



PEGASUS

A Magazine of Verse

VOLUME II, NUMBER I

March-April 1924

A NEW DIGITAL READING EDITION

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

Volume II opens with the magazine's boldest cover and one of its broadest contributor lists. Mathurin Dondo's extended nocturne is followed by poems from J. Corson Miller, June Hamilton Rhodes, Edwin Renold Lane, Samuel M. Sargent, Jr., Samuel Putnam, Ruth Monroe, Jo Hartman, Margie Lee Runbeck, and Lilian White Spencer. The sequence moves from cosmic invocation to landscape, carnival, regret, narrative experiment, and classical portraiture.

Internet and archival records clarify two contributors' wider careers. A 1923 University of California Chronicle contents page lists Dondo as an author on French literary history, consistent with his academic work at Berkeley. Southern Illinois University's guide to the Samuel Putnam papers identifies Putnam as an editor, translator, and writer; he would later become especially associated with Romance-language and Latin American literature. Their presence underscores Pegasus's reach beyond San Diego, while the editor's essay on art and development restates the magazine's faith in artistic cultivation as a public good.

SOURCES CONSULTED

- University of California Chronicle, July 1923
- Southern Illinois University, Samuel Putnam papers

TEXTUAL AND EDITORIAL NOTE

This edition is newly typeset from the supplied HathiTrust scan. Obvious OCR artifacts, broken words, duplicated drop capitals, and spacing errors have been corrected against the page images. Period spelling, capitalization, and unusual diction have otherwise been retained. Hyphens and em dashes have been checked against the printed pages rather than normalized into a single mark. Each poem begins on a new page, with its printed issue page and scan page identified, and every poet's name is placed immediately beneath the corresponding title.

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IN PRAISE OF MY GLORIOUS QUEEN THE NIGHT

Mathurin Dondo

Queen all glorious,
Omnipotent,
Mysterious!
Your dominion unfathomable
Extends over the earth,
Over seas and oceans,
Over the planets and over the suns,
Your sovereign empire
Is incommensurable.
Over all things and over all beings,
Over mind and matter,
Beasts and men and gods
You reign supreme,
Without beginning and without end,
Eternally.
The universe
Is the flickering emanation
Of your violet eyes,
An effulgence
Always changing,
Ebbing and flowing,
Always resorbed.
Into your own immutable being.
You are All,
And you are Nothing,
And you are hidden behind the seven veils.
You sit enthroned
In a wondrous palace,
A diadem of stars encircles your forehead,
And seven moons lie at your feet.
Queen compassionate,
Send me the messenger
Bearing the golden key,
Which shines over your breast.
Mother of sleep,
Fold me in your mantle,
I am your child:
Whom the visions of day
Frighten.

Mother of dreams
Lull me in your soft arms
And sing me the slow song
Of forgetfulness.
Mother of love,
Draw me close to your heart,
From you I came,
To you I shall return
With joy.

Issue p. 5 • Scan p. 7.

PORTRAIT OF A YOUTH

J. Corson Miller

His eyes are moon-hushed pools of loneliness
That stress the dark profile of weather-tan;
The straight, silk-raven hair denote a man
The world's wild nooks might love; slim hips—the press
Of firm-set neck on shoulders—back, breast, knees—
These all, with steel-knit limbs make Nature's plan
Complete for him to lead the flying van
Of those who pierce earth's savage fastnesses.

And yet his eyes, snow-cold and lonely, fill
Me with misgiving; mirthless eyes like these
Leander wore when breasting Dardan seas—
The night death flung him high on the Pontic hill.
So Hector, too, hearing his wife's far call,
Beheld Achilles climb the Trojan wall.

Issue p. 6 · Scan p. 8.

RELEASE

June Hamilton Rhodes

Time had set a lock upon my heart,
Through long nights and days
I have been storing up beauty unceasingly
Against the day of your coming.
You came, you spoke, and suddenly
The door flew open wide
And rushing forth, unmindful of their nakedness,
But chaste and unashamed,
My inmost thoughts
Radiant in the reflected loveliness of a world of beauty
Poured themselves upon you.
Time had set a lock upon my heart
Which is now a crystal lake of fluent beauty,
Overflowing its fragile banks,
Liberated by your understanding.
Others have come to my heart's portal
And gladly would I have opened
The fast closed door
But I was powerless to free myself.
You came and your vision and your belief
Broke down all the walls.
Time had set a lock upon my heart,
Through long nights and days
I have wrought a jeweled necklace,
Delicately moulded of wistful longing,
Which I place about your neck.

