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NO. 11

The
LYRIC WEST

A Magazine of American Verse



IN THIS ISSUE

Esther Yarnell | Virgil Geddes

Dorothy Patterson | Albert Edmund Trombly

Rolla Prideaux and others

POINT LOMA

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The Lyric West

No. 11

A Magazine Of Verse

March, 1922

Edited by Grace Atherton Dennen

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The Lyric West for March, 1922

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Esther Yarnell

Color

Color—color—color
Of land and sky and sea,
Color, the gift of the sun to the earth;
Drifting, shimmering colors
Waver over the mountains;
And the staring fixed stains of the desert
Glare hard in the breathless noon hour.
I clutch at the seven strings of the rainbow.
They hang across the gray afternoon.
Like tinted gauze.
Violet, indigo, blue,
Green, yellow, orange, and red.
I say them over.
I see them in jewels and dewdrops,
In bits of broken glass,
In a woman's blowing hair,
And in deep mountain gorges and rivers.
Waves of color ebb and flow
Over the universe.

Red — red — red,
Thrills of crimson and scarlet
Startle back memories of childhood.
Some day, I shall go again
To the sage gray hills of Ventura,

To find among the tangled chaparral
The old time wild flowers gleaming.
Scarlet Indian paint brushes
Glow like torches beside the narrow path.
Along the rocky ledges
The gaunt branched cactus plant
Holds high its candle flame blossoms.
And there is the dusty roadway
That leads from the hot dry mesa
Down to the tulle grown marshland
With its scent of the nearby sea.
I might have forgot the dim marshland
But for the red-winged blackbirds
Gemming the somber tulles.

An April day comes floating
Her light robes of green about her.
An April day runs gently
Through the knee deep grass of the Valley.
Up the soft slopes of the foothills
She saunters.
At noon she naps where sycamore trees
Spread their wide shady awnings
Over the white sands of the naked wash.

She drinks from a quiet pool
Held apart from the running water
By great clean granite boulders,
From an emerald pool translucent
And glimmering in light and shadow.

O I have seen the green, green waters
Of the Merced River
As they hurry or linger
On their way through Yosemite Valley.
I have tarried in the late afternoon
Along the shallow bywaters of the river.
Leaning branches of willows
Dangle their leaves on the surface.
Little pebbles are coated with green moss,
And grasses trail long ribbons
Under the glassy stillness.

The sea and the sky are blue,
And a far off range of mountains;
But all the beauty of blue is held
In the cup of a morning glory.
I have watched a bluebird flash
Across a dark hedge of cypress.
I have bathed in a mountain lake
That held in its bosom the sky.

In the San Joaquin Valley,
A hot July sun bears down from a turquoise sky
On broad spreading fields of alfalfa.
Blue butterflies poise above its dark blue flowers,
Still blue flowers beneath blue moving wings.
Far to the east and the west,
Are the indigo shaded mountains,—
The Sierra Nevada and Coast Range.

ts]

The purple glory of the iris
Absorbs my morning thoughts.
I look closely at their filmy petals,
And all the purple glory of the world
Passes before me.
The amethyst glow of Sierras,
And dark steep ocean horizons,
When afternoon merges to evening,—
Sleep in their airy folds.

The long lavender robes of the wistaria vine
Fall in lavish splendor
Over the brown pergola.
It forms a roof over my head,
And a carpet of fallen flowers under my feet.
Each pendant cluster is barbed with stinging beauty.
The keen transient loveliness of the wistaria
Cuts as deeply as memory.
Fold me in your spreading violet wings, O wistaria,
And let me forget.
Each Spring violets grow in the cool shady garden,
Violets grow in the meadows high in the mountains,
And by barren gray rocks in the foothills,
And in an old forsaken cemetery,
In a far little town I remember
That lies along the Pacific.
Each Spring brings violets,
And violets bring thoughts of Springs that have gone.

The sun is a golden bowl
Spilling amber and topaz,
Over lands that dip to the west ;—
Over mountains and foothills and valleys.

