

JOY SONG OF A POET

(A la Vers Libre)

I sing the song of verses—free verses—My verses.
 Free as the blinking bat or the succulent codfish,
 And 'most as clever.
 I've got no use for the guys who bow the knee to rhyme and
 rhythm.
 Don't talk to me of rondels, and ballades, and quatrains, and
 triplets, and hexameters.
 I don't know anything about them.
 And couldn't write 'em if I did.
 Nix on that old-time poetry stuff.
 Give me the songs *I* write—glee-songs, free-songs, Me-songs.
 Any old song at all, so long as you call it a soul-song.
 They're the dope to give flappers the squiggles, and baptise the old
 maids' hankies,
 And incidentally to raise a revenue from disciples of the New
 Poetry.

This is the Song of Songs, and Solomon's now a back number.
 Fancy Swinburne, and Keats, and Shelley wasting their time on
 the old line of goods
 When they might have been doing the Real Stuff!
 Imagine the frenzy of Chaucer and Sydney if they tried for a
 rhyme to "skookum"!
 Those old guys lacked enterprise and hustle, and consequently
 didn't get anywhere.
 Shakespeare, too!
 They'd stand about as much chance to-day as a wax cat with
 celluloid legs being chased through Hell by an asbestos dog.

Soar, soar, SOAR! That's the keynote to My verses.
 Thighs, knees, shin-bones, heels, feet, toes, toenails,
 Shoulders, arms, elbows, wrists. fingers, hair, teeth, claws—
 All soaring together.
 Some soaring b'lieve me!
 There's nothing that *I* can't sing, and there's nothing that *I* can't
 say, though I'm modest about it.
 Genius rampant is busting my soul, and the sunset is squiddering.
 I've got a number-one-size afflatur on, variety divine.
 That's the only way to account for my present lustre, luminosity, and
 effulgence—
 Unless it was that kipper!

Claude H. Dodwell.