

Pound's Poems, Previously Barred by Cerf, To Go Into a New Edition of Anthology

Yielding to critics who protested the exclusion from a poetry anthology of twelve poems by Ezra Pound, accused of nineteen acts of treason, Bennett Cerf, president of Random House, yesterday called the exclusion "an error in judgment" and announced his decision to include the poems in future editions of the volume. The publisher said that by his reversal he hoped to "remove any possible hint of suppression."

The publisher withdrew his ruling against the poetry of the expatriate poet, who broadcast during the war from Italy, after considering the views expressed by 289 letter-writers. Although the opinion on the omission of the poems was about equally divided, Mr. Cerf will reinstate the Pound selections lest, he said, he encourage censorship of other books, with readers demanding the elimination from publishers' lists of the works of such writers as Nietzsche and Marx.

The controversy started with the appearance several months ago of a new volume in the Modern Library, issued by Random House, entitled "An Anthology of Famous English and American Poetry." When Conrad Aiken, editor of the American section, included twelve poems by Pound Mr. Cerf ruled them out of the volume on the grounds that a publisher has the privilege of refusing to issue under his imprint the works of proclaimed Fascists. Mr. Aiken, also a poet, agreed to the omission provided the volume would list the titles he had intended to include as well as the

publisher's note explaining that the editor had been overruled.

"We exceeded our prerogative," Mr. Cerf will say in a forthcoming issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, in which he conducts a regular column. The letters were received from authors, judges, critics, doctors, factory workers and housewives.

Mr. Cerf said yesterday that while he had changed his mind he was "an angry convert."

The poetry anthology was issued in an edition of 15,000 copies, and is now running out of print. When paper becomes available the volume will be made over to include the twelve selections and will carry a note that will say in part:

"We reprint his [Pound's] poems in order to remove any possible hint of suppression, and because we concede that it may be wrong to confuse Pound the poet and Pound the man. Pound the poet is deemed worthy of representation in this volume by the editor, Conrad Aiken. Here he is. Pound the man we consider a contemptible betrayer of his country."

Pound, who was "repatriated" under armed guard to stand trial for treason, is now in a Washington hospital, having been declared mentally unsound by a psychiatrist.