woolf was alluding when she wrote: 'On or about December, 1910, human character changed.'(35) Some poets wrote 'Post-Impressionist' poems; (36) and Robert Bridges, thanking Marsh for his presentation copy of 'Georgian Poetry, 1911-1912', felt 'sometimes as if I were reminded of the Post-Impressionists' pictures'. Marsh, who thought he 'had kept out all that kind of thing', supposed it had 'become so much of the London air that one doesn't notice it'. (37) Middleton Murry admits in his autobiography that the somewhat vague ideal which inspired 'Rhythm' was transmitted to him in Paris by the Scottish painter, J.D. Fergusson, an enthusiastic spokesman for Post-Impressionists. (38) Murry wanted 'Rhythm' to do in words what the Post-Impressionists had done in paint. His first wife, Katherine Mansfield, wrote indeed that two of the Van Gogh paintings in the 1910 exhibition 'taught me something about writing, which was queer, a kind of freedom - or rather, a shaking free'.(39)

> When one has been working for a long stretch one begins to narrow one's vision a bit, to fine things down too much. And it's only when something else breaks through, a picture or something seen out of doors, that one realises it.

In a perceptive review of the second exhibition (1912), Rupert Brooke wrote of Matisse: (40)

> The great glory of this exhibition is that it gives us at length a chance of judging and appreciating Matisse. Some twenty pictures and nearly as many

> drawings. The pure bright and generally light colour, and the stern simplicity and unity of design, fascinate the beholder ..... There are moments in the life of most of us when some sight suddenly takes on an inexplicable and overwhelming importance - a group of objects, a figure or two, a gesture, seem in their light and position and colour to be seen in naked reality, through some rent in the grotesque veil of accidental form and hue - for a passing minute.

A still stronger feeling than Katherine Mansfield's of a sense of 'freedom' or 'shaking free' was that expressed by D.H. Lawrence in the March 1913 issue of 'Rhythm' (No. 12); but this was prompted by another and more literary occasion.

Georgian Poetry: birth of an idea

Some three weeks before Orage's pessimistic thoughts on the chances of a renaissance, a luncheon party had been held in the rooms of a civil servant who was then private secretary to Winston Churchill at the Admiralty. The beginnings of the Georgian Poetry venture have been often related. The earliest account is that of Edward Marsh himself in his 'Memoir' of Rupert Brooke: (41)

> There was a general feeling among the younger poets that modern English poetry was very good, and sadly neglected by readers. Rupert announced one evening, sitting half-undressed on his bed, that he had conceived a brilliant scheme. He would write a book of poetry, and publish it as a selection from the works of twelve different writers, six men and six women, all with the most convincing pseudonyms. That, he thought, *must* make them sit up. It occurred to me that as we both believed there were at least twelve flesh-and-blood poets whose work, if properly thrust under the public's nose, had a chance of producing the effect he desired, it would be simpler to use the material which was ready to hand. Next day (September 20th it was) we lunched in my rooms with Gibson and Drinkwater, and Harold Monro and Arundel del Re (editor and sub-editor of the then 'Poetry Review', since re-named 'Poetry and Drama'), and started the plan of the book which was published in December under the name of 'Georgian Poetry'.

In his own memoirs Marsh referred to two other events of 1911 which had 'put it past a doubt that a golden age was

beginning': they were the publication of Rupert Brooke's 'Poems' in December of that year and of Masefield's 'The Everlasting Mercy' in October. (42) In an appendix to his biography of Brooke, Hassall makes a useful survey of the contemporary reviews of the only book of Brooke's writing to be published during his lifetime. (43) Almost all the critics seem to have given their chief attention to those few poems which came to be known as 'unpleasant', notably 'A Channel Passage' in which, in Byronic vein, Brooke emulated Don Juan's retching farewell to Spain and Donna Julia, and 'Lust' which his publisher, Frank Sidgwick, persuaded him to retitle 'Libido'. (44) Criticism ranged from J.C. Squire's complaint in 'The New Age' that 'the appalling narrative of a cross-Channel voyage should never have been included in the volume. It spreads its aroma all round', (45) to the kindlier comments of 'The Times Literary Supplement':

> Mr Rupert Brooke's swagger and brutality we are inclined to take much more leniently [than those of James Stephens, one of the six other poets reviewed in the article]; they are so obviously boyish. His disgusting sonnet on love and seasickness ought never to have been printed; but we are tempted to like him for writing it. Most people pass through some such strange nausea on their stormy way from romance to reality.

The same review paid tribute to 'a rich nature - sensuous, eager, brave - fighting towards the truth', and concluded: 'We shall watch Mr Brooke's development with high hopes; but he must remember that swagger and brutality are no more poetry than an unripe pear is fruit.' (46) Congratulating him on the book's appearance, Marsh wrote to Brooke: (47)

> I had always in trembling hope reposed that I should like the poems, but at my wildest I never looked forward to such magnificence ..... The 'Channel Passage' is so clever and amusing that in spite of a prejudice in favour of poetry that I can read at meals, I can't wish it away - but ..... I must protest against the 'smell' line in 'Libido' ..... there are some things too disgusting to write about, especially in one's own language.

Among those with whom Marsh shared his enthusiasm was the poet, Francis Meynell. Meynell suggested that he should write an article on the 'Poems' for 'The Poetry Review'

which was edited by his friend, Harold Monro. Marsh agreed to do so, and Meynell's initiative was the means of first bringing together the future editor and the future publisher of 'Georgian Poetry'.

More immediately successful had been the publication of 'The Everlasting Mercy'. Robert H. Ross attributes its widespread popularity to the fact that 'it was the first book of verse since "Barrack-Room Ballads" to succeed in titillating the British public by poetry which managed to be at once both ribald and respectable'. (48) In his early study of Masefield, Cecil Biggane wrote: (49)

> It is difficult now to recall, and it will in later years be still more difficult to realise the shock with which 'The Everlasting Mercy' came upon the literary world. It was something quite new, in matter, in spirit, in style. Its amazing vitality, its startling candour, something large in the design, something swift in the pace, which made its frequent carelessness of detail seem not merely negligible but inevitable, took the public by storm.

