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The LYRIC WEST

A Magazine of American Verse



IN THIS ISSUE

John Curtis Underwood | Addie Cropsey Hudson

Reed Williams | Jean Paine

Katherine G. Smith and others

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The Lyric West

Vol. III, No. 3

A Magazine Of Verse

June, 1923

Edited by Grace Atherton Dennen

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John Curtis Underwood

Interval

Shimmers of sunset showing through trees,
At the end of our garden where the hill
Goes down with the water in little ditches,
Are opal memories pale and still.

Easter lilies are small pale ghosts—
Stars in my wild syringa shine.
Splendid peonies nearly ended—
There is waste in this garden of mine.

Cactus flowers are faint yellow sparks
Lit at the ends of spiked stubborn leaves.
What is left is a smile on the face of a beggar
When men turn hard and the hours are thieves.

June was glad and scattered her gold,
She was as young as you or I.
She could go singing, lavishing life in her,
Just as we did in the days that die.

Little is left and I look at the stars
Cactus spikes in the sparks of night
This is a pause in the great world's growing,
And I feel like my garden faint and slight.

I look at twilight after the stars,

Hearing water flowing; a little laughing moon
Is a silver smile on a face that sees farther,
Something is growing from this ending of June.

George Sterling

The Flight

'Twas night when I hurried
From out her ancient house,
With the slim girl, the shy girl,
Who fainted for a mouse.

Troubadour was I,
And proud o' blood was she.
Were we seen and overtaken,
Swords had crossed in me.

Dark were the towers behind us,
And dark the hills ahead;
Morning seemed long a-coming,
The night that we fled.

It found us half-spent,
And far had we to go.
I was glad of our weariness,
She leaned upon me so.

We took no breathing-space
Upon our upward path:
From the blue plain below us
I felt her father's wrath.

And fast were we winning

To the refuge far and high,
When Ralph du Mont came down the road,
With sword upon his thigh.

“Ha! cursed thief!”
And “Ha! thou hawk!” cried he.
“Dost think to seek thy nest,
With quarry such as she?”

Down from his stallion
He swept like a flame;
Like a flame from the scabbard
His long sword came.

The blade that I wore
Snapped on his own.
Prone on the greensward
I felt myself thrown.

I felt his great hands
Close on my throat
Far away and farther, farther,
The world began to float. . . .

The world went out in mist,
And I knew that I had died;
And the last sound I heard
Was a far voice that cried.

Long I lay, who knew not
How long I had lain.

Sound by sound and touch by touch
The world came back again.

Her hair was dark about me,
And my head was in her lap.
Soft she wept who saved our love
From so sore mishap.

I lifted up my head,
Struck by a sudden fear.
His own sword in his throat,
Ralph du Mont lay near.

She who had thrust it there,
Quietly she cried:
It was the only sound I heard
Upon the green hillside. . . .

With my kinsmen of the mountains
I have built a fair house,
For the shy girl, the brave girl,
Who fainted for a mouse.

Norma Miller

June Midnight

Stardust and jasmine—
Under the moon
A fountain laughs softly—
Midnight in June.
Perfume of wind flower,
Lilies' white sheen,
Sweet honeysuckle,
Dew on the green,
Mockingbird serenades,
Sun dial white,
Soft swish of tree-tops
Singing at night.
Stardust and jasmine—
Under the moon—
A fountain laughs softly—
Midnight in June.

Marion C. Kells

My Crown

When Spring was young and laughing, white-limbed
May

Shook from her hair the April showers clinging,
And wreathed it with bright grass and blossoming
spray,

I loved you thru the spendthrift hours, winging
Unweighted as the secrets of a child.

—For then I did not know . . .

I did not know that love could ever talk with sorrow,
I did not know that love had pledged away tomorrow.

I hear the sobbing of the summer rain,
Cooling the fields of yellow thirsting wheat,
Drenching the roses spilled with crimson stain;
These, too, we might have loved together, Sweet.
But even in my empty loneliness,
It is enough to know
A crown of pain's strange peace was given me, a crown
I wear since that grey lonely morn I let you go.

Beth Cheney Nichols

Spring Budding

Throw wide the pane, let in the song
Of bluebird in the apple tree,
And breezes whispering all day long
The violet's secret place to me.

I'll brush the hearth, and sweep the floor,
And hang the window-curtains white;
But oh, the lilacs by the door
Disturb my plans and reason quite.

