

if) then I am bound to wish them luck, whether they bear your name or mine or whatever name they bear."

All through these years Traubel has steered the Fellowship away from the rocks of formal hero-worship. The proceedings of the meetings are democratic. It is significant that each year an increasing number of young people attend the Fellowship meeting and dinner. No one pays any dues. One can become a member by simply announcing himself as such in writing to the secretary. It is the thought of Traubel, who is secretary-treasurer; that the levying of dues would exclude many persons who cannot afford to pay. Whitman himself once wrote: "What we believe in invites no one, promises nothing, knows no discouragement, sits in calmness and light. Waiting patiently, waiting its time." What the Walt Whitman Fellowship believes in invites no one and promises nothing, either.

The first meeting of the Walt Whitman Fellowship was in 1887, five years before the death of the old Bard of Democracy at his shrine in Camden. The Fellowship was the outgrowth of the Walt Whitman Reunion, the gathering of a group of Whitman's nearest friends with the poet on his birthday.

There is a Whitman Club in England, a Whitman movement in Canada, a Whitman Society in Chicago, a branch in Philadelphia, and a clique in Arden, Del., who each year on the poet's natal day plant a sprig of lilac or a young cedar and dedicate it to his memory. No vigorous agitation or persistent propaganda is required to get up these little Whitman meetings in New York. They are always as spontaneous as the spirit that produced the poems in "Leaves of Grass." The inclusiveness of Whitman's message is proved by the fact that at these Fellowship meetings each representative of his respective cult, sect, creed, or political theory finds something in Whitman to affirm his doctrine. The Fellowship ever advances his thought of Whitman:

After all, not to destroy but invigorate,
Not to create, but labor at what is already created and carry it forward,
Not to command, but to obey—is the mission of the New World:
After all, indeed, can there be any really New World?