The poem was first printed in 'The English Review', whose editor, Austin Harrison, recalled in a reminiscent article twelve years later that a large section of readers had been hostile to the 'Review' at that time on the grounds that it was corrupting morals: (50)

> ..... one morning the fell news came that the trade were boycotting us.
>
> We were off the bookstalls - banned, in disgrace, and sales fell by the hundred. The question was, would Sir Alfred Mond [the proprietor] hold on? He did gamely, and then, four months after the boycott, a man strolled into the office, dripping wet (it was raining furiously at the time), unpacked a thick manuscript, and told me no publisher would look at it, and walked out into the rain.
>
> The man was John Masefield and the poem was 'The Everlasting Mercy'. I took it home and, after reading it, decided at once to publish. But in proof form it looked catastrophic - to the editor. I think it contained eighty repetitions of the word 'bloody' and ran to eighty pages of print. I sent it to three literary lights for consideration. One said it was 'bloody rot'. The second said I should be locked up if I printed it. The third: 'It's splendid, but it will smash you.' That decided me. The poem appeared unedited in the following issue. Two days

> later the telephone began to ring continuously. Sir Alred Mond 'phoned: 'You've done it, but it was worth doing'; and then it got into the public houses, where the fight scene was read out aloud to admiring pugilists.
>
> Probably no poem ever created such a stir since Byron's 'Don Juan'. We printed edition after edition. A society lion-hunter asked me to dinner. A few weeks afterwards the trade placed us on the bookstalls again, from which date we never looked back.
>
> Those eighty bloodies had saved the 'Review', which we then turned into a company and sold at a shilling. Masefield's three subsequent poems appeared in its pages, and each poem was an event. Our enemies were silenced. We became an institution.

Harrison's facts of publication were disputed by Frank Sidgwick, who claimed that his firm of publishers had accepted the poem provisionally when Masefield offered it, then unfinished, in May of that year. He also corrected Harrison's inaccuracies about the text: 'The facts are that the poem occupied forty-four pages of "The English Review", and as written by the author contained the said word not eighty but eleven times.' Moreover, the 'Review' 'did *not* print the offending word, preferring to leave eleven blank spaces to be filled in according to the taste and fancy of the reader'. (51) Whether or not the 'Review' was saved by eleven blank spaces, Harrison's account was true in spirit to the event. Masefield, as Frank Swinnerton wrote, 'was the first Georgian Poet; for he did something which at that time no other young poet could do - he made the general public read what he had written'. (52)

The popular success of the poem could fairly have encouraged Marsh in his dream of a golden age. The sales of 'Georgian Poetry' were surpassed only by those of Brooke and Masefield: thirty-seven impressions of Brooke's 'Poems' were printed up to May 1932, totalling nearly 100,000 copies, and Masefield's 'Collected Poems' of 1923 had sold over 100,000 copies by 1930. No less important was the influence of such poets as Brooke, Masefield, and Wilfrid Gibson (whom someone called 'Masefield without the damns') (53) in capturing a wider public for 'realism'. When, in the second of his anthologies, Marsh (54),

> staked the considerable critical reputation of 'Georgian Poetry'on two long works in the realistic tradition - Abercrombie's 'End of the World' and

> Bottomley's 'King Lear's Wife' - he made amply evident what was in fact true: the kind of realism first popularised by Masefield was one of the major facets of the pre-war revolt against the dead hand of poetic tradition.

Arundel del Re wrote prophetically at the time: (55)

> Mr John Masefield is a revolutionary. His latest work is a direct assault upon cherished principles and venerable conventions ..... Its value lies not so much in sheer audacity - though this indeed has peculiar interest - as in the influence it may have on contemporary poetry.

The proud title 'Georgian'

All the literary histories refer to the title 'Georgian Poetry' as Edward Marsh's coinage, and he himself spoke of his 'proud, ambiguous adjective'. (56) There is, however, some slight evidence, though it is unsupported by Monro, that the publisher of the anthology rather than its editor may have first chanced upon the title. In 'Harold Monro and the Poetry Bookshop', Joy Grant quotes from the unpublished autobiography of the poet, A.K. Sabin: (57)

> [Sabin and Monro] walked along Brompton Road to Harrods, and went up in the lift to their newly decorated refreshment rooms. 'Georgian Restaurant', shouted the lift-boy, as we reached the top floor. Hundreds of people were seated at lunch. 'It ought to be called the *Gorgean* Restaurant', said Harold, with one of his rare touches of slightly sardonic humour. As we followed an attendant to a vacant table, he continued reflectively: 'This is the first time since my return that I have been reminded we are living in a new Georgian era - and, by Jove, Arthur, we are the new Georgian poets!'

According to Sabin, the event took place on or about 7 June 1911, and Arundel del Re's account confirms that Monro visited England in the late spring of that year. Miss Grant continues: (58)

> Harrod's [sic] archives confirm that in 1911 a new restaurant was opened on the fourth floor, 'an oak-panelled and beamed room with gas chandeliers', origin-

> ally to be called the Tudor Restaurant. The advent of the new sovereign suggested a more topical if less appropriate name.

She suggests that it would scarcely have been polite of Monro, a guest at Marsh's inaugural luncheon, to claim for himself the invention of the adjective which he had coined over fifteen months before. The 1933 Supplement to the 'Oxford English Dictionary' includes 'Georgian': 'Belonging to the reign of George V', and cites Marsh's title as a second example. He is preceded by P[hilip]. Gibbs, who wrote in the 'Lady's Realm' of July 1910 (p. 272) : 'Under the new régime of Georgian England'.(59)

When Marsh was considering poems for the fifth anthology, Monro wrote to him about one of the three he had submitted: 'I feel somehow that "Unknown Country" is almost too Georgian even for "G.P."!' This, as Hassall suggests, was 'possibly the first instance of that epithet's use in the now familiar, derogatory sense'. (60) Monro expressed himself publicly in this manner in a prefatory note to his 'Real Property' (1922), and was taken to task by J.C. Squire in 'The London Mercury': (61)

> The poems in the second half are for the most part earlier than the others. The poet says of these that 'they have no metaphysical background' and that 'some of them are tainted with slight Georgian affectations which no amount of polishing could successfully remove'. Presumably he is referring to the poem, which is not good, about the nightingale; the faults and merits of the others are distinctly Mr Monro's own.