In the Santa Clara Valley
The apricots are ready for the pickers.
They fall on the warm loam of the orchard;—
Apricots, the sun-loving fruit of the Romans,
Yellow skinned and golden to the heart.
I know where there are hills of gold.
I know the fields of yellow mustard.
Wild canaries dart
Across the honey-colored vapor,
And are lost in the floating mist.
The wind drapes herself
In a scarf of fine old lace.
She trips across the upland,
She laughs and waves her hands.
I know where cloth of gold is spread
Along the shimmering foothills
That slant to the setting sun.
Honey-colored, honey-scented mustard,
These few stalks that I hold in my hand
Are many flowered and enough for a poem.

It is twilight along the shore.
All the colors of delicate sea gardens,
All the colors of the polished bowl of a shell
Are reflected in opalescent softness

On the wet sands at the ebbing tide.

Between darkness and darkness

Waves of color bathe the earth.

Elliott C. Lincoln

The Girl of the Loneliness

FAR from the traveled roads of men our dim trails
wind away;
Through the cold, thin silence of hills we go, we watch
the shimmering desert flow,
By the nameless streams our campfires glow when the
evening mists rise gray.

And we, the wanderers, journey alone as the months
and the years drift by.
Sons of old Ishmael, unafraid, pledged men sworn to
the love of a maid,
To the Girl of the Loneliness we have paid the vows
that hold till we die.

To me she comes in a silver song of jingling bit and
spur;
Through sunny weather, and cold star-shine, and
pitchblack nights when storm winds whine,
I have felt the touch of her knee on mine, as I rode the
trail with her.

And her low sweet laughter gladdens me like the sound
of a stream in spring,
And the silken folds of her kerchief float caressingly at
her warm white throat,

And the light in her grave eyes echoes the note of her
lips' soft welcoming.

Out from the waste lands of the earth we sunburned
men come back

With never a word of her winsome face, and tarry
awhile, and then retrace

Our eager ways to a trysting-place far off from the
trodden track.

She is older than history, younger than dawn; she is
loyal, and brave and gay.

She has brightened the trail for a million men, the
stern, unshaven, homeless men,

Those rugged, useless, wandering men who travel the
lonely way.

Dorothy Pinckney Pillsbury

Coastwise Hills

They play at being Quakers
When the rains come slanting down;
Pose them gravely in the dimness,
Clad in sober cloak and gown.
Grey and silent little Quakers,
Huddled meekly by the sea,
Oh, your quaint retiring primness
Is a melody to me.

They play at being gypsies
When the red-winged blackbird nests;
Gay in gorgeous flower stitchery
And in verdant flounces dressed.
Bold and scandalous little gypsies,
Shaking petticoats at the sea,
Oh, your wild contagious witchery
Is a melody to me.

They play at being vampires
When the sun-scorched mustard dies;
Wrapped in leopard's skin alluring,
Tawny hues, 'neath burning skies.
Scented, languid little vampires
Lolling softly by the sea;
Oh, your drowsy, dusty luring
Is a melody to me.

Montana Wives

HORIZONS

I had to laugh,
For when she said it we were sitting by the door,
And straight down was the Fork
Twisting and turning and gleaming in the sun.
And then your eyes carried across to the purple bench
 beyond the river
With the Beartooth Mountains fairly screaming with
 light and blue and snow,
And fold and turn of rimrock and prairie as far as your
 eye could go.
And she says: “Dear Laura, sometimes I feel so sorry
 for you,
Shut away from everything—eating out your heart
 with loneliness.
When I think of my own full life I wish that you could
 share it.
Just pray for happier days to come and bear it.”

She goes back to Billings to her white stucco house,
And looks through net curtains at another white stucco
 house,
And a brick house,
And a yellow frame house,
And six trimmed poplar trees,

And little squares of shaved grass.

Oh, dear, she stared at me like I was daft.

I couldn't help it! I just laughed and laughed!

THE DRYLANDER'S DAUGHTER

He bought this place a month before we married,
And we have lived here now almost a year.
It's one of the best ranches in the valley,
The soil is fine—you don't have failures here.
It has a nice white painted house and the main
 highroad's near.

But I was raised upon a benchland claim,
Where the great waves of the sagebrush meet the sky,
And my heart hungers for the restless springtime
When the great gales are high,
Filling the chill air with mad rushing voices,
While black against the clouds the geese go by.