Tomorrow I will set my room
With bassinet and downy spread
But now, the purple lilac bloom,
Persistent, turn my heart and head.

Oh, who could hold a sober mind
When secret hopes, so soon to flower,
Are given by lilacs to the wind
And scattered on the passing hour?

Elinor Manning Prescott

The Swallow

From out the sky, a long, grey line,
The swallows fly through rain and mist;
Their pointed wings outstretched and free,
Their satin bodies water-kissed.

O Swallow, give to me your faith,
Your zeal to live from day to day;
Your trust in God in rain or shine,
Your winging flight through gold or grey.

Idella Purnell

Poetry

I follow a white road over purple mountains,
Into green caverns where cool waters are,
Here I bend above them, curve my hand for drinking,
And find in my fingers the splendor of a star.

Oh, I never thought thus to have a star for drinking!
And its fragrance fills me with gladness and content,
And its beauty shakes me, so that I am awestruck,
And sink to the green moss, wearily, spent.

Slow in the fire of my brain a wonder spreads,
And I see a mighty army, with light about their heads,
Marching in a solemn and ecstatic tune
To the high regions of a great yellow moon.

O, sight too terrible for tears! I start awake, and cry,
“Alas, alas! for mighty dreams, when I am only I!”

And following the white road across the purple
 mountain,
And taking the highroad of common-place again,
I wander from my dream-world, till at last I find me
Back in the little town of men.

Idella Purnell

Noon Song

“A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and
streams from Lebanon.”

The summer now had come in her old dress,
Yet ever new, and filled with loveliness,
With ruffled pink and white on clear green boughs,
And the dishevelled gold upon her brows
Where young acacia trees, grown amorous,
Had kissed her hair: silken and luminous.
So one mid-day, grown indolent, your eyes
Forgot to hedge about with flowered lies
The tranquil pool wherein I saw my face.
Beloved, oh, beloved, your strange grace
That moment grew all intimate and dear,
And there was no more doubting, no more fear.
There was but calm assurance and content.
I watched you, then, as splendidly, you spent
Your loveliness. The summer on each breeze
Cast equal favors to the festive trees,
But of them all, I knew there must be one
Received her fullest fancy, halcyon.
And so I waited. . . . You would turn to me
As summer to her most beloved tree.

William Griffith

Ideal

Secret—she has never been known,
Save as days may be known by the hours.
By herself, she has been too alone,
As are strange jungle flowers.

Alone—she has ever been near
As the hours that are shaping the day,
Yea, as days that are making the year
Green or golden or gray.

Bereft—she has wept, and been heard
Pleading peace on the lips of a shell.
(Beauty rarely by thunder is stirred,
But may thrill to a bell.)

Betrayed—she is frail, she is vain;
Mona Lisa once taught her to smile
She is something that Dives would fain
Have had tarry awhile.

R. Helyn Martin

Failure

I made a poem.

Its measures marched

Like tiny metal soldiers all in time.

It should have been a scrap of tapestry

Ravelled at the ends.

Addie Cropsey Hudson

The Singing Trail

There's a silver crescent swinging
In the purple of the West;
There's a pine-harped breeze that's singing
To an echo in my breast,
For my heart is filled with gladness as I ride along the
trail;
And the coyote up the canyon might be just a
nightingale
As the hoof-beats of my pony
Measure music such as this:
When he walks I hear a murmur,
I kiss,
I kiss,
I kiss.
Then I urge him to a gallop,
Just to change the melody,
And it comes, a joyous cadence,
Juana Lou is loving me;
Juana Lou is loving me.

Up the way I once thought dreary;
Sliding rock and shifting shale;
Snowbanked miles, a pony weary,
Piercing wind and pelting hail;
By the lake so often gloomy—God! how changed the
world can be—

Now the lake is mirrored heaven and the whole trail
sings to me

As the hoof-beats of my pony

Measure music such as this:

When he walks I hear a murmur,

I kiss,

I kiss,

I kiss.

Then I spur him to a gallop,

Just to change the melody,

And it comes, a joyous cadence,

Juana Lou is loving me,

Juana Lou is loving me.

Stars of heaven, you are doubled

In Earth's mirror—lake and sea—

But the waters, when they're troubled,

I can liken unto me

Failing to reflect perfection, tempest tossed by human
sins;

But a promise seems to beckon and I know that heaven
wins

When the hoof-beats of my pony

Measure music such as this:

As he walks I hear a murmur,

I kiss,

I kiss,

I kiss.

