

American poetry, apart from the work of the older men such as Edwin Markham, Wm. Arlington Robinson, George E. Woodberry and others, is now passing through the phase of *vers libre*, and many of the young men and women have fallen victims to loose, open forms which make the *lack* of content, and the forced mannerism and the routinized imitations all the more conspicuous. Among the most prominent of these younger revolutionary poets are Carl Sandburg, a singer of social injustice, Maxwell Bodenheim, T. S. Eliot, Vachel Lindsay, Vincent O'Sullivan, Amy Lowell, and a number of others. This movement is hopeful in spite of eccentricities, for it means revolt and rebellion against the frozen forms and ideas that have dominated American poetry — a reaction against the sterile conservatism of American tradition.

The drama in America has suffered an almost unbelievable degradation at the hands of the theatre trust and of a public to which the higher value and meaning of the theatre seem to be unknown and to whom it is either only a show, somewhat more refined than a circus in a tent, or a place where women may show off their finery and men digest their dinners. In spite of technical excellence, good acting and attention to detail, the American stage has sunk deeper and deeper into the swamp of the banal, the inane, the lewd, the vulgar and the meretricious. Vacuous prettiness has driven the majesty of true beauty from the stage. A hedonistic creed of infantile amusement has cast Beauty into exile. The truly sexual has been debauched into the merely genital. Now and again some intense journalistic play may sweep the boards, such as "Paid in Full". But every play is judged entirely from the point of view of whether it will pay and pay abundantly. The managers declare that they give the public what the public demands, and the public pays liberally in order to be poisoned with trash. Again the deadly circle. But here, too, rebellion has set in, and a number of small theatres, stage societies and uncommercialized playwrights such as Eugene O'Neill with his brilliant plays "Beyond the Horizon", "Emperor Jones" and "The Hairy Ape", and Zoë Akins with "Papa", have proved that there is an American public which has a taste for something else beside theatrical rubbish. There is also the Little Theatre movement which is offering opportunities to the native dramatist who wishes to express himself and the tumultuous, teeming burly-burly of life about him.

The revolt against every kind of authority which once characterized the American attitude naturally also extended itself to the field of criticism, and arrayed itself against the recognition and acceptance of any authoritative critic. A certain respect, to be sure, is paid to the