

to match those deeds we have quantity indeed, but how much of it will long be held worthy the reading and the world's delight?

The question must remain as yet unsettled. Here, as in other sections of the huge historic field, there has been controversy. Most of the critics who have considered the poetry of the war have expressed something less than enthusiasm. A learned writer in the *Times* tries to account for the lack of first-rate quality by saying that the time is not yet ripe for poetical expression. His text is Wordsworth's famous saying that poetry is "Emotion recollected in tranquillity." It sounds a plausible theory, but close upon its publication comes the keen utterance of Mr. Punch, prompt to put his finger upon a fallacy. "Of course war songs are never written during the white heat of war time," says, in effect, this clear-eyed satirist; "that is why the Marseillaise has never been produced."

We who are readers and not writers may well leave theories alone and ponder thankfully the verse which the war period has produced and is still producing. And for such pondering the present volume gives us much material, put before us in convenient and attractive form. Many of its pieces will certainly live in the popular memory long after the war, and some few will be enshrined in the treasuries of national literature, side by side with the immortal songs of old.

It is undeniable that there are aspects of this colossal strife to which no poet has as yet done justice. It would need a giant of poesy to rise to the height of its great argument. Not to mention innumerable exploits worthy of Shaksperian treatment, the great drama