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NO. 1

The LYRIC WEST

A Magazine of American Verse



IN THIS ISSUE

Margaret Widdemer | Rosamond Eddy

Margaret Tod Ritter | Charlotte Joy Wilson

Pauline Barrington and others

COMMENT

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The Lyric West

Vol. III, No. 1

A Magazine Of Verse

April, 1923

Edited by Grace Atherton Dennen

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Margaret Widdemer

Hill Sunset

Leaning against the quiet western doorway
In the sweet wind
Here in rose-light your griefs are nearly out of mind:
Forget a while, for it is in your power,
All you have borne, and all you still shall miss:
What matter? There's no hour but this the present
 hour
And there is peace in this:

Here things seem nearly found that you may never
 find,
Things nearly seen that most may never see
By these bright steady hills that make their age old
 promise
Of rest and certainty:

The changing sunset burns to violet
While boughs arch black across, clearcut and beautiful
How can you not forget?
For still while Beauty lives, the world is light to bear,
And crippled dreams stand, straight and lovely in the
 silence,
And if a thing is dreamed, surely the dream may be
Alive somewhere!

Josephine van Dolzen Pease

A Carol of the Way

Whenever the crimson candles bloom
 Upon my Christmas tree,
And the little Christ Child is a Rose
 For all the world to see;
I needs must think how waxen white
 The Easter lilies be.

Whenever the holly berries burn
 Red above the snow,
And the little Christ Child is a Light
 For all the world to know;
I needs must think how pale toward Heaven
 The Easter candles show.

Whenever the joyful carols rise
 To God on Christmas day,
And the little Christ Child is a Prayer
 For all the world to say;
I needs must think what litanies
 The Easter anthems pray.

Josephine van Dolzen Pease

White Birches

The white birches walk across the Catskills.
Pluck me one for my bride's-boquet.
It shall be a ribbon of tulle
Among daisies, buttercups and devil's-paint-brush.

The white birches stand in the valleys.
The darkness drips purple from their branches.
Light me one for my bride's-candle
Slim, pale, virgin, among the shadows.

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Katherine Pope

Wild Lilacs in California

In hue and spread they show as haze upon the hills,
Or blur of bloom down-dropping to the rare-seen rills,
Fragrance elusive, leafiness soft and lush of tone—
Fairy, but prodigal, beyond all blossoms I have known.

Wright Field

The Soul of a Garden

There's something about a garden
That brings you close to God;
A leavening stir in the heart of things,
A song of the silent sod,
That one who lays his ear to earth,
With a listening of the soul
As well as the ear, will surely hear,
Unchanged as the ages roll!

There's something about a garden
That makes you pause and think,
That seems to hold you back awhile
From Eternity's yawning brink.
The onward rush of the surging years
Seems stilled for a little space,
As you bend the knee unconsciously
In a silent, holy place!

There's something about a garden
That gives your soul release,
That soothes and calms its troubled dreams,
And descends in a mellow peace,
Brushing your cheeks with soft dove-wings,
Wiping away your frown,
Something that laves you like warm sea-waves
Or the folds of an angel's gown!

There's something about a garden,
 With its aching soil that waits
For the tiller's hand and the goodly seed,
 And the hope that elevates
Mere drudgery to the height of Art,
 As you love and tend and care,
That makes you know why man must sow,
 And water the seeds with prayer!

There's something about a garden
 That you cannot put in words—

But it's there, in the scent of growing things,
 In the songs of mating birds;
It's there in the leaf and bursting bud,
 In the life that warms the clod—
The Spirit that dwells where the old Earth tells
 Her rosary to her God!

Virginia Taylor McCormick

I Remember

I remember evenings
Wrought with rose and gold;
Nights alive with hoar frost,
Mornings on the wold.

I remember springtimes
Flushed with bloom of haw;
Blue seas and grey skies
Are pictures that I saw.

But your radiant beauty,
Your white breast's gentle swell,
Make for me a memory
Indestructible!

Virginia Taylor McCormick

Awakening Garden

My garden stirs,—then wakes from quiet sleep
With little gasps of joy, . . . as if it knows
That singing through the land young April goes
Scattering new seeds, . . . laying on vale and steep
A warm and golden coverlet to keep
Alight the perfect flame that burns and blows
To beauty in the heart of summer's rose
The rose close-folded where the red shoots peep.