Interestingly, Monro would seem to have yet another claim to originality in the useful coinage of 'neo-Georgian' as applied to Georgianism in decline. Writing in 'Some Contemporary Poets' (1920), he suggests that W.J. Turner 'has suffered from learning the "tricks of the trade" in the neo-Georgian school'. (62) Robert H. Ross, who develops a distinction between 'Georgian poets, 1912-17 vintage, and [neo-] Georgian poets, 1917-22', evidently missed this earlier occasion, and gives Alec Waugh the credit (63) (see No. 62). It was taken up by those few critics who were sensitive enough to appreciate the need for such a distinction, and further elaborated by Herbert Palmer in 'Post-Victorian Poetry'. (64) An anthology of 'Neo-Georgian Poetry, 1936-1937' was published in 1937, edited anonymously by the poet 'John Gawsworth' (T.I.F. Armstrong). In the company of poets who were 'alike in eschewing both the esoteric and the propagandist tendency

of much modern verse' (65) we find, surprisingly, the Communist poet 'Hugh MacDiarmid' (C.M. Grieve).

Brooke did not at first like the name 'Georgian'; he thought it sounded too staid for a volume designed as the herald of a revolutionary dawn'. (66) A.C. Benson wrote in his review of the first volume (No. 5) that one was apt to (67)

> connect it with the hapless Hanoverian period, with prosaic, shrewd, ethical verse, with solidarity rather than fineness. One thinks of George II's horror of 'Boetry' and George III's complaints of all the 'sad stuff' there was to be found in Shakespeare.

But no more suitable name could be agreed, and it is interesting to see how rapidly it gained currency. Frank Swinnerton, more sympathetic than Benson to its associations, thought the title 'a stroke of genius': (68)

> 'Georgian' - with King George barely, you might say, upon his throne, a whole literature was announced: What! is the age as active as all that? 'Poetry' - what! have we, then, some poetry apart from Masefield and the old ones? 'Georgian Poetry' - what a claim! It suggested that the poetry of the age differed from the poetry of all other ages.

It was a cause of confusion that Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's 'Oxford Book of Victorian Verse', appearing at almost the same time as 'Georgian Poetry, 1911-1912', should have included several of the same contributors. As Max Plowman said in reviewing Q's anthology: 'No man can serve Victoria and George at the same time' (69) (see also No. 2). When a new book of poems, 'The Sea is Kind', was published by T. Sturge Moore, the most senior contributor to 'Georgian Poetry', it was reviewed under the title 'A Victorian Georgian'. (70) In contrast, one of the younger contributors to the fifth volume, Edmund Blunden, had been hailed as a 'Georgian Poet' some six years before his appearance in it, when his first book, 'Pastorals', was published in the series produced by one of Marsh's imitators. In a notice of the first four volumes of 'The Little Books of Georgian Verse', the reviewer in 'The Times Literary Supplement' wrote: 'For a publisher to open at this moment a series of books by rising poets writing, for the most part, as if the world was in profound peace, compels by its very audacity some admiration.' (71)

Although in 1914 an anonymous reviewer in 'The New Statesman' could refer to Georgian literature in an eighteenth-century context, two years later in the same paper Desmond MacCarthy reviewed under the heading 'Georgian Plays' the production at His Majesty's of Bottomley's 'King Lear's Wife', Gibson's 'Hoops', and Brooke's 'Lithuania'. (72) Edward Marsh interested a number of contemporary painters in an idea first suggested by Stanley Spencer for a volume of reproductions to be called 'Georgian Drawings'. (73) Rupert Brooke wrote to Russell Loines in New York (6 July 1914): (74)

> I'm ..... sending a package which explains itself: 'Georgian Drawings'. I think, myself, it's going a bit far to call a lot of beastly artists *Georgian*, when the name has been appropriated for a nobler clan. And it's generally agreed that Marsh has got Georgianism on the brain, and will shortly issue a series of Georgian poker-work: and establish a band of Georgian cooks. Still, there it is (or will be): and it'll contain work by most of the good young people in England.

The idea petered out, partly because of the outbreak of war, but chiefly for financial reasons. (75) Rupert Brooke's Rugby friend, W. Denis Browne, headed his music criticism for the first issue of 'The Blue Review': 'Georgian Music'. (76) And a series of 'Georgian Stories' appeared in five annual volumes from 1922 to 1927 (1923 excepted). Their anonymous editor, Arnold Lunn, handed over after two volumes to Alec Waugh. The series borrowed more than his proud adjective from 'E.M.'. The first issue bore on the front of its dust jacket: '"Georgian Stories" seeks to do for modern English fiction what "Georgian Poetry" did for modern English verse .....'; and the editor begins his Preface: '"Georgian Stories" is published in the hope that the art of the short story is once again coming into its own .....' (77)

Edward Marsh: Editor

Herbert Palmer wrote of the first Georgian anthology as 'probably next to Palgrave's the most important and influential anthology ever published'. (78) Edmund Gosse paid its editor the compliment which pleased him most when, on Monro's announcing the end of the series, he said in a valedictory tribute, 'He is with Tottel': (79)

see also Gosse's earlier reference to 'Tottel's Miscellany' (No. 26). Like his eminent forerunners, Marsh was not himself a practitioner, and his anthologies were less subject to a poet's idiosyncrasy than those, say, of W.B. Yeats, and more recently Philip Larkin. But like other truly personal collections, their distinction and limitations reflect both the sureness and the limits of their editor's taste. It is relevant, then, to touch upon certain aspects of his life and character. (See Nos 72, 73 and 74.)

Edward Howard Marsh, known to a wide circle of friends as 'Eddie', was born in 1872 to Jane (née Percival) and Howard Marsh. His father, who became Professor of Surgery at Cambridge and Master of Downing, entrusted to his wife the upbringing of his son and second daughter (an elder had died in infancy), and she was the 'all-pervading influence in my early life'. (80) A devout, puritanical lady, she had cut 'Don Juan' out of her collected Byron to 'put herself out of temptation'. (81) Likewise she had thought it necessary to protect her son, a precocious and avid reader, from 'The Heart of Mid-lothian' (for the seduction of Effie) and 'David Copper-field' (for the fate of Emily). When he committed 'L'Allegro' to his remarkable memory, she made him begin at 'Haste thee Nymph', 'so as to spare my memory the contagion of the not-quite-nice line in the preamble about Zephyr "filling" Aurora with the buxom Euphrosyne'. (82) To his mother's distress he was to find himself incapable of any kind of transcendental belief. (83) Moreover he kept throughout life an almost schoolboyish delight in the ribald. One of the earliest letters I received from him included a jingle he had composed about Henry Moore's 'Three Standing Figures', followed by: ' - but this will shock you?'(84)

