

If we consider Whitman as the fore-runner of the present-day free verse movement, and I think it is right to place him there, then another large field is opened up. I have a list of 150 present-day writers of free verse; it is serious work, and some of it, at least, is likely to live.

On the music list there are 81 compositions inspired by Leaves of Grass. One of them, a setting of "The Mystic Trumpeter," by Hamilton Harty, you may have heard at our Mendelssohn Choir music festival last February.

Whitman has had great influence on French and Belgian poets of to-day, and considerable on those of other European countries, but it is difficult to get full data at this distance and I have only been able to get together 30 books and pamphlets in foreign languages.

In pursuing a hobby like this one has many interesting little adventures and comes across items in what seem to be roundabout way. Here is an instance. A couple of years ago, in the queries and answers column of the Toronto Star this paragraph appeared:—"W. J. H.: Walt Whitman was a famous American poet. His poems are for sale in the Hamilton book stores, or you could see them in the Public Library. Don't know where you could sell his autograph letters, but you might write Walter R. Benjamin, 1125 Broadway, New York, for an estimate of their value." Indirectly I heard of this item and tried to follow it up by getting the address of the Hamilton correspondent from the Star, but no record of it was to be procured there. If the enquirer has some original Whitman letters they were worth hunting up, so I got the Star to insert another answer in the same column, asking the inquirer to communicate with me. At the same time I sent advertisements to two Hamilton papers to try and catch his eye. In addition a Hamilton directory was searched and the twenty-two persons in it with those initials were sent post cards of inquiry. None of these cards reached the right man, but he saw my advertisement in one of the Hamilton papers and answered it. On my next free day I went to Hamilton to see what was being offered, and found no manuscript letters at all, but instead one facsimile letter, five large photographs, a steel engraving, a large woodcut and two etchings, all of Whitman; also the two original sketches by Pennell, of the Whitman and Van Velsor grave yards, which Dr. Bucke used