And I, who weep and call my vanished youth
In pity to return and bring me hope,
Caught in the silver net of April's rain
See clearly that the years come back in truth
Like glistening bits of a kaleidoscope,
For me to set the pattern straight again.

Helene Mullins

Prelude

You are the evening sun,
Filling the sky
With your passion-song.

And my hands
Are five-pointed stars
Straining to touch you. . . .

I stand alone
In the silent night,
Wanting you . . . wanting you . . .
And my heart is a
Queer-shaped bowl
Hoping for you to fall. . . .

Samuel Heller

The Stars Will Remember

The stars will remember,
I have sought long
Their quiet wisdom,
Their flame-deep song.

The stars will remember,
High overhead,
I have loved Heaven;
When I am dead.

Rosamond Eddy

Twilight Wonder

My poplar trees have drifted off
Into the endlessness of mist.
They slipped away without a sign
To keep some urgent, unknown tryst.

And now for joy I only have
The inarticulateness of rain.
By morning light, I wonder, will
My trees come floating back again.

Constance Lindsay Skinner

Swiya's Songs Beside Running Water

No. 1

SWIYA'S SPRING SONG

Red-throated Spring is calling me,
O Gamemanes Sotetc—man that I have loved
In the dark pine thatch beneath the falling snows;
Red-throated Spring is calling me by the brookside.
I hear his pipe of scarlet willows
Ruddy-shrilling through the wind,
With its thousand notes of flame
Piping to the young wild Dawn by the brookside.

O Man that I have loved,
In the dark pine thatch beneath the winter snow,
I must go!
For my silent songs have wakened
And my lips are thirsting for his kiss,
For the Kiss
Of red-throated Spring by the brookside;
And my heart is leaping from your hands,
O Gamemanes Sotetc,
With the sound of the blue ice cracking to his thousand
notes of flame.
I must go

Where his scarlet pipes are calling me,
To another mating—
In the arms of the young wild Dawn by the brookside!
Swiya—Earth. Gamemanes-Sotete—Old Man Winter. —Language
of a British Columbian Indian tribe.

SONG OF THE LONG RIVER

All day my songs
Sang beside the River,
Sang on my lips like my lover's kiss.
I asked no more.
"Tell me, how long, how long is the River
That flows on and on yet stays forever,
Bearing my songs Oh whither, whither?"

I said only:
*"When the starry wampum is offered,
When the twilight smoke signals
That the Woman, Swiya, camps beneath the willows;
And her tent of willows,
Red spring willows,
Is open—is open—open !
Will he come, the Man of Arrows,
Like a white hawk skimming
Down the circling path of waters,
Down the tide
Of the silver singing River,
That winds, and, winding, beckons,
Like a low-hung girdle round the hills?"*

I said only:
"Come! When the day is darkening,
Come, Swift and Wounding One, to my lips,
Where the two crimson wings,

The wings of my flying Songs, are folded.
The flesh of my songs is sweeter, O Wounding One,
Than wild turkeys:
Softer than feathers is Swiya's breast, swelling with
love.

Moor thy white canoe
By the running River
Till lily-picker Dawn shall pluck it
From the black-tipped clustering bull-rushes of night.
Leave the shallower tide
Of the silver singing River, for the deeper flowing;
Leap to the still-winged silence of thy mate!"

*When the starry wampum is offered,
When the twilight smoke signals
That the Woman, Swiya, camps beneath the willows;
And her tent of willows,
Red spring willows,
Is open—is open—open!—*

SONG OF THE FRUITFUL BREAST

Kitsilano, Spirit dwelling.
Dwelling in the waters!
Hear the song I sing beside the waters,
Running waters.
Lave my breast of darkness,
Bear away the burden,
The burden of its darkness,
Spirit dwelling.

Far—far

From between the feet of Mountain
Treading down the sky-path
Where the sod was wounded
By the arrowed star—
Come these waters, running waters,
Rippling soft and tepid
Like the hands of children,
Little creeping children
Feeling for the breast.

Kitsilano, Spirit dwelling!

Hear the song I sing
Of the Woman, Swiya, lonely—lonely by the waters.
From between the feet of Mountain
Treading down the sky-path,
Loose the arrowed star!
Where the sod is wounded,
Flood with living waters, rippling waters—
Soft and tepid hands of children,
Little creeping children

Kitsilano, Spirit dwelling,

Dwelling in the waters, running waters!
Lave my breast of darkness,
Bear away the burden,
The burden of its darkness—
Spirit dwelling!