He was educated at Westminster School and at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he gained a starred First in the Classical tripos. The earliest 'portrait' of him in print appeared in a short-lived undergraduate magazine, 'The Cambridge A.B.C.'. One of six players in 'A Game of Croquet' is 'Mr Ethelbert Swamp', an 'Apostle' of Trinity College. 'Miss Edith Staines' (Ethel Smyth) is 'discussing the rhythm of Baudelaire's poems with Mr Swamp, an intellectual looking gentleman with a pince-nez; his hair curls outwards from his collar; he bears a striking resemblance to Mr Emile Zola'. While he waits for Miss Staines to begin, he 'hums a "couplet" of his own composition (in the manner of Paul Verlaine) in a delicate falsetto'. After going through the second hoop, he muses: 'It is a nice point whether I should get into

position or try and spoil Mrs Tanqueray's game by croqueting Spur's ball. I wish McTaggart were here to ask. (He plays, and misses both strokes.)' (85) The satire is gentle; more hurtful was that of H.G. Wells's 'Freddie Mush', whose chief characteristic was 'Taste, Good Taste', and who 'spoke in a kind of impotent falsetto'. (86)

The falsetto was a direct consequence of a boyhood attack of mumps complicated by German measles. 'His speech', wrote his biographer, 'sounded like a witty aside written in faded pencil.' (87)

> The illness which had left him with a mode of expression strangely appropriate to his unusual personality (though at first it might give a misleading impression of weakness of character) had at the same time affected his physical constitution in a more serious way. The disease had determined the colour of his personality and the course of his life so fundamentally that one cannot wish it to have been otherwise, although the result was a disability. So early in life did it happen, and the knowledge of it came so gradually, there are no grounds for supposing he grieved that he was to be incapable of the act of love, or minded at all that he was destined from then on to live and die as chaste as the day he was born. It enabled his affections to grow more intensely in the mind, and as a result he cultivated a capacity for friendship which, untroubled by physical desire, could develop into a devotion characteristically feminine in its tenderness.

As he wrote at the close of his own reminiscences, he counted among his advantages in life 'a tendency to take rather more interest in other people than in myself'. The title of those reminiscences, 'A Number of People', was apt; but 'it seemed a pity', wrote Hassall, 'that the author himself could hardly be counted as one of their number'. (88)

In his multiform activities he seems always to have taken second place. As private secretary to a succession of cabinet ministers (notably to Winston Churchill: 'I was Ruth to his Naomi'), editor of 'Georgian Poetry' ('Private Secretary, nay, Accoucheur and Wet-Nurse, to Euterpe in her most respectable modern rebirth'), (89) biographer of Brooke, translator of Horace and La Fontaine, proof-reader and book-doctor to Churchill and Somerset Maugham among many, he gave his time, sympathy, and artistic judgment to the service of others. In a brief parenthesis in his 700-page biography, Hassall

refers to the difficulty of presenting as leading actor one who was 'off stage even in his own life story'. (90) Hassall achieved this, however, and gave shape to what might otherwise have been a mere conglomerate of letters, tributes, anecdotes and chit-chat, by directing attention to 'the one unchanging figure - the fastidious and exacting master of pure scholarship'. Informing the frigid surface of the public figure - 'Patron of the Arts', senior civil servant, gentleman of society, 'undeniably one of the ornaments of his time' (91) - was a mind of classical symmetry, rational, Horatian, scholarly rather than intellectual, of wide culture but intensely English, with something of the elegance, formality and wit that were more common attributes of the eighteenth century. It is an indication of his biographer's success that, although friends as diverse and interesting as Bertrand Russell, D.H. Lawrence, Henry James, Robert Graves, Stanley Spencer, and Ivor Novello crowd the pages, one's chief interest throughout is in him who - to adapt Swift's maxim - by taking second place has title to the first.

An event which occurred some sixty years before Edward Marsh's birth was to have notable consequences for himself and many others. In 1812 his mother's grandfather, Spencer Perceval, was assassinated while Prime Minister. Parliament granted a pension to the family, and an inherited share of what he called the 'murder money' was used by Marsh a century later for the benefit of British art and letters. 'I have never had what anyone in his right mind could describe as Money', he said once; (92) but he refused to draw on the pension for his personal benefit, and shared it instead among struggling poets and artists. To call him a patron with its inescapable Johnsonian undertones would be to give a false idea of a relationship in which he felt himself the servant. 'I should be ashamed', he wrote to one of his beneficiaries, 'of being comparatively well off, if I couldn't take advantage of it to help my friends who are younger and poorer and cleverer and better than I am.' The pension also provided the means of his guaranteeing Monro against possible loss on 'Georgian Poetry'.

'Georgian Poetry, 1911-1912'

Such a guarantee was to prove entirely unnecessary. At least in its beginnings, 'Georgian Poetry' was a successful business venture rather than a literary movement. The sales both of the first volume and its successors

were immense by present-day standards for hard-backs. Marsh estimated that in the final reckoning 'Georgian Poetry, 1911-1912' sold 15,000 copies. (93) The second volume sold 19,000, establishing a record which, as Hassall conjectures, may never be surpassed. The third volume sold 16,000, the fourth 15,000; but sales of the fifth fell to 8,000, which Marsh himself conceded as an obvious 'falling off in public receptivity' and 'a pretty strong hint' that the series had outlived its day. (94)

Marsh had made one stipulation in accepting Brooke's suggestion that he should edit the anthology: he would remain in the background, and not put his name to it. This was characteristically modest, but it was also shrewd. For the private secretary at the Admiralty to be shepherding a group of poets might be thought absurd by the uninitiated and so damage the cause (95) - though such feelings did not prevent Asquith's referring to the group as 'Eddie Marsh's gang'. (96) It was agreed with the luncheon guests that the anthology should be published in time for Christmas sales in an edition of 500. Half the royalties would go to 'The Poetry Review' which Monro was then editing (when his Poetry Bookshop opened in the following January, it took over publication) and half to Marsh who would distribute his share equally among contributors. When he accepted this arrangement, he could have had no idea of the immense administrative labour he was taking on: the idea of a series had not then been considered, nor could the demand for successive reprints have been foreseen. The intermittent despatch of royalties over the following decade was a means of keeping him in touch with his contributors, and, because he was a thoughtful and painstaking correspondent, of keeping them in touch with one another. (97)

No-one was more enthusiastic from the first than the prime mover of the venture. John Drinkwater recalled Brooke's telling his fellow guests at the inaugural luncheon that 'England must be bombarded with the claims of the new poets', and offering to use his influence 'as brazenly as a commercial traveller'. (98) 'Years before', Marsh noted, 'a cynical young friend of ours at King's, Francis Birrell, had told me that though "Rupert's public form was the youthful poet, the real foundation of his character was a hard business faculty".' (99) During November, while staying in Berlin, Brooke kept Marsh plied with suggestions for promoting sales. (100)

> 'I forget all my other ideas,' he wrote, after making some very practical proposals, 'but they each

> sold some 25 copies. I have a hazy vision of incredible *reclame*. You ought to have an immense map of England (*vide* 'Tono-Bungay') and plan campaigns with its aid. And literary charts, each district mapped out, and a fortress secured. John Buchan to fill a page of the 'Spectator': Filson Young in the P[all]. M[all]. G[azette]. ..... You'll be able to found a hostel for poor Georgians on the profits'.

