

marks, I must add that Miss Moore's occasional violations of the quoted saying demonstrate that it is even more difficult to observe it than it is to chisel it.

Distaste which takes no credit to itself is best.

There is wit, unexpected and debonair. Mark also in the following quotation how buoyantly Miss Moore's poetry floats the Latin-derived verbiage.

To popularize the mule, its neat exterior
expressing the principle of accommodation reduced to a
minimum.

There is the selection of the "beautiful fact" and uncontaminated precision in recording it.

Black butterflies with blue half circles on their wings.
And there is, best of all, the pure poetic dance.

When the wind is from the east,
the smell is of apples, of hay; the aroma increased and
decreased

as the wind changes;

of rope, of mountain leaves for florists.

In all these felicities one takes delight.

A postscript is called for, since Miss Moore appears in other literary roles than that of poet. She is a critic and lately she has become an editor. In both capacities, unfortunately, she is much less consequential than as a poet.

The critic must be ambitious and Miss Moore is not. She attempts to make no more than a sensitive impressionistic sketch of her reading, a sketch that is always liberally studded with quotations from the author under review, and carries a valuable sentence or two of acute technical understanding for good measure. The quotations are ably selected for the object she has in mind, which is to give the "flavor" of the author. But, after all, the "flavor" is *in* the book and each reader of it may garner his own impressions. The critic must do more than that. At any rate, he should not be backward about handling ideas.

Marianne Moore, the critic, is still preferable to Miss Moore, the acting editor of the *Dial*. What shall I say about that role? Let us say nothing, but rather ponder on the qualifications of a first order editor, who is so much rarer than a good poet.

The first order editor must of course be expert in his own special technic: that of assembling his contributions into an organism that is reborn at stated intervals. He must include in himself a critic capable of discerning a variety of values. He must have elevated standards and a broad outlook. He must be instigator as well as judge. His magazine must reflect a directing mind, yet not be warped by his own limitations. His, in fact must be that impartial free intelligence that so seldom appears.

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