Kitsilano, Spirit dwelling: Language of a British
Columbian Indian tribe.

Virginia Stait

The Vased Rose

The day is just as fair
As when my roots kept faith with sod and stone,
 For here—or there
I bear a torch that is not mine alone.
 In stillness, without rue,
I wait for hour by hour to do its will,
 To voice in hue
My words, from red to wan, that whisper still.
 And yet, perhaps somewhere,
This embered passion that was love and sun,
 Is made more fair,
And what was broken is a dream begun.

Antoinette DeCoursey Patterson

Persistent Errors

To this day do stupid mortals call them
fireflies—speaking
Of these sparks that prick the evening's grey—
When in truth they're flashlights of the fairies who are
seeking
Proper flowers in which to sleep and dream the night
away.
To this day do stupid mortals call the pansies flowers—
When the clearest fact of all clear things
Is the one that pansy beds throughout the summer
hours
Are the booths where butterflies buy all their velvet
wings.

Harriet Hall Shumaker

Seen in April

I saw him drop his ermine cloak today:
It fell upon the grass, the Mary-buds, and all the gay
array
Of Spring. I saw it fall
Soft over all—
Then naked, comfortless old Winter slipped away.
. . . The Sun came out, and between hopes and fears
Still laughed—But on Earth's upturned face were only
tears.

John Russell McCarthy

Under the Stars

So many worlds, dear heart, so far, so far—
And no faint answer to our questioning—
So many worlds and never one of them
That you and I may dare so much as dream of;
So many worlds, so very far away,
And yet, dear heart, how little do we care,
Here in our own small world, for all the myriad
Galaxies of suns! At least we know
That ours of all the heaven-full is best:
At times we're even sorry for the rest!

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John Russell McCarthy

Friends

A friend is one
Who asks nothing and gives all.

Your friend, the arbutus,
Is waiting for you
Beneath my friend, the oak.

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John Russell McCarthy

From Nowhere

The yellow butterflies that one by one
Waver from nowhere into meadows bright
Are more than worms with wings of satin spun:
They are the daughters of the dim star-light
And the pale moon-flower hiding from the sun,
Sister to death and lover of the night.

Ralph Parker Bishop

Words

My brain is panting,
I can't put my thoughts into words—
They look to me like jewelled lanterns
Blowing from the sun.
They look to me like the silver shawl the moon throws
Over the face of Night.
They look to me like gold strings
Hanging from a star.

Margaret Tod Ritter

An Etching—From Memory

Red roses,
A hand that closes
Its five white petals round my heart;
My heart!
A silver blade of moonlight and a boat,
Like some enchanted legend, set afloat
Upon enchanted waters. Thy two eyes,
Thy lips, thy hair,
And everywhere
The rain of stars.
Phantom-wise
Two bars
Of music down the wind;
Turning the spirit faint, the vision blind.
Recall the night?

Not—quite.

Dark grasses,
A step that passes
With fugitive intention; scarcely heard.
A sharp cessation of the thread-like sound
As though the midnight's crescent scythe had found
Its root and murdered it. But wait—
It stirs again
Lighter than rain,

Lighter than breath, than pulsing blood,
Lighter than flood
Of melody. Too late!
The bright moon stabs at emptiness, a ring
Of cedar rises dark and conquering
Impenetrable barrier of pine;
Thy white uplifted face, thy lips on mine,
Thy brow, thy throat, throbbing with joy and pain,
Thy lips again.

Was it not so?

No!—No!

Tall shutters,
A storm that mutters
Its diabolic prophecy of ill.
A door wrenched open and a lovely face
Framed like a gleaming opal in that place
Of desolation. Night of a thousand crimes,
A wind that climbs
The scale of terror. Thy two eyes,
Thy hair gold-spun,
Thy breast to lean upon.
Phantom-wise
A strangling moon
That sinks and rises from the black lagoon.
Night of a thousand wrongs,
A thousand miracles, a thousand songs.

Remember thou?

Yes—now.

Dorothy Page

La Naïve

Oh, I have seen a slim, young poplar tree
 Fling back the long, grey veil of April rain,
 Lift up new leaves to touch the air—refrain,
And pause to send a wondering look at me;

Half doubtful of her lacy-green array,
 Enchanting in her awkward innocence,
 And conscious of my gaze, she makes pretense
At dignity—until I glance away.