(John Buchan filled half a page of 'The Spectator': see No. 6.) It may have been some measure of Brooke's success that Drinkwater could report: 'the Prime Minister's car was waiting outside Bumpus's shop in Oxford Street at opening-time on the day of publication, and Rupert's strategy was to be seen in it'. (101)

But if Brooke was an enthusiastic lieutenant, Marsh was, in Robert H. Ross's words, 'the generalissimo in charge of strategy'. (102)

> So skilful and thorough was his campaign that one is tempted to conclude that if there had not been a poetic renaissance before publication of 'Georgian Poetry' I, it would have been necessary to invent one after. Had 'Georgian Poetry' I turned out to be a mediocre anthology or worse, it would nevertheless have been assured of creating a considerable critical splash.

Marsh's first task was to assemble contributors. His normal practice was to make particular requests for what he wanted rather than allowing choice to the poet. With few exceptions, those invited agreed to allow him the poems he asked for. Housman refused: he did not think of himself as belonging to Marsh's 'new era'; 'A Shropshire Lad' had appeared sixteen years before, and he had written nothing in the past two years, the period Marsh set himself to cover. Pound was asked for The Goodly Fere and one other poem (Hassall thinks Portrait d'une Femme), but refused the first 'as it doesn't illustrate any *modern* tendency' and the second as it was appearing shortly in a book of his own. (103) He invited Marsh to choose from Canzoni, but Marsh found nothing suitable there. Pound hoped that he might appear in the second volume, but by then Marsh had decided to confine his choice to British writers, a decision which later deprived him of Robert Frost. Masefield was at first reluctant, but finally so warmed to the venture that he held back publication of his 'Biography' so that it could make its first appearance in 'Georgian Poetry'.

The exclusion of Edward Thomas, who became for a brief period at the end of his life one of the finest poets of his day, has sometimes been held against Marsh. But Thomas did not begin writing verse until 1914, a year after Marsh had first met him, and the best of his poems date from the winter of 1914-15 (see headnote to No. 4). When in 1917 de la Mare and others tried to persuade Marsh to include him in the third anthology, de la Mare offering to stand down in his favour, he was excluded by the editor's ruling that no poet should appear for the first time in the series posthumously.

Publishing schedules were more briskly timed in those days. Conceived in late September, the anthology was in proof by 5 November, and Marsh received advance copies from Monro later that month. He sent over a hundred copies to his friends, and worked by night with a team of packers (among them, Gilbert Cannan, Elliott Seabrooke, Abercrombie, Brooke, and Monro), despatching review copies to all parts of England and to newspapers abroad. He worked with remarkable skill through friends or friends of friends, and no subsequent volume was so widely or so favourably noticed. At least three of the notices were written by contributors (Nos 2, 12 and 13).

While it has seemed important to refer here to the beginnings of 'Georgian Poetry', to chronicle its development through successive volumes would be too large a task for this Introduction. In most important respects its history will appear in the reviews selected and the headnotes to them. Biographically the series is well covered by Christopher Hassall's 'Edward Marsh', and no better literary account has appeared than that by Robert H. Ross.

Contemporary editors and reviews

In his Introduction to 'Ford Madox Ford' in The Critical Heritage series, Frank MacShane writes of the 'neglect of serious imaginative literature ..... during much of the period that led up to the First World War', and of the 'absence of serious literary people on the staffs of the literary journals'. (104) This was truer of the nineteenth-century literary journals to which he refers, such as the 'Quarterly' and 'Edinburgh' reviews, than of some of the newer magazines which sprang up shortly before the war, many of them to be killed by it. Indeed, for one brief period, just too early to be of service to 'Georgian Poetry', Ford himself brought 'The English Review' to greatness. Contributors to his first issue in 1908 included Conrad, Hardy, Galsworthy, Wells,

W.H. Hudson, and Tolstoy; and later issues included the first published work of D.H. Lawrence and Wyndham Lewis. But, as Samuel Hynes has pointed out, 'Ford ran his review for little more than a year, lost £5,000, and was fired, while Orage kept 'The New Age' going for fifteen years with an initial investment one-fifth the size of Ford's, and resigned. Ford was brilliant, but Orage lasted.' Elsewhere in his article Hynes is less kind to 'The New Age', which he calls a 'farraginous chronicle': 'It never published an excellent poem, rarely a good story. It opened its pages to a good deal of rubbish, simply because it was *new* rubbish'. (105) But it is a measure of Orage's greatness as well as his longevity as an editor that among writers whose first published work appeared in his paper were F.S. Flint, T.E. Hulme, Katherine Mansfield, J. Middleton Murry, Storm Jameson, Herbert Read, Llewellyn Powys, Ruth Pitter, and Edwin Muir (under the pseudonym 'Edward Moore'). (106)

Orage was highly critical of the Georgians; he thought little of Brooke, and less of Gibson, Drinkwater and Abercrombie. 'The New Age' played no direct part in promoting 'Georgian Poetry'; it seems deliberately to have neglected the five anthologies, preferring to support the rival Imagists. But its importance in the contemporary literary scene has already been suggested. Shaw (who had put down half the initial capital for the paper), Wells, Belloc, Chesterton, Arnold Bennett, and Pound were regular contributors during the first phase of Orage's editorship. In the issue of 19 January 1912 which noticed Brooke's 'Poems' and W.H. Davies's 'Songs of Joy', there is a youthful poem by Ruth Pitter (then aged fourteen), one of a series of verse/prose contributions by Pound ('I gather the limbs of Isiris'), a reproduction of de Segonzac's 'Les Boxeurs', a proposal by Huntley Carter for a circular theatre, a letter on Belloc's anti-socialism, and part of a lively correspondence on Picasso, provoked by the publication two months earlier of a Cubist study by him - all this in 1912! Not only was Orage successful at getting people to write for him (usually for nothing unless, like Pound, they were hard up or, like Bennett, mercenary); he was also, according to T.S. Eliot, 'the best literary critic of that time in London'. (107) For his part Orage wrote a remarkable assessment of Eliot as a critic at a time when he was comparatively unknown: 'A very serious critic of our day is Mr T.S. Eliot; and I commend his essays wherever they are to be found.' (108)

