

REPERTORIO BIBLIOGRAFICO

Nuestras ediciones en el exterior A CHILEAN POET

A COLLECTION OF THE WORK OF MAGALLANES MOURE

[En el *Boston Evening Transcript* del 17 de agosto de 1921, nos hallamos con este interesante juicio. Lo suscribe I. G., a lo que parece, iniciales de Isaac Goldberg, un gran conocedor estadounidense de las letras hispano-americanas].

Florilegio.—M. Magallanes Moure. Prólogo de Pedro Prado. Publicado por J. García Monge. San José. Costa Rica.

As a member of the well-known "Convivio" series, inclusion in which is held to be a literary honor by Spanish-Americans, there comes from Costa Rica a selection of poems made by one of Chile's leading writers from his own works. The publisher, García Monge, has served his nation in this country, has figured at the head of its educational and literary advancement, edits the magazine "Repertorio Americano" and conducts a series of editions that have made him known wherever Spanish is spoken and read. He is himself an author of established reputation, too modest, gifted with a sure taste that selects and presents the work of others with as much interest as if it were the product of his own pen. In bringing out Magallanes Moure's poems he makes access somewhat easier to the labors of an aloof spirit whose name is better known outside of Chile than his actual work. Indeed, the Chilean was fortunate in his very first book, "Matices," which attracted the favorable attention of Mistral, who had not yet come into prominence through the award of the Nobel prize for literature in partnership with the Spanish dramatist Echegaray. Already in these youthful lines there was suggested the poet's communion with field and water, his employment of these scenes in the evocation of a human simile, his wrapping of life in a veil of tender melancholy.

Prado's foreword reveals Magallanes Moure as a quiet leader of his nation's poets, and as one of the country's foremost painters as well. It is natural, then, that in the lines of the Chilean favorite readers should seek for suggestions of the artist who won a Government award in the salon

of 1919; they do not seek in vain, for, although the quest easily leads to illusory findings, there is more than one of his sonnets that needs but a frame to make it a picture. If the poet's canvases are anything like his poems, they must be moody, crepuscular, suggestive of solitary souls. This man is a brooder over persons and things. Yet there is not too much of the static canvas in his lines; he is extremely sensitive to sounds, especially when they may be made to convey a gloomy connotation. In his better work he shows a fine sense of form and achieves that subtle effect which may be called a rhythm of thought. (Read "La Jornada," for example, in which is treated the burgeoning of love, or the sonnet-series "Himno al Amor," in which is employed a rare form of an opening ter-

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cet, followed by two quatrains and closed by another tercet).

There is no sensualism in Magallanes Moure's treatment of love, says Pedro Prado. Certainly there is no wild proclamation of the senses; in this poet love appears as symbol and simile. The sensualism is refined, becoming a soft voluptuousness rather than a noisy, Dionysiac abandon. When it is not voluptuous in this sense, it becomes a sort of cult in which eroticism has dissolved into worship. His love is as much thought as feeling — as much retrospection as participation. In "Sentirse fuerte" he seems to invoke the ideal of strength and impassivity, and one feels that he has often achieved his aim in the peculiarly repressed poems of love.

That he is capable of occasional commonplace may be read in the "Final de Otoño", an undistinguished treatment of a trite theme, in which occurs a reminiscence of Shakespeare's "undiscovered bourn". If Magallanes Moure is really his nation's favorite, his countrymen (despite recent protests against such a view) favor the contemplative and the intellectual in poetry rather than the less constrained worship of the muse. He lacks the intensity of his remarkable countrywoman who writes under the pseudonym of Gabriela Mistral; he lacks the depth of the countryman who contributes the generous introduction to his selection. In the opinion of the present reviewer, Prado is not only a great poet of Chile but will in time be recognized as one of his continent's foremost intellects. Magallanes Moure is not Chilean in the sense that P. Antonio González or C. Pérez Veliz were; he is not a "national" poet. He is a writer chiefly of twilight moods and in minor keys. His hues may be varied, but they are beheld in the gathering dusk, just as his melodies, though numerous, are heard as if muffled by the mute. He is not, as one might be led to expect, Chile's greatest contemporary poet, but he has been, as he is, a good influence and stands well up in the national roster.

I. G.

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