Issue p. 7 · Scan p. 9.

SYMPHONY

Edwin Renold Lane

From pole to pole

 I saw the gray wires stretched;

Five lines against the blue sky hung,

Four spaces lay between, a staff

That wayward chance wrote music on;

A flock of blackbirds settled there,

And swayed and swung.

Like notes upon a printed bar

They seemed so like, I smiled to hear

The little dots break into song.

Issue p. 7 · Scan p. 9.

CARNIVAL

Samuel M. Sargent, Jr.

The blare of a carnival
Is like a drunkard
Beating on an old tin pan.
The confetti falls
Like blazing snow,
In startling pinwheels of color.
The people flutter,
Strutting and clucking,
Like restless fowls in a barnyard,
And a pickpocket creeps through the crowd
Like a gaunt weasel.

Issue p. 8 · Scan p. 10.

SAWTOOTH AND VIOLET

Samuel Putnam

Then, place
the cold keen edge
to the white throat of Expectancy,
stay
the madness-wombing drop, drop
of unfulfilled surprise,
the pendulous drab return
of plundered tears.
Have you not numbered,
can you not number
the serrated approaches of the years?
Do they still hold for you some sudden flower
to be dew-plucked on the mountainside
of an astonished dream?
Have you not strewn the wind with the petaled slighthness
of each vague murmuring hour,
grey-dusted with a pollen no bee stings,
with no near brush of wings?
Then, place the cold keen edge —
to Expectancy's white throat,
stay the pendulum, and scatter
the withering petals on the winds,
where Laughter dies and Weeping, and Weeping laughs to die,
and Peace, mist-eyed, smiles through.

Issue p. 9 · Scan p. II.

REGRET

Ruth Monroe

I for a moment gave you lips of longing.
Gave you my hand to clasp, my lips to seek.
I, who hold cheap this bartered love belonging
To other minds, I loved, for I was weak.
I was a princess lavishing my kisses
Upon a shepherd lad who did but smile.
I was a priestess craving earthly blisses,
Finding them satisfying for awhile.
Guilty of lust was I who scorn the lustful,
Spendthrift of love was I who hold love dear.
I, who am ever cynical was trustful,
Forgetting everything...

Issue p. 9 · Scan p. II.

LEAGUE

Jo Hartman

My timid soul,
Cannot we by some alchemy convert
Into a vital, palpitating flame
The power that lies within us, dumb, inert—
Oblivious to worldly praise or blame
Or unreached goal,
Of Life afraid?
Could we, this part of us so sepulchred
Might paint (with brushes dipped in dust of stars);
Might sound the sweetest music ever heard
On harp of gold; triumphant, burst the bars—
Defeat has made;
And yet aspire
To blaze new trails to God! Or then, again,
The Muses being kind, its pulse might beat
Immortal lines thru our now sterile pen—
Stir each old dream, that fell with weary feet,
To young desire!

... For I would will

An iridescent sword's keen flashing thrust
(Its opal hilt stained crimson in the sun)
Or white hot tears—a wild, unending gust—
To this pale, prisoned silence of a nun
Unshriven, still!

Issue p. 10 · Scan p. 12.

EPIC

Margie-Lee Runbeck

Out of nothingness

Suddenly I was,
A chaotic mite of personality,
Reflecting God, they say,
And wondering.
There were nine days in my life.
If I understood them,
I could understand myself.
There was a day
When the poignancy
Of pear blossoms
Whipped me to numbness.
I fled, aching with beauty,
Where I could not see.
In that day I became
Beauty's slave.
There was a day
When I felt a stir of creation
Within me.
I was humble
With the self-effacement
Of ambition.
I was passionate
With the desire
To express.
There was a day
When despair,
Blinded me.
I tossed my head wretchedly.
I paced swiftly among the places
I loved.
But I could not shake her off.

There was a day
When my power
Intoxicated me.
I drank the poisonous
Champagne of success
Till I was mad with power.
Even God was smaller
Than I
That day!

There was a night,
Windless and listening
When love came to me.
The stars were unborn kisses.
My soul, a prayer-clad virgin,
Reached dewey-eyed toward God,
And tremulously pledged herself
Forever.

There was a day
Of agonizing holiness.
Of quivering with the desire
To be better.
Faith was my breath
Then,
And devotion my food.