Orage had been appointed joint editor with Holbrook Jackson. They parted amicably after ten months, Jackson to begin a more literary journalistic career in which he

edited 'T.P.'s Weekly' (1911-16) and 'To-day' (1917-23). (109) Belloc founded the 'Eye-Witness' in 1911, and Cecil Chesterton (brother of G.K.) became editor when it changed to 'The New Witness' in 1912. But 'The New Age' was more directly concerned with the appearance of its most significant rival, 'The New Statesman', in 1913. There was a political reason for this: Orage's espousal of what came to be known as 'Guild Socialism' had alienated his Fabian supporters. Partisan feelings ran high between the two papers; and Wells, writing in 'The New Witness', declared his feelings towards the upstart: 'One of their best writers is almost good enough for "The New Age" ..... Ideas! There is not so much as the tenth of an *Orage* in the whole enterprise.' (110) In fact two of their best writers had transferred: Clifford Sharp as political editor and J.C. Squire as literary editor. Squire now took upon himself the mantle of 'Solomon Eagle' - if mantle be the word when the original bearer of the name ran naked through the streets of London at the time of the Great Plague, a pan of coals on his head, crying: 'Repent, repent!' (111) Squire's 'Books in General' became a weekly platform for his wit and entrenched literary tastes, and he developed also his gifts as a parodist.

In November 1919, after a well-prepared publicity campaign had enlisted several thousand subscribers a full year in advance, 'The London Mercury' was launched with Squire as editor. His biographer, Patrick Howarth, writes (112)

> in the belief that the 'London Mercury' was, arguably, the greatest purely literary and artistic magazine that this country has ever produced and that the years from 1910 to 1925 produced one of the greatest flowerings of the English lyric in history.

Whatever allowance may be necessary for the partiality of this judgment, 'The London Mercury' took over with remarkable consistency at the point where Marsh had chosen to leave off, and became a powerful last bastion of the neo-Georgians. In an opening fanfare Squire claimed that 'there has never been in this country a paper with the scope of the "London Mercury"'. He referred to 'The Edinburgh Review' of Jeffrey's and Macaulay's day, to Thackeray's 'Cornhill', 'The Times Literary Supplement', and 'weekly papers which review the principal books and publish original verse and prose'. But there had been no paper hitherto which had combined 'all those various kinds of matter which are required by the lover of books

and the practising writer'. There followed this statement of his editorial principles: (113)

> As convenient descriptions we do not object (save sometimes on grounds of euphony) to the terms Futurist, Vorticist, Expressionist, Post-Impressionist, Cubist, Unamist, Imagist: but we suspect them as banners and battle-cries, for where they are used as such it is probable that fundamentals are being forgotten. Our aim will be, as critics, to state and to reiterate what are the motives, and what must be the dominant elements, of all good art, whatever the medium and whatever the idiosyncrasies of the artist ..... The profoundest truths about art, whether literary or pictorial, are crystallised in maxims which may have been more often reiterated than understood, but which have undeniably been so often repeated that people now find them tiresome. Of such are 'fundamental brain-work', 'emotion recollected in tranquillity', 'the rhythmical creation of beauty', and 'the eye on the object'. Each of these embodies truths, and there is indisputable truth also in the statements that a poet should have an ear and that a painter should paint what he sees. These things are platitudes; but a thing does not cease to be true merely because it is trite, and it is disastrous to throw over the obvious merely because it was obvious to one's grandfather.

It will be seen that Squire shared a number of Marsh's preferences and principles: an impatience with schools of literary theorizing, a concern that 'a poet should have an ear', and, above all, a wish that writing should be easily intelligible. Squire's short review of 'The Waste Land' began: 'I read Mr Eliot's poem several times when it first appeared; I have now read it several times more; I am still unable to make head or tail of it.' (114) Which was at least honest.

To return to the beginning of the period, Middleton Murry's 'Rhythm', which was first published in summer 1911, might be regarded as the first of the English 'little magazines'. (115) It was founded and edited by Murry and Michael Sadleir while they were still undergraduates at Oxford, and exhibited all the bold outspokenness of youth. '"RHYTHM" is a magazine with a purpose. Its title is the ideal of a new art ..... Aestheticism has had its day ..... Humanity in art in the true sense needs humanity in criticism .....' and, quoting Synge without acknowledgment, 'Before art can be human it must

learn to be brutal'. (116) It was a sitting target for 'The New Age', which made easy fun of the abundance of naked ladies in linocut (one of whom, an especially buxom Eve with apples, appeared on each cover), as also of the literary misjudgments. There were extravagant reviews by Murry: 'James Stephens is the greatest poet of our day ..... Henceforward [he] stands with Sappho, Catullus, Shakespeare, Coleridge, Heine, Villon and Verlaine'; and in the same issue Frank Harris is 'the greatest living English critic and story-writer'. (117) But the magazine was a brave venture, expressing a genuine spirit of newness and vitality as well as what Katherine Mansfield called 'the gentle art of self-consciousness'. (118) In the fourth issue Laurence Binyon wrote on 'The Return to Poetry': (119)

> Slowly we have emerged from the nineteenth century. We are breathing a different air. We are no longer *fin de siecle*. We are being changed, and the world with us. Horizons open and allure us.
>
> How long have we been sitting down before Nature and letting her impose herself upon us! Our imaginations have been schooled into passivity. Unconsciously enslaved, we were growing benumbed. And now we want to stretch our limbs, to move, to dance, to feel our life-blood running again.