And then her fragile self is all a-stir—
 “O Wind!” she cries, “Come out—come on across
 The fields!” He comes with buoyant rush to toss
Her budding leaves into a silvery blur.

And spins her through a breathless, mad-cap pace,
 And when I turn, the boyish wind has fled,
 The poplar stands confused and droops her head,
And draws the veil of rain across her face.

Jessica Nelson North

Wheels and Wings

Four stories high,—
Four smoky windows in a smoky sky,—
Thus far our poverty and love have led us.
Our small room trembles when the trains go by.
The iron bed
Rocks like a cradle, and the dark world reels,
And below us and around
All day we hear the sound
Of wheels, wheels,—

Sometimes across our sky
An airplane hums.
It passes by,
And the sound of its engine comes
No louder than the beating of our hearts.

Have cheer, love, and rejoice.
These are wonderful things,
Wheels and wings.
What kingdom so remote,
What far bright destination of your choice,
What cloudy citadel of upper air
But some adventurous embassy is there?

All day below us in the market place,
Wheels roll sturdily in—

Wheels that turn swiftly, loyally around,
Laying their patient rims along the ground.
All day above us pass the wings that bear
The brave, adventurous nomads of the air.

Hearts know no barrier in days like these.
Free-roaming fancy travels where it will,
For look, love, neither wilderness nor hill,
Nor the four seas,
Nor all the skies with their uncharted span
Hold back the swift, undaunted soul of man.

N. Bryllion Fagin

To a Glass Door-knob

If I were you

I should not mind

The touch of rude, rough hands. . . .

I would think of the hours

When the sun's kiss

Transformed me

Into a throbbing prism. . . .

N. Bryllion Fagin

I Sometimes Gaze

I sometimes gaze at dahlias,
And in my mind I see
A field of daisies saying mass
Around a lonely tree.

I sometimes meet gladiolas,
While passing to and fro,
And then I see among the grass
A joy-white cadence blow.

Chrysanthemums and fragile peas
And orchids I have met,
And many lovely sights like these
Have made me not forget

A little scraggy field I knew
Above a hard plateau,
Where little daisies gaily grew—
But that was long ago.

Kinship

The bushes stretched kind hands to me,
As I went by.

I touched them soft and sisterly,
In passing by.

The noble trees bent gently down,
To give me shade,
“Rest, little sister from the town,”
They softly said.

The lifted sky smiled down at me,
From high above,
And sent my brother birds to me,
To sing of love.

And God was here and everywhere,
And I was one
With all that moves in earth and air,
'Neath the high sun.

Neeta Marquis

Twilight Song

The day was ripe of summertime, but night is fresh
with spring.

The moon peers through the sycamores, a slender,
girlish thing;

I hear the little mountain brook go by on silver feet,
The tinkle of its tuneful step most mystical and sweet,
As if the garments of young dreams brushed by with
rustlings fleet.

Upon the daytime of the heart, the glare of passion's
noon,

Such tender dusk sometimes descends, like April
following June,

When garish loves grow beautiful as brooks beneath
the moon.

Lucy Hale Sturges

Kwacho

SHOJI SAN

On the torii
The white cocks slept.
Who could see
If the princess wept?

When the hour grew late and the stars grew pale
She knelt among the maple leaves
And her hot tears fell on her embroidered sleeves;
Over the gate sang the nightingale.

The Shikibu were sleeping,
Why was the princess weeping?

On the torii
The white cocks slept.
Who could see
If the princess wept?

AYAME

Over the maple boughs
The cold March moon.
It is too soon
For vows.

And yet
The cuckoos call
And white plum blossoms fall. . . .
You may forget.

And when the scarlet peony
Tells us of June
You may be gone,
This much I see.

Over the maple boughs,
The cold March moon.
Is it too soon
For vows?

MOMIJI

Up the farthest hill
Izumi wanders, sighing,
Overhead,
Wild geese are crying.

A stag goes leaping
Through fields of purple clover.
Softly creeping,
Her bright dream over,
Izumi gathers maple leaves
To give her lover.

Margaret Ely Webb

Trails

High in the hills
The trails are flung
Like silver ribbons
Forgotten and washed pale.
But little feet
And shy wood eyes
Know every turn,
Each faded loop and streamer,
And spring by spring
The ribbons hold
Blue, rose and crimson
Flowers in a posy tied.

