

**MORE SONGS BY THE
FIGHTING MEN. SOLDIER
POETS; SECOND SERIES**

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More songs by the fighting men. Soldier poets; second series by Galloway Kyle

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SOLDIER POETS: SECOND SERIES

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Preface

AN Introduction to this second series of "Soldier Poets" is superfluous. What was said by way of Foreword to the original volume is equally true of its successor. There is the less need for repetition because that original Introduction and the poems that followed have been the text of many articles, sermons, and speeches, including an address by the President of the Board of Education, who allows us to paraphrase his remarks on the characteristic features, already noted, of the remarkable outburst of lyrical poetry from the seat of war. The poems are remarkably individual, he pointed out: they are entirely free from hate and execration. There is no reviling of the enemy. Our young soldiers look to poetry as a deliverance from the grim necessities of the hour rather than as a means of expressing martial emotion. They do not gush concerning patriotism, but they feel it none the less, and express it soberly, seriously, and with intense conviction.

The same characteristics, the same yearning over the beloved country left behind and of tender feeling for parents and home, are found in all the poems that have come to us from men in the fighting forces since the former volume was collected. And here we may repeat, that while these volumes are typical of the lyrical efflorescence of the fighting men, they do not pretend to be exhaustive: the larger task of sifting already published work and compiling a more complete anthology has been undertaken by a devoted advocate of the significance of the soldier poets' work and its claim to recognition.

Preface

We builded better than we knew when we issued the original volume as the climax of our proud association with the soldier poets: it was a greater thing than we were then aware of. No literary work of our day has possessed so much genetic force or been of greater influence. It was well said that "Soldier Poets" was of greater service to the Allied cause in America than many Blue Books and specially prepared statements: it showed the high clean spirit of ardent, generous youth engaged on a new Crusade. These songs before sunrise gave fresh vitality to poetry and were welcomed by a nation on the eve of rebirth as the promise of a greater intensity of living, a finer perception of beauty, a clearer vision of the undying splendour after the weary days in which life and art had become dreary and meaningless to the multitude. Now the birth-throes have become more severe, the spiritual quickening more accentuated, more and more of the poems are personal threnodies, and the sentinel graves of the *Poetry Review* young men who responded to the call in 1914 now consecrate the long line from Nieuport to Basra. They are a more glorious and more numerous company than the Elizabethans, with whom, in the great comradeship beyond the grave, they still march, an invisible army, with their brothers-in-arms who continue the material and spiritual warfare here in the flesh, inspiring and directing the fight that will not end with the war.

GALLOWAY KYLE,

"THE POETRY REVIEW,"

LONDON, W.C.

All Saints' Day, 1917.

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