D.H. Lawrence's 'Georgian Renaissance' (No. 12), which develops these ideas, appeared in the final issue. The first issue of 'The Blue Review' which followed it for three issues only (May-July 1913) had as its frontispiece Max Beerbohm's cartoon of Winston Churchill with his secretary, 'A Study in Dubiety: Mr Edward Marsh wondering whether he dare ask his Chief's leave to include in his anthology of "Georgian Poetry" Mr George Wyndham's famous and lovely poem: "We want eight and we won't wait".' Edward Marsh, who reviewed 'Mr Max Beerbohm's Exhibition' in the second issue, studiously avoided reference to the cartoon of himself, but managed to slip in four lines from Brooke's 'Thoughts on the Shape of the Human Body'. (120)

In 1920 Arthur Rowntree bought the moribund 'Athenaeum' and invited Murry to edit it. Murry initiated such new features as 'Marginalia' by 'Autolycus' (Aldous Huxley) and the publication of fiction: Katherine Mansfield, Tchekov (in translation), Max Beerbohm, Virginia Woolf, Stephen Hudson, and Robert Nichols were prose contributors, and among the poets were Hardy, Edith Sitwell, Graves, Binyon, Conrad Aiken, T.S. Eliot,

Blunden, W.H. Davies, Wilfred Owen, and W.W. Gibson. The scene had changed since the days of his two pre-war magazines. As some of the names suggest, he was still happy to print Georgians, but he was discriminating in his choice of them. In mid-1919 he had attacked the whole anthology system (No. 31), and in December he delivered the most damaging blow to 'Georgian Poetry' by his review of the fourth volume (see No. 34). In February 1921 'The Athenaeum' merged with 'The Nation' and 'The Nation and Athenaeum' was in turn absorbed by 'The New Statesman' in 1931.

Another poet-critic-editor who showed a somewhat ambivalent attitude towards 'Georgian Poetry' was, surprisingly, its publisher. F.S. Flint said that Harold Munro 'did more to stir up an interest in poetry than any other man of his generation'. (121) His life and work, particularly his support of poetry and poets through the Poetry Bookshop, have been excellently chronicled by Joy Grant. Miss Grant explains in more detail than can be given here the unhappy agreement he reached with Galloway Kyle, founder of the Poetry Society, to publish 'The Poetry Review' in conjunction with the society's 'Gazette'. It was a misalliance between a man dedicated to poetry and a society in which, as Miss Grant writes, 'poetry was made an excuse for pleasant social exchanges, for irrelevant snobbery, for the disagreeable consequences of organized association'. (122) In his first issue in January 1912 Monro showed his colours. 'Poetry', he wrote in his preface, 'is said to be unpopular - generally by those who dislike it themselves. Good poetry is as much read now as at any time since the invention of printing, and bad poetry is certainly read a great deal too much.' (123) In the same issue, an article on 'The Future of Poetry' is both reflective of the time and prophetic of the future. (124)

> Something different is necessary in modern poetry than sentimental patriotism or a mere delight in poetical verbiage. The modern poet's equipment must include, apart from the natural adoration of beauty, a clear and sound grasp upon facts, and a stupendous aptitude for assimilation. Moreover he may suffer from no illusions as to calling or divine inspiration, but, with the simple faith of a forerunner, must work on persistently and delightedly towards an invisible goal.

Also in the first issue F.S. Flint began a review of Pound's 'Canzoni' (in which, it will be remembered,

Marsh had been able to find no poems suitable for his anthology): 'Let it be conceded at once, without cavil, that the authentic note of poetry sounds throughout this last book of Mr Ezra Pound's.' (125) When Pound himself launched out in the second issue with 'Prolegomena', the staider spirits of the society must have been disquieted by his ideas on 'the poetry which I expect to see written during the next decade or so': (126)

> ..... it will, I think, move against poppycock, it will be harder and saner, it will be what Mr Hewlett calls 'nearer the bone'. It will be as much like granite as it can be, its force will be in its truth, its interpretive power (of course, poetic force does always rest there); I mean it will not try to seem forcible by rhetorical din, and luxurious riot. We will have fewer painted adjectives impeding the shock and stroke of it. At least for myself, I want it so, austere, direct, free from emotional slither.

The Georgians are well established, with Maurice Browne reviewing Gibson, and Arundel del Re 'The Everlasting Mercy', Gibson finding Abercrombie's 'the most significant voice of our time', (127) Abercrombie and Gibson writing on poetry in the drama, Abercrombie appreciating Drinkwater, and Brooke's 'Poems' acclaimed 'The Book of the Month', reviewed by E. Marsh. 'The Old Vicarage, Grantchester' was awarded £30 as the best poem printed in 'The Poetry Review', by a panel of judges consisting of Monro, Marsh, Ernest Rhys, Edward Thomas and Edward Plarr. Among other poets published by Monro were Gibson, Pound, Drinkwater, James Stephens, Sturge Moore, F.S. Flint, Abercrombie, W.H. Davies, Walter de la Mare, Flecker, G.K. Chesterton and himself. Perhaps the most significant contribution was F.S. Flint's survey of contemporary French poetry which filled most of the August number (see No. 14). Pound mentioned it as 'something which everybody had to get'. (128)

Towards the end of 1912 Monro's conflict with the Poetry Society came to a head. In 'The Poetical Gazette' for December (included in 'The Poetry Review') appeared the announcement: (129)

> Mr Harold Monro having decided to enlarge the scope of his periodical by issuing it quarterly under the title POETRY AND DRAMA, THE JOURNAL OF THE POETRY SOCIETY beginning with the next number, January, will be issued under the Editorship of Mr STEPHEN PHILLIPS and a brilliant list of contributors has

> been secured, including all the principal leaders of modern life and thought and criticism who are associated with poetry. In addition to his editorial functions, the poet-dramatist who thrilled the world with 'Paolo and Francesca', and fascinated us with the rare beauty of 'Marpessa', 'Herod', 'Ulysses', 'Nero', will contribute a monthly article on the eternal significance of Poetry.

Confusingly for many contemporary readers, 'The Poetry Review' continued in name under Phillips's management while its true successor, Monro's 'Poetry and Drama', came out in eight quarterly numbers between March 1913 and December 1914. It is interesting to contrast Monro's hopes in September 1913 that the laureateship would be abolished ('officialdom is incompatible with poetry') (130) with Phillips's disgruntled not to say misinformed comments on 'The Appointment to the Laureateship' which appeared in his concurrent issue: (131)

> We have ..... as the official representative of English verse the patron-saint of what one may call 'the bloodless school' of modern poetry. The representatives of this school are a large class of the younger men who call themselves Georgian poets, and as their leader is Dr Bridges, so their prophet is Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Their business in verse is chiefly that of the present Laureate, a clever cold carpentry of metre and an intense determination to be 'original'. But it may be pointed out that, as in the verse of Dr Bridges, this technical originality has rather the effect of irritation than inspiration; it is fidgety rather than fiery, and the fact is ignored that what is called the great 'technique' of verse is rather the result of an overpowering emotion and sense of glory than a toying with the inanimate.

