

LIGHT
LONDON, ENGLAND
8 AUGUST 1940
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THE PSYCHIC THREAD

VICTOR B. NEUBURG

These *Strange Tales* have led me to think of another poet, a poet of occult things, when the mood was on him, a poet of rare spiritual power, one of the most original and melodious singers of our times—the late Victor B. Neuburg. His death, a few weeks ago, after a long illness, has brought his spirit very near to those who had known the man, revered his learning and loved his lyrics. Neuburg of “The Vine Press” was an individual among individualists, a bizarre personality with a noble intelligence, a passionate warmth of affection, and a psychic temperament which opened his inner eye and ear to the wild, lovely forms, hues and harmonies of those enigmatic presences that haunt certain streams and woodlands hallowed in remote times to their worship. There was, in truth, something “elementary” about the poet himself, something elfin and non-human which one sensed immediately, and this elementary atmosphere of his contrasted strongly and sometimes even rudely with the astonishing breadth and depth of his scholarship. The two characters united to produce the phenomenon of his verse.

Perhaps Neuburg's finest poems are to be found in the volumes entitled *The Triumph of Pan* and *Songs of the Groves*, though some little masterpieces are scattered alike through anonymous *recueils* from the Vine Press and certain rare journals of unusual character. The Occult is seldom, if ever, deliberately revealed in his verse, but it lies just below the surface in his major achievements and haunts many a frailer piece with its age-old memories. He does not write of magic, but there is magic at the root of most of his writings. That he printed much of his best poetry anonymously on his own press may account for the comparative obscurity in which his brilliant productions still remain, but his name is a famous one where public advertisement is not deemed an obligatory passport to poetic renown. To scholars, Neuburg's translations from the Greek and

Latin will remain things to praise, to students of the poetic art his feats of virtuosity in rhyme and rhythm are things to wonder at, while to those whose spirits seek the hidden springs of inspiration his poetry is a perpetual fount of world-forgetfulness: "Come unto the shadowy pools; Night's silver ring chains thee," for

"Here are silences
Profounder than deep death. Thou canst not hear
Even the murmur of the Atmosphere
Borne on the wings of the delightful breeze
Of Night"¹

To what heights, what harmonies, will such a soul as Victor Neuburg's swiftly soar, freed at last from the prison-house of suffering mortality! The path of an unfettered poet in the ether is as a comet's trail in the firmament.

C. R. Cammell.

¹—"Panthea"; *Songs of the Groves; Records of the Ancient World*; The Vine Press, Steyning, Sussex. 1921.