This is a quiet pretty little spot,
The water sings all day among my flowers,
And down in the cool pasture by the river
His blooded cattle doze away the hours,
While through the trees, beyond the hills, blue Castle
 Mountain towers.

But my heart leaps back to the great gray shoulders
Of shaggy benchland that I love the best,
And I remember all the frozen winters,
As end of day brought rest,
How dark and savage was the night with shadows
And a finger of green light along the west.

HOLLYHOCKS

If I could just get hollyhocks to grow.

Mis' Jensen, in the valley, has a garden.
They ran a ditch behind the house. She raises phlox,
And zinnias and sweetpeas and bachelor's buttons,
And by the fence great loads of hollyhocks.
She said that they would bloom where nothing grows,
And gave me seed for pink and white and rose.

I planted them and through the early summer
They grew like flowers back East, and sent out lots of
 shoots,
But when the drouth came on they never blossomed,
Just dried and shriveled up right to the roots.
At first I carried water every night,
But 'twant no good with dust and heat to fight.

See there they are against the fence—
Poor brown ghosts in a row.
Oh God, I think that I could stand the rest
If I could just get hollyhocks to grow!

Nora B. Cunningham

There's a Wide Sky

There's a wide sky where I live, and a sight of dawn
and sunset
Unhindered by my neighbor's roof, untangled in his
trees;
There's a quarter-hour more sunlight, when the town is
in the shadow;
There's a glimpse of rippled water, and a
blossom-scented breeze.

There's a little park to southward, slender elms and
flowering grasses
There's a faint and twisting pathway to the turnstile
yonder side;
There's a lilac-guarded gateway, hollyhocks and pinks
and poppies,
And a broad-leaved, spreading grape-vine, where the
purple clusters hide.

If you ask a dull acquaintance, he will probably inform
you
I've a shabby little dwelling out upon the edge of
town—
Oh, my flowers that wait to greet me when the office
day is over!
And my mother at the window in a lilac-colored
gown!

Virgil Geddes

Valley of Slew Grass

Today I am a valley of slew grass;
And spring freshets have flooded the valley
And laid my shining spears
All flat.

I will ride me over hills in the blue dawn tomorrow.
I will find me a blossom to stick in my coat.
I will find me my soul to remember.

Arching my back,
Jerking my points from succulent earth,
I will rise to meet tomorrow's sun;
Snap straight.

Lew Sarett

To a Dead Pembina Warrior

Killed by Indians in hostile territory and given by his enemies a tree-burial; i. e., wrapped in a bundle of birch bark and placed in the crotch of a tree.

Slumbering warrior-soul, afloat
Upon the seas of night,
In your ghostly birchen boat,
Anchored upon the black limb,
And etched against the white
Of the broken hunter's moon,—
O warrior-spirit, dark and dim,
Draped with festoon
Of moss, and shielded by lancing pines
That ring their ragged lines
Around the somber swamp,—
Sleep without fear in your birchen shroud,
Sleep with a heart secure and proud
In your ghostly chieftain's pomp.
Know that the iron-hearted mountain-ash
Lifts you with mighty arms
Up to the proud flash
Of the moon, holds you high
In the unconquered sky,
Safe in a starry cache,
Safe from the little harms
Of the little peoples of the earth.
Through soundless nights, with ghostly mirth

Echoing your crimson scalping-cry
From peak to brooding peak,
The lonely wolf will speak
Of your valiant deeds and many wars.
When white Bee-boan shall heap
His snowy avalanche—
Soft as the down of the Canada goose—
In tufted drifts and bars
On the black branch,
To keep you warm in winter-sleep,—
The wild feet of the stars,
Mirrored upon the frozen snow,
Will dance for you, row on row;
And when the hoary spruce
Bends on your head,
To whisper soft lullabies, to weep
Sweet songs for the dead,—
Lo! out of the white deep
Of night, the winter wind will sweep
Down on your birchen bed,
To wrap its arms about your clay,
To carry you away,
To the land of your desires,
To the country whence you came
Like a devastating flame,
Back to the country of your sires,
To a land of peaceful slumbers and friendly council
fires.

Babette Deutsch

Chess

We used the square verandah for a deck,
Holding our books and blankets on our knees:
Dusk took the stars in pawn till night said check;
The inland wind was strong with hidden seas.

