1931

Letters from Quarterly Readers

University of New Mexico Press

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq

Recommended Citation
University of New Mexico Press. "Letters from Quarterly Readers." New Mexico Quarterly 1, 2 (1931).
https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq/vol1/iss2/14

This Back Matter is brought to you for free and open access by the University of New Mexico Press at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in New Mexico Quarterly by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.
Letters from Quarterly Readers

The most disastrous reception that a new magazine can meet, is that of dead silence. To editors, nothing is so terrifying as silence. They must have their praise or their condemnation; else the spur to effort is gone.

Next to dead silence, as an evil omen, ranks the faint praise that damn's. It is the least satisfactory of all rewards for the effort that it takes to bring together material and dish it up in organized printed form. Strange as it may seem, criticism that has the ring of sincerity behind it, is most satisfying when a publication is young and striving to find its place in the world. It denotes interest, and given interest of readers, half the battle is won.

The first issue of THE NEW MEXICO QUARTERLY drew many comments, spoken and written. Some were very helpful. Very few, may it be said, were of the faint praise class. Most of them gave vigorous encouragement; several were emphatic in their criticism.

It is interesting to look over the letters which have been received, and it may interest readers to have excerpts from a few of them.

E. H. Shaffer, one of the advisory editors of the magazine, had this to say:

I have not been able to read thoroughly the first issue of the QUARTERLY but I have seen enough of it to know that I think it is a very creditable piece of work.

For general appearance and make-up I consider it fine. It's a good job.

My suggestion as to future contents would be that an effort be made to get at least one good controversial article per issue. It might be controversial about the weather or the condition of the moon or what-not, but controversial.

I should say off-hand that the great danger of the QUARTERLY will be that it becomes pedantic,
dull and stodgy. One big problem will be to keep it from becoming a text book. Don't let it get stuffy and ponderous. I am not suggesting that the QUARTERLY run comics or become undignified. But I think the editors should insist on life and color and an air of sprightliness.

More careful proof reading (someone would bring that up), and elimination of the line “Published by the Faculty, etc.” from the front cover, are suggested by Dr. T. M. Pearce, who concludes:

The dearth of real criticism in this communi-cation is the best tribute I can pay to the first issue of the magazine. I am confident of its success...

From Elizabeth Cooley, librarian of the Carnegie Public Library at Las Vegas, came this brief observation:

I want to thank you for the very interesting number of THE NEW MEXICO QUARTERLY. It is a very much worth while magazine and I hope it will have a long life. Please enroll the library as as subscriber and send bill.

President J. F. Zimmerman, also a member of the Editorial Board, paused long enough in the midst of worries and activities incident to the legislative session, to com-ment:

I do wish to say, however, that I am very much pleased with the first issue, and congratulate you on its form and general appearance. I feel that we are launched on a program that will bring great credit to the University...

Witter Bynner, poet of Santa Fe, who was, perhaps, most noted of the contributors to the first issue, prefers a plainer cover. He wrote:

My only suggestion after reading your excel-lent first number is that at the top of the right hand page throughout the magazine, you print the name of the contribution. I venture, however, to add my preference for a plainer cover: a well
balanced piece of type setting like the *Yale Review*, for instance, eliminating the cut. I particularly liked your leading article; and I thank you for the pleasant position you gave my poem.

"It feels its oats, I can see," is the reaction which comes from Dr. G. S. Hubbell, formerly of the English Department of the University of New Mexico. He believes the QUARTERLY one of the best ideas which has come from the University. Other comments were:

There is symmetry among the contributions in this first number. It will help if you add more discussions of *current* questions which are not purely local . . . . such topics have a living interest and significance as news, and each one has a local aspect, too . . . . If you could work for some sort of symmetry in each issue, embracing a definite portion of the best thought available at the time, I think a short editorial might greatly help to point the focus. It would prevent an appearance of scrappiness . . . . Your request for a contribution is flattering.

Speaking from experience in a similar field, Henry Smith, editor of the *Southwest Review*, published at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, says:

The magazine as a whole strikes me as very promising. I believe, however, that you will have the experience which we have had with the *Southwest Review*: namely, that a journal published in the Southwest ought to restrict itself to the Southwest. But then I may not fully understand the purpose of your journal . . . .