There was a night
When I lay, broken,
Beside the anguished sea.
Exhausted with sorrow,
I could not pray—
Never that, any more.
For God had laughed at me,
And taken my beloved.
God had played with my prayers
Like strings of opalescent beads,
And had broken them with his fingers.

They beat down upon me,
Bruising me like hail.
I could not even cry out
Against him.
There was a day
When first I learned
To pretend.
I wound my eyes skillfully
In a veil
That made my weeping
Seem like laughter,
And my mocking
Like mirth.
There was a day
When the veil strangled me.
I ripped it from me,
But it was too late.
I had forgotten how to live without it.
In that day I died,
Wearily eager to cease struggling
If I could.
Back into nothingness
Suddenly I went,
A chaotic mite of personality,
Reflecting God, they say,
And wondering.

Issue p. 13 · Scan p. 15.

OCTAVIA

Lilian White Spencer

White rose of Rome, old shadows shroud you while
Fame's bright appareling invests the fate
Of him who tossed you lightly by and ate
That amorous magic lotus of the Nile,
Drugging with scarlet dreams his gray exile.
To those dark loves the ages dedicate
Raptures of song but none commemorate
Your tears for time to pity or revile.
The generations banish one who gave
Her all, a Caesar's all, to treachery
And yet, though Cleopatra's banners wave
Forever, is not prouder majesty
In this furled standard? Theirs, the joy, the grave;
Hers, the long grief, the lonely tragedy.

EDITORIAL AND BACK MATTER

Editorial — Art and Its Influence on Development

Why is culture? Where are the evidences of it in our present civilization; why is painting, sculpture, music and what are their effects on living? Has art any influence on the unthinking masses or is culture the pursuit of those who seem to be born in the circle of the understanding? Are the numerous proofs we find in the output of scores of art and poetry magazines in America any evidence the people as a whole are taking an interest in their artistic development? We would like to have the opinion of the intellectuals on these questions.

We read that the Greek civilization rested on the appreciation of the masses as much as on the isolated groups or geniuses that started them; the old Greeks as a nation loved art, sculpture, philosophy, poetry, drama, for that reason they contributed so much to future ages. No one art was indulged in by the masses; they worked harmoniously for cultural development.

Today we find in this country one art predominating—music. In nearly every town clubs guarantee large sums of money to procure orchestras, pianists, singers and choruses. The concerts are well attended, the guarantee fund is never touched. Music plays the most important part in the country's development, because people will pay a fair price to hear good music. We have arrived at a period when thousands of people will go to hear a symphony, a tenor, or a chorus, but few will visit an art exhibition, or go to a lecture on poetics. Now it is time, when good music is listened to by the masses, to ask the question: Will music awaken within the individual listener a desire to study the arts? And if it does not, what importance can we attach to classical music if it does not lead eventually to the desire of a well-rounded artistic development? Music, it seems at present, is most popular because it can be enjoyed without any knowledge of the subject; one need know nothing about tone color or pitch to enjoy the melodies of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony.

Santayana in his *Sense of Beauty* writes, "Music is the less instructive of the arts," and we agree. Is that why we can find people with money to guarantee a music club, and can rarely find anyone to endow a museum or art gallery? The very people who guarantee money, say, for an orchestra, would be doing a much greater service to art if they endowed an art school or sent a young man or woman who showed unusual genius in drawing or music to Paris or Vienna.

We cannot be too discouraged, for here in San Diego—the same can be said of every section of the country—scores of literary clubs, art clubs and dramatic clubs exist; it is possible some soul will be illumined by their influence to produce something of a permanent nature to art.

COMMENT

The Second Anthology of Verse Writers' Club of Southern California published by Harr Wagner, San Francisco, is off the press. This is a more important collection of poems than one would expect to find emanating from a writers' club. It is certainly a fine contribution to California poetry and we doubt if any similar club in America could produce within itself such a high standard of poetic expression. From a modern standpoint, there is one criticism—it is too lyrical. There should be a little more balance. In this volume of verse there is much distinctive work, and many poems that will remain long in one's memory. Ben Field, president of the club, in his foreword writes: "I think it is doubtful if any period of seven years in the literary history of America has been more productive of creative art than the last seven years. Especially is his true of poetry." This statement is particularly true, we think, of the development of the arts in California. What the next five years will bring forth depends much on individual effort.