You were half-stranger and half-friend, the same
One finds on shipboard, and our words were spray.
Till in your eyes I saw the ancient game
Was done, and I was mated with the day.

Edwine Behre

Sketches from the Tyrol—

MARCH NIGHT

Spill the golden liquor from the half-full wassail bowl of
the moon, oh gay wild March-wind!

Blow it across the sky as you have blown the foam
clouds!

Carouse above the silent streets, above the church
towers,

Until the stars go out upon your night of madness,
leaving you alone with the dawn.

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Sarah Bixby Smith

Blowing Grasses

I

In narrow Nuuanu
On this side the Pali,
Where mosses and green fern
Make velvet the walls of the valley
Always the wind blows,
Always the grass flows
In green waves and silver
Back to the lowland,
As though swept by the breath
Of the spirits that yearn
To return
Over the path they were driven to death.

II

In Santa Ysabel
On sunny days in summer
When the hot winds blow
All the pale gold grasses,
Ghosts of winter grasses,
Dance and curtsy low
Till all the rounded hillsides
Where the live oak grow
Seem to leap from base to crest
With running fairy flames
That rise and find no rest.

Dorothy Patterson

Telegraph Hill

A little house
On a sheltered hill
By the side of a wind-tossed sea

And behind me a city
Bright and gay
With twinkling lights
On its broad high way.
But the lights I love
Are gold by day,
Are the sun-kissed lights of the sea.

My little house
On the sheltered hill
By the side of the wind-tossed sea

Is just beyond where
The city's din
Draws love and life
And death within.
But the sounds reach me
So pale and thin
I think they are winds from the sea.

And the dreams I dream
In my sheltered house

By the side of the wind-tossed sea

Are dreams that come

With the rising tide

And end where the far

Sea horses ride.

They are tall as the city,

But far more wide,

As wide, as wide as my sea.

Glenn Ward Dresbach

Mountain Pasture

After the climb up the mountain side,
After we reached the leveled top
That was rimmed with cedars swayed in the wind,
It was not enough for us to stop
And look for long on the glories behind.
We crept through the cedars that cast their shade
On the edge of the little grassy glade.

Mountain pasture of grass and sun
And wild flowers peeking like fairies out
Of the swaying grass was waiting there,
And the whispers of cedars were all about
And musky sweetness was on the air.
We looked at each other and loved as we should,
There at the edge of the pasture and wood.

Long had the mountain pasture stored
Sweetness and richness from night and day. . . .
What pipes played and through what dances
Mad feet glimmered with us away?
What thrilled laughter and luring glances?
That then we seemed of them a part
And all was as memory stirred in the heart.

We turned faun's eyes to fauns that peered
Out of the shadows of cedars there,

And we stretched on the grass and warm was the place,
And my hands reached out and loosened your hair
That fell as my kisses covered your face.
And I was yours and you were mine—
New offerings at that golden shrine!

The Junk

Stubby nosed and lumbering,
Made of sturdy teak,
Hatches filled o'erflowing,
Her water-line low,
Patchy sail a-billowing,
Filling half the creek,
Moves the old junk creakingly,
Dignified and slow.

In her hold queer merchandise,
Jars of fiery “ju,”
Furs from old Manchuria,
Heaps of pearly rice,
Silks in bales, and pomaloes,
Apples from Cheefoo,
Black dates and pomegranates,
Oranges and spice.

Grinning crews of countrymen,
Naked to the waist,
Haul and grunt perspiringly,
Keeping tow-line tight.
Harken to the old lowdai,
“Hi, my men, make haste!
Extra pay for you, if we
Make Chinkiang tonight.”

So they haul in unison,
“Heeya, heeya, ho!”
Far across the rice fields
Their chant goes on the wind,—
Ahead, town lights are gleaming
As the sun sinks low;
Now their hearts are merry,
For the long road is behind.

Ben Field

The Passing of the Long Wharf at Port Los Angeles

The monster thing has lost its grip,
The giant's strength is all but gone.
No more the steamer and white-sailed ship
Shall seek that wharf and rise and dip
At noonday and at early dawn.