Charlotte Joy Wilson

Sleep

Sleep broods in my heart,
A quiet sea
Over which my love
Like a shining bird
Raises a snow breast
And stretches wide glad wings
Across the night
To brush your lips,
Returning to me with the dawn,
Your kiss on their tips.

The Revenant

I saw him first in April of this year—

The old sheep herder who lies buried here.
He slips among the poplars all day long.
I can see his streaming hair beyond the alders,
And “Lonely—lonely—lonely—” is his song.

They say that tending sheep was all he knew.
He’d been upon the range since seventy-two.
He got quite childish years before he died.
And spent the long days picking Black-eyed Susans,
And talking to the sheep dog at his side.

I hear him singing when the river calls.
I see his face at night when black rain falls
And the cottonwoods are lashed along the sky.
His peaked hat bobs up beyond the window,
And “Lonely—lonely—lonely—” is his cry.

Epitaph

There was a night, long watched for, when he heard
The startled whisper through his dreaming run,
And crept from his rough bed, and caught his gun,
While all the moonless dark about him stirred
With rustlings like a frightened wakeful bird.
Sharp throbbed his wounds before that night was done;
And when with bloody victory came the sun
He saw with flames his scanty acres furred.

Gone is the alien foe; the wolf is fled;
White placid houses cluster on that ground;
Glad children play where the wild arrow sped
Sweet tended roses hang above his mound.
Disturb him not in slumber, yours is sound
For that in younger years he waked and bled.

Hazel Farkasch

Alone

I am wasting my days
And my nights are tossed to the winds.
I am wearied and dulled
Of being alive, yet not living;
Of holding emotions in check
And attempting by boldest illusions
To harness my dreams to the stars—
Which, in their cold, placid orbits,
Will never acknowledge my being.

I am weary indeed of being myself
And alone!

Hazel Farkasch

Waiting

The pale moon slid behind a cloud
Hiding her face.
The stars withdrew
Into a misty sky
And a hazy silence
Clung to the rustling trees,
Stilling their tuneful whispers
With the hush of an expectant night.
All the earth waited.

We walked along the river bank together,
You and I.
The soft sod oozed beneath our feet,
And at our side
The waters rose and fell
Like quiet breathing of a woman's breast,
Waiting. . . .

Kate Blackman

Love's Departure

The night grew sickly-pale with pity for my unfolding
pain as you became unaware of my nearness.

The night was a ghostly mist when you left the quiver
of my shadowy smile.

Oh where have you hidden the radiance of the
midnight sky?

The moon wore the vacant stare of a blinded Cyclops as
you looked unseeingly upon me.

The moon was a transparent bulb of vapory sighs when
you absently smoothed my tousled hair,

O, what have you done with the golden laughter of the
midnight sky?

My body felt the tremor of a silver-stringed bow when
it snaps in twain.

Your strong steady hand carefully hid a stifled yawn.

Caroline Ainslie

Through the Storm

Soft footsteps press the meadow grass
And slender stalks of grain,
That sway and tremble as they pass,
Betray the scouts of rain.

A light stir lifts the drooping leaves,
As they expectant wait;
Born of a mighty rush the breeze
Bursts through the mountain gate.

Upon the wide-roofed porch rain-hosts
Their battering volleys hurl,
And driven hailstones through the posts,
Bewildered, pause and whirl.

Across the valley far below
Wind swept battalions ride;
And where they vanish row on row,
Fragments of cloud abide.

On sodden meadows, mourning yet,
Red-streaked twilight falls;
A frog croaks hoarsely in the wet—
A lonely robin calls.

Within, the leaping fireflame brings

In sudden light the room;
A radiance rests on homely things,
The rose-hung windows bloom.

Anna Porter

Moon Shadow

The moon peers idly down,
Seeking himself in the dark still pool,
But tonight he does not find himself
In the dappling shadows.
The moon-round face, upturned,
Is not his face,—
Not his the moon-white grace of rhythmic limb,
Breaking the dapples.
Is it a wind-moved lifeless form?
Is it a half-sleeping nymph in the shadowed water?

In the white light,
The alder-shadows dapple the wave
Like the sound of laughter.
In the pale light,
The shadowing dimples ripple her cheek
Like the sound of laughter.
The slow slight motion of limb
Hints at the close-sheathed strength of her,
The dimple's shadowy ripple
Tells of her spirit's light sweetness,
The dusky corals, beading the vibrant throat,
Speak for the pulsing heart of her.
Not lifeless form—not nymph.