In 'Poetry and Drama' Monro felt freer to achieve his aims as editor, and there is a new note of iconoclasm. Algar Thorold contributed to the first issue an 'irrevent' [sic] article attacking the National Anthem; in the third issue appeared del Re's translation of the 'New Futurist Manifesto' together with Monro's own versions of Futurist poems by Marinetti, Buzzi, and Pallazzeschi.

Less tolerant than Squire of the 'platitudes' of literary criticism, Monro commented tersely on the state of it in the March 1914 issue: (132)

> Reputations are made like those of William Watson or Alred Noyes. Every time such an author publishes a book, some trained person has merely to jot down a series of the conventional phrases: - 'sustained inspiration', 'finished craftsmanship', 'essential quality of high poetry', 'splendid and virile', 'among the finest achievements in English poetry', 'most conspicuous achievement of our age', 'sounds depths only possible to a master', 'never been surpassed', 'noble', 'felicitous' - we all know them so well that we do not trouble to pay the slightest attention to them. The criticism of poetry has been degraded and prostituted out of all recognition: it still remains genuine in only a few periodicals.

Among Monro's other contributors were Ford Madox Ford (then Hueffer), Remy de Gourmont, Thomas Hardy, and Robert Bridges; Edward Thomas reviewed regularly, Brooke wrote on Webster and the Elizabethan drama, and Newbolt reviewed 'Georgian Poetry, 1911-1912' (No. 11).

When 'Poetry and Drama' closed it was with the assurance that it would reappear after the war. In July 1919 Monro issued a rather different magazine, 'The Monthly Chapbook', sub-titled 'Poetry and Drama, New Series', and later renamed 'The Chapbook'. It appeared monthly for the first two years, but by early 1922 financial difficulties made its appearances less regular. The series ran to forty issues, and concluded with two large annual volumes in October 1924 and October 1925. The first issue announced: (133)

> Each number of 'The Monthly Chapbook' will be of separate interest, and complete in itself. At the same time, a definite continuity will be preserved so that the six issues for any half-year will form a volume combining a record of that half-year's production in poetry and drama, a critical survey of contemporary literature, and numerous examples of the creative work of the present period.....

Joy Grant summarizes the contents of that first issue, and remarks on the variety of talent represented: (134)

> The inclusion of de la Mare and W.H. Davies harked back to the first Georgian anthology, and Thomas Sturge Moore and Charlotte Mew hailed from an even greater distance; the old pre-war *avant garde* was represented by Aldington, H.D., F.S. Flint and D.H. Lawrence; Siegfried Sassoon, W.P.R. Kerr, W.J. Turner and

> Robert Nichols were Georgians of the war-time generation, while the three Sitwells, Aldous Huxley and Herbert Read were in the very firing-line of post-war poetry. Monro contributed 'Underworld'. 'The Chapbook' was plainly interested in experiment of every kind, and issued incongruously from the house that, a few months later, produced 'Georgian Poetry, 1918-1919'.

Monro, who had in 1914 missed the opportunity of publishing 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock', (135) seems to have been the only contemporary editor to find 'The Waste Land' 'as near to poetry as our generation is capable of reaching'. (136)

An incongruity of a different sort was the publication in the September 1922 issue of Osbert Sitwell's satire, 'The Jolly Old Squire or Way-Down in Georgia', the Prologue to a 'Mime-Drama, with copious notes by the Author'. The Heroes were 'J**K C*LL**GS SQ**RE, Poet and Journalist, Editor of the "English Hermes". ED**RD SH**KS, Journalist and Poet. Contributor to the "English Hermes"', who with FR**M*N and T*RNER were week-end rustic poets living in London 'where Hawthornden more sweet than hawthorn blows' because Shanks and Freeman had both been awarded the Hawthornden prize. The Villain, Satan, was to be impersonated at the first performance by 'Mr H*R*LD M*NRO'. (Monro had already been billed in this unflattering rôle by William Kean Seymour: (137)

> *Monro*, as Mephistopheles, no doubt
> Would be a leading figure in the rout,
> While *Marsh* with all his orders would be there,
> The beau of all the Georgians, and the snare.)

There is also to be a 'Chorus of Critics, Journalists and Poets, referred to as the Squirearchy, or the Press-Gang'. The Squirearchy spend half their time playing cricket and taking in one another's washing, so they do not have time to do their own work properly, and do not notice when Satan puts a stanza from Shelley into the desks of Sq**re and Sh**nks. Each thinks it his own brainchild, with predictable consequences. It is a strange outpouring of dated wit and doggerel; its inclusion in the body of this book as a literary curiosity was considered, but its value as comment seemed too slight to merit this. Here, however, are the concluding lines with their echo of the third and poorest of Brooke's '1914' sonnets: (138)

> Now in the Play which follows you shall see
> The mighty Goddess Mediocrity
> Contrive that naughty Satan's overthrow.
> Meanwhile blow bugles, blow red trumpets, blow!

Two other poets were to echo Sitwell in the early 1930s. Robert Nichols also writes of Squire at a village cricket match (and alludes to Brooke): (139)

> The dawdling 'over' scarce disturbs the flock,
> And oh, how slowly chimes the village clock!

And Roy Campbell pictures him in another sporting context: (140)

> Nor at his football match is Squire more gay -
> Heart-rending verse describes funereal play;

Part II of Campbell's 'Georgiad' begins: 'Hail, Mediocrity'. (141)

In 1921, a year before the appearance of his satire, Osbert Sitwell published a small pamphlet, 'Who Killed Cock-Robin?', 'Remarks on Poetry, on its criticism, and a sad warning, the story of Eunuch Arden'. In it he attacked 'the lark-lovers - to whom the antics of some miserable bull-finch are as important as any poem'. (142)

> *Poetry* is *not* the monopoly of the Lark-lovers, or of those who laud the Nightjar, any more than it belongs to the elephant or the macaw.
>
> Because a good poem has grown out of the emotion felt by a poet who realised a lark or a green tree, it does not follow that other verse-writers, by babbling continually of larks and green trees, will write good poems.
>
> It is better to leave well alone.
>
> The lark has outstayed its welcome, and migrated. It may return again one day. (143)

All three Sitwells were to feature noisily in the post-war chorus of anti-Georgians, quoting one another with an approval which they bestowed upon few of their contemporaries. Thus Osbert's lark-lovers and the veritable aviary he derides in the 'Jolly Old Squire' reappear in Edith's 'Aspects of Modern Poetry' ('Birds became a cult') together with sheep, beer and the violin 'although this must always be called a fiddle', (144) and in 'Trio', where we find: (145)