'Twas like the body of a seal
And spanned the waves, mile long and great,
A servant of the common weal,
Athrob with continental steel,
And ships that sought the western gate.

A golden spike was at the end—
The long wharf pointed to the sea
And typified a people's trend,
Where fertile lands and ocean blend
In elemental symphony.

Albert Edmund Trombly

The Log House

Weathered and gaunt but valiantly foursquare!
The rough-hewn cedar timbers of the floor,
The one room's mud-calked walls, its only door
And small high window, these have tongues that bear
Clear testimony to the things that were:
To keen far-leveled eyes, to arms that bore
Travail and tenderness, to faith at core
Too full of spacious skies to lodge despair.

We of the later race, shall floors we tread
Evoke warm shapes of us when we are dead?
What have we hewn whereby we may be told?
Our walls? We calk them not with mud—instead,
Hobbema trees, a Leonardo head
And sometimes through the chinks the wind blows cold.

Bernice Lesbia Kenyon

The Answering Heights

Shout at your sounding sea,
Fling it your loud laughter
It will never reply
As my hills reply to me,
Cry with answering cry,
And a last cry following after!

Stand on the sand and call!
Your tide will go on roaring
And breakers tell of a storm
With green and thundering fall;
My hills have a voice that is warm
With the softness of sun downpouring.

The curves of the answering heights
Hold a more distant wonder
Made of mirage and cloud,
And wavering northern lights,
And they will not speak aloud
With a dark voice of thunder;

But in the high thin air
They will answer your calling
With a soft golden sound,

And if you laugh, they will share
Your own loud joy with round
Repeated notes down-falling.

Bernard Raymund

On a Holiday

Oh to be free again! To know
Once more the cool embrace of winds, the shy
Caresses of the leaves about my feet,
The hemlock's sober kiss,—
All that I had forgotten long ago.

And yet I knew these lovers never die,
These winds, these leaves, these trees, they never can
forget,
Patient as rain-worn rocks beneath the sky
They only wait to give me—this!

Edna G. Henry

Trees Walking

When on dark starless roads I ride,
Grim, stalwart oaks step out to see;
And when I near my own hillside,
White birches run to welcome me.

In summer, when the long days wane,
Elms stroll against an orient sky,
While in the moonlit country lane,
Poplars in couples hurry by.

Bronze beeches, walking hand in hand,
With me climb glowing autumn slopes;
While serried ranks of cedars band
To march and fight for my lost hopes.

In God's cathedral, fragrant, dim,
The altars rise both far and free,
While pines swing censers high to Him
And open endless aisles for me.

Dorothy S. Lyndall

Eucalyptii Amygdalina

In driving through groves the trunks of many of the Eucalyptus trees, which have been stripped by the wind, loom up with a startling whiteness against the sombre green and brown of the other trees.

SHAMELESS ones!

Why are you here along the roadside,
Flaunting your bare limbs
To the gaze of careless passers?

You come from a family
Old and dignified,
Accustomed to the forms
Of staid convention.
They would be shocked and grieved
To see you here,
You wantons—

You, who have revelled
With the boisterous wind
Until your hair all disarrayed
Falls over your bare shoulders,
And your gowns are shredded to the waist—

Have you no thought
For the feelings of your family?

Rolla Prideaux

Point Loma

I will fill my eyes with hues of the sea,
Dyes from the rainbow's deeper side
Violet of the evening tide,
Blue of the noonday drift at rest,
Green of the lifting breaker's crest.
Like a jewel, I carry away with me
To the dun of heavy hills of clay,
To the dusty village, bleak and gray,
The gleam of the turquoise-throated sea.

I will fill my ears with sounds of the sea,
While on the rocks I dream alone;
Rhythmic dirge of the billows' moan,
Roll of the comber's surging might,
Hiss of the spendthrift's foamy flight.
Like sea-spoil, I carry away with me
To the din of toneless inland ways,
To the dull routine of stolid days,
The roar of the tiger-throated sea.

