

AMERICANS

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Americans by John Curtis Underwood

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JOHN CURTIS UNDERWOOD

AMERICANS

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AMERICANS

BY

JOHN CURTIS UNDERWOOD

AUTHOR OF "THE IRON MUSE."



NEW YORK

1912

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This page is at once foreword and dedication. In *The Iron Muse* I tried to make a book, popular and literary; of the people, for the people and by the people from cover to cover; which has been pronounced a fairly comprehensive criticism of American life up to date.

The effort here is to repeat and exemplify; through the medium of one hundred representative "Americans" of to-day, who address themselves directly to the reader in speaking parts of thirty lines or less. The result may seem to many chaotic. As such, literature *per se* disregarded for the moment; the author claims that it is truly representative and interpretive of America in the making to-day.

The subject being America, treatment in the majority of cases is necessarily realistic. *The Poet, The Interner, The Reporter, Broilers, Central, The Felon* and *The First Barn* are frankly idealized.

To many critics and precisians the last of these poems will doubtless seem the best in the book. Such men and women still dictate the literary policy of our leading magazines and reviews. Meantime the demand for serious modern verse in America to-day approximates an irreducible minimum.

To those who like the author are insurgents in art and other things, who believe in art as a criticism and interpretation of life in the most modern and efficient sense; the strongest poems in the book will speak for themselves and stand by themselves; the value of impressionistic experiments like *The Strap Hanger, The Old Grad, The Sculptor, The Fan, Moving Pictures, Coney Island, The Power Smith* and *The Last Word*; compared with more academic verses will remain sufficiently distinct; at the same time inherently American.

For this audience, who to-day are concerned no less with facts than with form, this book was written. To them it is entrusted.

New York, 11, 12, '11.

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July 2, 1912. p 90

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