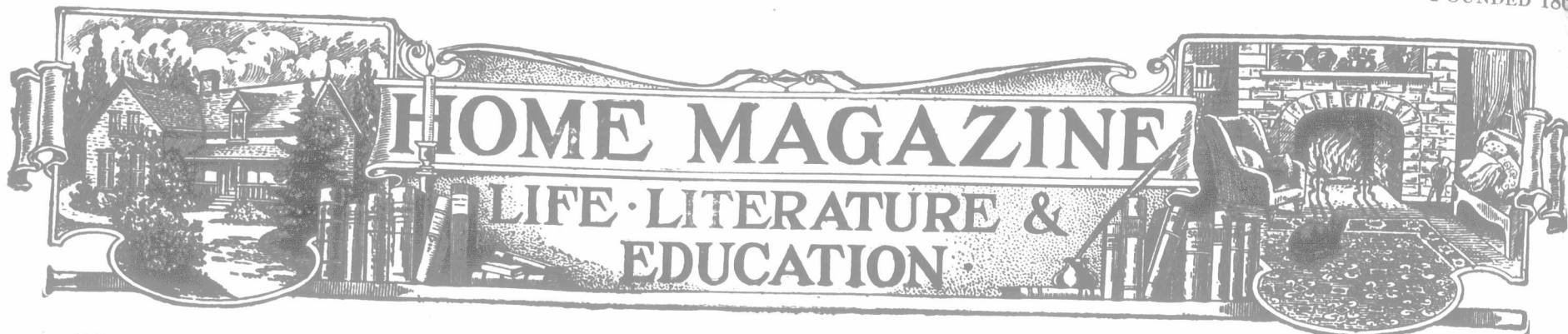




The Refugees.

(By W. G. S., in the 'Spectator,' London.)
Past the marching men, where the great road runs,

Out of burning Ypres three pale women came:
One was a widow (listen to the guns!)—
She wheeled a heaped-up barrow. One walked lame
And dragged two little children at her side,
Tired and coughing with the dust.
The third
Nestled a dead child on her breast, and tried
To suckle him. They never spoke a word.

So they came down along the great Ypres road.
A soldier stayed his mirth to watch them pass,
Turned, and in silence helped them with their load,
And led them to a field and gave them bread.
I saw them hide their faces in the grass
And cry, as women cried when Christ was dead.

Among the Books

"Love and the Universe".

(By Albert D. Watson. Published by the Macmillan Co. of Canada, Ltd., Toronto. \$1.25, net.)

Not long ago a reader of this paper wrote to us, "I like best those articles which touch upon poetry." It was not the first time, nor the second nor the third, that such declarations had come to us from the farm homes, hence it is with no misgivings whatever that we give over to-day the entire space of our "Among the Books" department to an appreciation of a book of poems, and especially of its initial poem, "Love and the Universe,"—a poem which occupies little over a dozen pages, but which—we have no hesitation in saying—has within it a grasp of Infinite things, so comprehensive, so far-reaching as to leave the reader who has been able to see almost awe-struck before the vision that could penetrate so far beyond the material, and the grip of words that could embody within such short space so great a conception.

And "Love and the Universe" was written by a Canadian. Let us realize our prophets.

Before one word more is said, the poem must not be passed over in light mood. To grasp it one must read with every faculty wide awake and concentrated; slowly, pondering upon every line and often upon individual words; out-reaching, seeking for the meaning beneath and behind, which the soul alone may best apperceive. But the effort will be well spent. If one has caught the vision, one lays down the book and looks up to find a greater light about, one experiences a distinct sense of intellectual and spiritual elevation; one recognizes the almost dizzying truth that if the spirit expressed in this poem were universally realized, the whole face of this blundering world would be changed.

The poem is divided into two parts. The first begins with the arresting proclamation, "I dreamed that I was God." The poet, ascending to cosmic heights, has looked forth upon all creation, and his poetic "dream" hurls upon us, within a few stanzas, a picture of the ages that have passed and the one through which we are passing. "The tramp of onward-marching nations"; woman in her long slavery; the blunders of a priesthood that, however, well-meaningly, has sought to tie up cosmic advance in

creeds; the "Calvary" that has awaited everyone who has sought to bring forth a new idea; nationalism—the "separating prejudice of races," perhaps the curse of the world,—all these things are made to pass before the mind's eye of those who know history, within the space of a few minutes reading.

And under and beneath, as one reads, one is conscious of a tremendous, sweeping conception of God—a conception as yet new to many people—of God as the all-pervasive Spirit rather than a personal Monarch on a throne.—"I, God, the Spirit of the Ages," is the argument,—the God who waits, knowing that through all these earthly blunderings Universal Love must eventually emerge triumphant. The Love that sees: "I saw and knew that lesser good is evil"—nothing but the highest should pass muster;—"the lesser evil good"—present evil but a hang-over from past necessities, as every evolutionist knows. The Love that must be all that is and will be, else Creation is not justified—Love which

"Can change the basest hell-upheaval To sweetest brotherhood."