Comment

WITH this March number, *The Lyric West* completes its first year. The plan of a magazine of poetry for the West, which was just beginning to take shape a year ago, is now an accomplished fact. In very many ways, looking back over the past year, we feel that *The Lyric West* has justified its existence. Its long list of subscribers, most of them coming unsolicited from those who are interested in the magazine for its own sake and appreciate what it is trying to accomplish; its wide circulation in every part of our country, and even across the water; its many warm friends among readers, writers and critics of poetry; the fact that libraries, schools, colleges and clubs have placed it upon their reading tables and are using it in several cases as a textbook—all these things make the editors of *The Lyric West* feel that there was a need and a place for a magazine of this kind, and that it has found this place. During the past year we have come in touch with many new and delightful personalities; we have shaken hands across the continent with many fellow workers. We have gained a quickened faith in human nature, in the generosity and kindness of most people. We have proved that high purpose and steady effort are appreciated. Best of all, and nearest to our hearts, we have been able to bring before the reading public the work of many new writers and to waken interest in them. Many poems have been quoted from our pages with favorable comment.

In the coming year we wish to make the standard of *The Lyric West* higher in every way, until our published poems represent the best that our contributors have to offer. We want your best, we want your help in bringing the literary life of the great west to a fuller and freer development and a closer kinship and understanding of the highest standards of the East. If *The Lyric West* is filling a real need, then it should

have before it long years of growth and development. We want this to be the largest growth and fullest development possible.

What some of our friends have said of The Lyric West: "The Lyric West is printing some beautiful poetry and will, I am sure, become a real influence, not only on the Coast, but elsewhere."—Jessie B. Rittenhouse. "You have assembled in The Lyric West such striking distinction that I am glad for you from my heart." —ZONA GALE. "I have bought every number of The Lyric West and found beauty in every number."—Rupert Hughes. "Your Lyric West is thriving well. I hope it may always prosper as goldenly."—Anna Catherine Markham, Secretary, Poetry Society of America, New York, N. Y. "I am much pleased with The Lyric West and wish to congratulate you sincerely."—Charles Wharton Stork, Editor, Contemporary Verse.

The Lyric West is filling a real need, and if its present standard is maintained it will be a worthy medium for the literary expression of American poets.

Professor Richard Burton

Count me as the friend of as worthy an enterprise as your Lyric West. It deserves all sorts of prosperity and will doubtless have it.

Gene Stratton Porter

Notes

Miss Gwendolyn Haste, whose poem, "Montana Wives," appears in this issue, has just won the prize offered by The Nation. There were two prize winning poems chosen out of more than a thousand manuscripts submitted. One of the earliest poems of Miss Haste to be published, "The Stoic," appeared in The Lyric West for October. It is with a sense of personal loss that we have received word of the death of Roubaix de l'Abrie Richey, whose poem, "Streetscape," appeared in our January issue. Mr. Richey was an artist of rare promise, as well as a poet. His work in both lines was receiving the most favorable attention. He died in the City of Mexico, where he had gone to paint the atmosphere and scenery of the country. In his batiks, in his paintings, in his poetry and prose is that effort to subtly portray beauty and self-expression. He, himself, felt that he was just beginning to work out the finished product. His death is a great loss to all of these branches of Art, both in what he had done, and in what he was just on the eve of accomplishing.

Poems especially commended in the January and February issues are: "Dances of the Flame," by Edna Worthley Underwood; "Now Speak of Love No More," by Babette Deutsch; "Frost," by Grace Atherton Dennen; "Snow Nocturne," by Harold Vinal; "Fog," by Sarah Hammond Kelly, in the January issue. In the February number, the following: "Isolde," by Joseph Andrew Galahad; "Astral Stones," by Neal Gallatin; "Problem," by George Sterling; "Flower o' the Wind," by Wright Field; "To Eleanor from the City," by William Foster Elliott. Bernard Raymund is an instructor of English at Ohio State University. His home is in Columbus, Ohio. His poems have appeared in Poetry, The Midland and The New Republic. Albert Edmund Trombly lives in Texas, where he writes for The Nation, Midland, Poetry. A brilliant trio of young women

is found in Babette Deutsch, who is Mrs. Yarmolinsky; Bernice Lesbia Kenyon and Nora B. Cunningham. The first two live in New York and the last in Kansas and all are familiar names in the columns of poetry magazines. They have published widely within the last year or two, and making enviable reputations. We welcome them warmly to the pages of *The Lyric West*.