The idling moon—
Tonight he does not see himself
In the dappled pool.

Nancy Buckley

“Laughter and Longing”

Laughter,—for the perfumed summer night,
For high desire—for the rare delight
Of comradeship that makes the silence sweet,
For joys that run to us on winged feet.

Longing,—for the slender shadowed dawn,
For elfin call of silver-fluted morn,
For roses red, bedewed with happy tears,
For just one hour of the vanished years.

Comment—Ezra Pound

Conducted by Pauline Barrington.

Poems 1918-21 including Three Portraits and Four Cantos. Boni and Liveright, New York.

I do not pretend to follow all his volts, jerks, sulks, balks, outbursts and jump-overs, but . . .” Mr. Ezra Pound said of Mr. Williams. I would say the same of Mr. Pound, continuing the “but,” Mr. Pound has been the sworn enemy of sentimental twaddle, clichés, the commonplace, puritanism, pollyannaism, babbetism et cetera. He has been the loyal champion, fighting the fight for the poets, by whom and through whom poetry has had its renaissance in the beginning of the twentieth century. He is continually asking the question, why James Joyce’s Ulysses, cannot be read by Americans, who may read freely Rabelais, Shakespeare and the Odyssey. He has upheld the hands of The Imagists and modern poets, who are trying to find new forms of expression. If he had closed the ivory gate of his tower against the warpath and tilting of windmills; if he had devoted all his energy to writing poetry, however, he might have given the world a better book of verse than POEMS 1918-21 including Three portraits and Four Cantos which, though it is not as good as Lustra or as interesting, is too good to miss reading.

CLARA

“At sixteen she was a potential celebrity
With a distaste for caresses,
She now writes me from a convent;
Her life is obscure and troubled;
Her second husband will not divorce her;
Her mind is, as ever, uncultivated,
And no issue presents itself.
She does not desire her children,
Or any more children.
Her ambition is vague and indefinite,
She will neither stay in, nor come out.”

His wide knowledge of language gives him the advantage of being able to read a fair part of the literature of the world in the original. He has plead long for an international interchange of literature and criticism, “English and French literature have stood in constant need of each other.” It would bring America, who has passed the monolingual stage, closer to a proper prospective. He would widen our horizon, push it back. Mr. Pound left Philadelphia to live in London, like Whistler he finds the artistic atmosphere there which he failed to find in America. He has some fine things in his books of prose: “A Study in French Poets.” His arrangement of an essay by Ernest Fenollosa, “The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry,” also “Translations of Greek,” his essays on Henry James and Remy de Gourmont are so splendid one wishes there were more. The continual alluding to this in Greek and that in French, the other in German or Italian; the too much quoting—one feels that though Mr. Pound is good, it is all a bit bewildering; he is so clever but not clever enough to be a genius. Some of his early poetry is lovely; this one for example: “I would bathe myself in strangeness;

These comforts heaped upon me, smother me!
I burn, I scald so for the new,
New friends, new faces,
Places!
Oh, to be out of this,
This that is all I wanted
—Save the new.
And this one:

An Immorality

“Sing we for love and idleness,
Naught else is worth the having.

Though I have been in many a land,
There is naught else in living.

Though rose-leaves die of grieving,
And I would rather have my sweet,

Than do high deeds in Hungary
To pass all men’s believing.

The Garden. En robe de parade. Samain.

Like a skein of loose silk blown against a wall
She walks by the railing of a path in Kensington
Gardens,
And she is dying piece-meal of a sort of emotional
anaemia.

And round about there is a rabble
Of the filthy, sturdy, unkillable infants of the very
 poor.
They shall inherit the earth.
In her is the end of breeding.
Her boredom is exquisite and excessive.
She would like some one to speak to her,
And is almost afraid that I will commit that
 indiscretion.