Words fail, in prose, to carry the import of the continuing argument, for only poetry can give the glimpse that half-tells, half-reveals, and sets the spirit soaring.

Love, the poet would burn upon us, was the basic force of Creation, and Love alone must carry it to its bright realization,—the Love that goes out from the personal (where it may have arisen) to the Whole,—such Love as, in

The failure of things has been due to man's own shortcoming, since he, "allured by fame or fortune's leading, his brotherhood forgot," but, when Love again triumphs, all failure will be righted, and (with rare touch of the practical) one of the first evidences will be in government:

"The Government of men was on my shoulders,
Their onward march I planned."

And so, in the cosmic dream, the fulfilment of Love in the Universe works the great transformation:

"Then all humanity in love-surrender,
With all its blight and blot,
I poured into Love's all-consuming splendour,
The cosmic melting-pot.
Then slowly rose such majesty of feeling,
Such clear-eyed vision too,
That all the ills of life found perfect healing
And earth was made anew."

The party patriot quelled his petty passions,
The miser spent his hoard,
The proud of heart despised their futile fashions
And nations sheathed the sword;
For all was Love, the central soul of being,
The all-embracing stream,
The fountain-head of joy, the eye all-seeing—
Such was my wondrous dream.

Then, coming from the clear ether

And so we come to the end of the first part of the poem which closes with an outburst on the "bigness" of man,—man himself, so much greater than either his deed or creed,—the God in him loosed to give perfect freedom:

"I seek no Lethean stream of self-forgetting
To hide me in its wave,
No gem-oasis in its desert-setting
No lotus-dream I crave;
But life athrill, unfettered and abounding,
Free as the winds are free,
Fresh as the vernal forest, breeze resounding,
Deep as the blue-domed sea."

"Let every soul beneath the star-strewn ceiling
For life's own sake be free,
Flame every beacon-fire, set bells a-pealing
From hills of victory;
For as the eagle to his eyrie soaring
Along the crags of time,
In Love's high service every power out-pouring,
All life shall be sublime."

The canto ends: The God in man has spoken.

In the second part of the poem the poet speaks from the standpoint of the human being who has caught a glimpse of the infinite, and the theme is introduced in some stanzas of wonderful beauty; He looks first into the "stellar spaces," finding God there, then he finds Him in the things that we are wont to accept as commonplace:

"But not in vastness only I discovered
A Soul of love and might;
Above the dew-drop on the grass-blade hovered
The clear shekinah-light.
As in the daisy's or the rose's petal
God's praises never cease,
The noisome insect and the stinging nettle
Are temples of His peace."

Even sorrow he finds to be "a messenger of pity" to lead us to higher planes of life.

And so he reaches the great conclusion:

"The Universe is God. There is no heaven
To bribe, no hell to affright;
Ills are by justice banished, good is heaven
To fill the worlds with light.
The Universe is Form and Light and Beauty—
All this in dream I saw—
Is godlike Strength, and great-souled
Love and Duty,
Is firm but kindly Law."

"The Universe is Truth, falsehood consuming,
Is Light, devils to chase
From out the minds of men, their soul illumining
With visions of God's face.
The Universe is Power. The gross things even
That all our spirits mar,
And all the elements they blend and weave in
To make them what they are,

"Are wholesome symbols of our birth, agreeing
That God and man are one;
Are but the bonds that bind our outer being
In union with the sun.
Thus man the creature too is universal,
Awhile in bonds of sense;
His life on earth, at best, a time-rehearsal
Until his faring hence."

For the destiny of man is not to be measured;—growth must go on until "final Christhood" is realized in each soul, and man himself becomes increasingly God's helper:



Regimental Mascots.

Canadians paid a surprise visit to their pets on the Mappin Terrace at the Zoo. The pet of the "Princess Pats" (the bear to the left) brings her pal for an introduction.

human sphere, led a Father Damien to die among the lepers, a Livingstone to brave the dangers of darkest Africa, and thousands of "our boys" to-day to the hell trenches of Europe, for the sake of a principle, that humanity may be spared what they now have to suffer:

"And Love was mine, the joy and power
supernal
To make the loathsome ways
That rise from out the deeps of gloom
infernally
With heavenly lustre blaze."

of abstraction, the poet finds in humanity (as it may be) the fulfilment of Love:

"Then, 'mid the mystery of the blue
high spaces
And clouds of fleecy hue,
I came awake, and gazing on men's faces
I found my dream was true.
The dream was true; ah yes, 'tis Love,
my brothers,
Can make the earth anew;
Only as you give life in loving others,
Will they find heaven in you."