

HARRIET PLIMPTON who summers at Litchfield, the section known as Purgatory, lives

in the house in which her father was born. This section of Maine has undoubtedly helped to shape some of her poetry.

If you haven't read her book *Out Of The North*, printed in Great Britain by the Oxford University Press, good and enjoyable reading are in store for you. Sometimes you will agree with her and other times you may not, but so much the better, Miss Plimpton thinks and she makes her reader think, too.

This writer has learned many things and she tells of the hardest and wisest thing in her poem entitled *Learn To Let Go*. This poem like her book is wise in the way of living. Miss Plimpton has come to grips with life, she is a person who has not been beaten, one who has won through to more than an agreeable acceptance of life. The reader feels this author has the strength and desire to look at life realistically, to see it in detail, and to write truly and clearly, with fine choice of words, sometimes harshly, often beautifully, and often with phrases which delight because of their aptness.

This is a book mostly of thought but a book of feeling, too. Miss Plimpton paints and sculpts and her sensitivity to beauty flickers and flames through her book.

NORTHERN VIEW, the first poem in the book, tells us "Day comes slowly out of the north, from the first thin white of dawn's Beginning to the last gold." The writer says it comes slowly and follows this with descriptive, distinctive similes, but better than this, she writes we have "a long time to think about change And to be tempered to what will come." The entire poem is well integrated; there is a true craftsman's diction; there is simplicity born of sureness and strength.

The writer has a certain largeness of grasp; in some of her poems there are two meanings — that which is literal and easily recognized and that which may be read into the lines and parallels the evident. Against *The Wind* is such a poem. We read of storm, fireballs, hail,

lightning, and we are told that even those who are weather-wise rebel at things beyond their control, "beyond our prayers, In storms that come against the wind." The poem goes beyond one electrical storm or a series of storms, it is expressive of man's rebellion against death, incurable illness, war.

PERHAPS, in a poem or two the writer tells us a little too much. *Gnarled Hands* is a strong piece of work; there is a message, it is clearly stated; the poem needs no summation.

Although we are told in the first line "I am not sorry for them," we are asked in conclusion "Why pity what bears the marks Of work it was meant to do?"

There are memorable lines and statements in *Out Of The North* — "The terrible swiftness of unexpected things. . . How different are the rose, The iris and the rue. . . I had learned how love can be strange. . . Man must proclaim himself. . . But grief — some kinds — never leaves a place more. Than it does a heart" — each reader will choose for himself.



MISS PLIMPTON

—Cates Photo