The world would have been a poorer place without Ezra Pound. He has looked deep down in the darkness and seen a glimpse of beauty, beyond life and death, beyond time; he has never been able to catch and hold it, never quite . . . the iron of frustration has entered his soul. There is a bitterness and an over-reaching after effect about most of his writing. We taste the bitterness and feel the bite of the iron. "Beauty in art reminds one what is worth while. I am not now speaking of shams. I mean beauty, not slither, not sentimentalising about beauty, not telling people that beauty is the proper respectable thing. I mean beauty. You don't argue about an April wind, you feel bucked up when you meet it. You feel bucked up when you come on a swift moving thought in Plato or on a fine line in a statue."—From *The Serious Artist*. It reminds me of a pen and ink drawing I have by Frederick Carter: The struggling mass of humanity is struggling upward, with outstretched clutching hands and straining backs, they have struggled a little above the surface of the earth and there is one who has pulled himself higher than the rest, though still held by the mass, who has lifted his head clear in the blazing sun and has wings of light about his head. Ezra Pound for all his struggling has not won the wings of light in the sun's high rays, but his stubborn back and stiffened shoulders have given brave

support to others. For all his brilliance and courage and knowledge of literature and a real talent (if he had happened to have what T. S. Elliot has, but what's the use of it) he has somehow, somewhere missed the geste.

—*Pauline Barrington.*

Marcel Proust

France knows so well how to treat her makers of literature. A whole number of *La Nouvelle Revue Francaise* is devoted to Marcel Proust who died in November. This strange man lived behind his cork walls in saturated silence, hating all natural objects as he loved the artificial. Classifying himself as an extreme example of the so-called “stream-of-consciousness” writers with the disinvolture of a man concerned with his own life—entitling his novels with absolute definition, “*A la recherche du temps perdu*.” His century was that from 1815 to 1914 and of that period of French life and manners he is the minute and meticulous chronicler—but in nuance—not in realisms. He remembers his childhood and tells of it in its aspects and effects—then leaps to other points of his life, building up about these unconscious self images a whole world of beauty, delicacy, and intricacy. Those who love to have their ideas properly tagged insist upon calling him the French Henry James—while he comes nearer the Joyces, Richardsons, and Sinclairs of English writing. There is much fuss as to his difficulty for non-French readers—but like all such objections it implies a lazy reader, for he can be quite perfectly understood if one has the desire and the intelligence. The first of his series, *Du cote de chez Swan*—has been translated under the title of *Swanns Way*—so that anyone who cares may know him to that degree—never of course a perfect one. Elizabeth Bibesco was one of the few women who loved and was loved by him and has left an exquisite account of a last visit. “I had been in America and he had written me those wonderful letters—like filet lace. He was ill and I went to visit him. The cold was so great that I felt like a fish being kept fresh. I was trying to express something very complicated. He smiled with half his mouth as he always smiled when his mind was giving you a benediction—“*Vous colonisez la langue Francaise*” he said. And I felt as I always

felt with him as if I walked into a pool—the pool of his personality in which one moved slowly and estatically, detached from life. Caught in his gleaming web, spinning ever further through the air on some thread of fancy, all the time you remained yourself because he loved you to be yourself, and because out of the abundance of his generosity he created you in his own image.”

—*Dorothea Moore.*

Notes

With this April number *The Lyric West* enters upon its third year. The past months have been filled with varied experiences, the making of new friends; the continued confidence and affection of the older ones; the kindly and helpful recognition of critics and poetry lovers; a constantly widening reading public. Best of all, there is the deepening assurance of the need and the mission of the magazine. The last year has seen the beginning and development of a poetic awakening throughout the entire west. In addition to the older, fully established names of the few distinguished poets of the Pacific Coast which we have heretofore recognized, there is now appearing a strong and individual group of younger poets who are interpreting the larger west of prairies and mountains and ranches and growing towns. Many of these young writers found their early recognition through *The Lyric West*, many of them will grow to be figures of national interest, the interpreters of the big spaces and the men and women who live in them. No more direct and vigorous poetry is being done in America just now. Another phase of this poetic development is the number of new magazines of poetry which have made their appearance within the year. *The Lariat* in the middle west, *Caprice* in Los Angeles, *Pegasus* in San Diego; *Palms* from still further south. Whether they all succeed in maintaining themselves and fulfilling their purpose, or not, they bear witness to the general awakening and eagerness of the west for self-expression. The coming year is full of promise. *The Lyric West* enters upon it gladly.

Among the books received this month we note gladly *Songs of Unrest* by Bernice Lesbia Kenyon, Charles Scribner's Sons. It is the first book of a young writer and shows much lyric beauty together with clearness of insight and unexpected knowledge of human nature. The *Songs of Unrest* interpret much of the restless and turbulent spirit of today.

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