

A Whitman Bibliography in the Making

By HENRY S. SAUNDERS

SINCE most of the addresses this evening will deal with interpretation and appreciation of Walt Whitman as poet and prophet, it has seemed advisable to the Fellowship Executive that I should deal with a more technical side of the great Whitman propaganda and discuss briefly my own work which has been principally the collecting of Whitmaniana and the compilation of a bibliography, not only of the poet's own works, but also of the references to him in literature.

We all know how much it would mean to scholars if ample contemporary knowledge were available about the many great authors of past centuries, the records of whom are often so meagre. I need only cite one instance, almost belonging to our own time, the case of Shakespeare, to make this point emphatic. What a lot of the energy of present day writers might go into other channels if we had full details of his life before us.

As far back as I can remember I have always been a collector. Six years ago this collector's instinct was turned for the first time into a literary channel when I became interested in acquiring Whitmaniana. The existing bibliographies on the subject very shortly were found to be quite incomplete, so the idea grew naturally out of the collecting, to compile a more adequate record.

The material gathered consists of Whitman's own editions; reprints, and the books containing quotations of many or few poems; books written entirely about Whitman; magazines and books containing essays on him, and the same with less important references; poems and parodies on Whitman; works by present day writers either directly imitative, or growing naturally out of *Leaves of Grass*; music inspired by the poet's work; photographs; books and pamphlets in foreign languages; books associated in various ways with Whitman such as, for instance, Warren's "*Lily and the Bee*," which some have thought Whitman took as a model when deciding on the poetic form of *Leaves of Grass*.

Many of those present probably saw E. H. Sothorn on his recent visit to Toronto, in Sutro's play "*The Two Virtues*," and you may remember him telling his sister, in the play, of the literary