Kamuela Serle— An Appreciation

Shelley mourned for Adonais. We mourn for Kamuela Serle. To talk with him was to know a genius. And though he went young leaving no Endymion to proclaim him, he has left to some of us the knowledge he would have gone far. Once only we talked together, but in that one conversation he said more worth while things than most men say in a life time. Ideas were passions with him,—time too elusive to catch them and make them tangible. He was trying to find himself, all his early life was just that,—athlete, movie-double, soldier—expressing his passions in what he imagined their proper medium.

Then came the illumination! In France one night, a wet, cold night, as only a soldier knows a winter night in France, marching along in full equipment, tired, hungry, sleepy, "fed-up," a halt was called. The men sat down in the mud on the side of the road to rest or catch a brief five minutes' sleep. Serle's hands came in contact with a lump of soft clay, his fingers worked, he moulded, modeled, soon a figure took shape, how, why, he knew not,—at last he had found his medium, without effort, without even thinking about it. He would be a sculptor! That is Serle's story as he told it to a fantastic to those who do not understand, inexplicable to all but the understanding.

Serle was a great talker. Anyone who ever heard him talk knows that. And his enthusiasm was as rampant as a lion. Did we not hear a lady exclaim, after listening to him for five minutes: "Why such fierce enthusiasm, Mr. Serle!" But he only smiled. He was talking about his native Samoa and the barbarous things civilization had done to his southern islands. Cannot one show passion in talking of one's native land? Talking would have been a greater art with Serle. It was already an art. Perhaps he was as interesting a talker as Oscar Wilde, but he lacked Wilde's wit and brilliance, but made up for it with his dogmatism and intense feeling.

After he had finished a story of Samoan life I said to him: "You talk like a poet." "Do I?" he answered, "I am glad you said that. Yes, I have written some poems I would like you to read." A little later he said to me, "I could never have done anything without the help of the wonderful people at Point Loma." How glad we were he was given a chance to express himself and give something of value to the world unhampered and without worry. Artists will never forget the help people give to other artists. The gem that stands out in the pitiful story of Oscar Wilde is that of the young Jewess who helped Wilde when all the world was against him. In helping

Wilde at this critical time she said, "it was inadequate recognition for the pleasure he had given me by his wonderful talks." "Such actions," writes Frank Harris, "are beyond praise; it is the perfume of such sweet and human sympathy that makes this wild beast's cage of a world habitable for men."

Serle is numbered among a host of young geniuses whose life was snuffed out before he had scarcely learned its meaning, certainly before he had time to give the world a portion of his great soul, sent out adventuring before this adventure had started. Truly in Dowson's words:

They are not long the weeping and the laughter
Love and desire and hate,

I think they have no portion in us after
We pass the gate.

Pegasus' birthday party at the Three Arts Club on the 21st of January was quite an artistic event. It was a fitting celebration of a successful first year. The artists who contributed to the evening's entertainment were: El Nora Rader, Fred Hakel, Royal Brown, Emma Carolyn Landgraff, Gertrude Peterson and Mrs. Inez Caldwell. There were thirty-five poets and friends present. Next January we hope to have a poet of national reputation as the honor guest at our annual celebration.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

MATHURIN DONDO is an author, artist and poet. He is on the staff of the University of California.

J. CORSON MILLER, Buffalo, N. Y., is the author of two poetry books.

JUNE HAMILTON RHODES, Santa Ana, California, appears for the first time in a poetry magazine. Mrs. Rhodes has kept her work too long from poetry lovers.

SAMUEL M. SARGENT, JR., Los Angeles, has appeared before in Pegasus.

SAMUEL PUTNAM, Chicago, is a newspaperman. A series of his articles "The Younger American Poets" were published in Caprice last year.

" RUTH MONROE is a student at the University of Redlands.

MARGIE-LEE RUNBECK sends her work from Plymouth, Mass.

LILIAN WHITE SPENCER, Denver, Colo., is doing as fine work as any of the younger women poets. Her translation from the French, "If Christ Should Come," in November Contemporary Verse, is perhaps the most dramatic poem that appeared in a poetry magazine last year.

Edwin Arnold Lane and JO HARTMAN live in San Diego.

Where Pegasus can be procured in San Diego:

Hutton's Book Store, 1143 Sixth Street. Antlers' News Stand, Broadway, opposite First National Bank. Alcove Book Shop, Tenth and Broadway.

Ernest Dowson is a poet of the inarticulately beautiful. His kingdom is the human heart.

Dorothy Hawley Cartwright.

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