Then I urge him to a gallop,

Just to change the melody,

And it comes, a joyous cadence,
Juana Lou is loving me;
Juana Lou is loving me.

William Foster Elliot

Desert Dusk

Isled here a moment from the rising swell
Of night that brims these canyons like a sea,
I watch the desert's brazen savagery
Levelled like lands that mighty waters quell.
Stern is this touch, yet merciful its spell,
Which can so soothe the wind-tormented sands,
And make a temple of these outcast lands,
Where for a night the peace of God may dwell.

Vain were a Noah! Yet this flood foreshows
End of a life through deserts come to age;
The closing down of eyes that vainly weep;
That gracious respite which the spirit knows,
Summoned from passion's tyranny and rage
To taste the larger dignity of sleep.

John Northern Hilliard

Romance

What matter if we never fare
Beyond our own horizons dim?
Romance, the old Arch-Mage, will bear
Us sea and land apace with him.

A turn of page and we're away
For Fez or Bagdad, Singapore;
Hull down the seas for Mandalay,
With care behind and love before.

When summer parches, lo! the pines
And tamaracks they sing to us;
When winter pickets our confines,
The fronded palms they swing to us.

At morn—in bed or chair a-wing—
We set at naught or sea or land;
We take our tiffin at Tai-Ping,
We rest at noon in Samarkand.

We're leagues away when twilight falls,
On the great quest of Otherwhere;
We hear the temple bells, the calls
Of swart muezzins at their prayer.

At night we watch the desert stars

Unfold like blossoms, one by one,
Above the splintered shards and bars
Of Nineveh and Babylon. . . .

Ah, some day, when we two have drawn
The final, ineffectual breath,
And have set out across the dawn
On the Adventure men call Death,

Then, dear, it may be you and I—
Gypsies of Time, adventuring far
Across the frontiers of the sky
On the old trails from star to star—

Shall find Romance to lead us still,
Setting each night his signal fire
To lure us, with the ancient thrill,
Down all the Lands of Heart's Desire.

Elvira Foote

Redolence

I stand and look at my bed of poppies;
The warm noon wind sways them ever so little;
They blaze and gleam in the sunshine—
Blood-red, strange purple, and fierce bright yellow.
They plunge through my eyes to my soul,
And I am delirious with their color.
Above them pale blue butterflies lazily drift and hover;
Their silly wings move so idly,
They can not know sound, nor color, nor sunlight;
They have no loves to remember and so they are happy.

. . .

Have they breathed from the warm black hearts of my
poppies
Some old mysterious fragrance
Which forever puts an end to longing?
Oh, then let me gather the flaming blossoms!
I shall crush them tight in my fingers,
Bury my face in their fading petals,
Close to my lips press their unvexed hearts,
And pray that the happy oblivion
Fill me and permeate both mind and body,
Stilling my restless blood and the prisoned spirit
within me.

Then might I walk unfeeling and never again be
troubled
With that strange pain which hurts so,
When I look on the face of beauty.

Elizabeth G. Coatsworth

The Mystic

Everywhere there are hills and mountains, fields,
forests, rivers and lakes;
Jovial mountains with wide-spread knees, mountains
that sleep with an elbow over their faces,
Prophets whose mantles fall straight from their
shoulders,
Woman mountains with their fingers on their lips and
the hills held to their breasts,
Mountains that crouch and wait, mountains that pray
with folded palms;
And then there are the lakes that curl in hollows,
sleepy and lazy,
Warming their backs in the sunlight, breathing slowly,
And forests that gather together in families and clans
and peoples,
And the supple rivers with long blue hair
That dance to the sound of their anklets in the
meadows,
Or rush screaming and howling through the chasms,
Their torn draperies whipped back from their
shoulders—
Let a man pick his friends among the realities
And he will never know disillusionment,

The soul of a man cannot fail who puts his hand in the
 sinewy hand of a field,
Or bends his head to listen to a birch,
Or meets the austere regard of a mountain.

Georgia Rowles

Tankas

LILACS

I love the lilacs,
Blooming in an old garden;
Their purple fragrance
A book of precious poems
Writ on leaves of amethyst.

YOU GAVE ME A ROSE

You gave me a rose
And now all the year is June.
In vain Winter's snow—
I think of you in roses,
Rich roses of Damascus.

Mary Sintou Leitch

The Secret

The woods have their secrets but I know one of them!
I have surprised a little pool among the cold bare trees,
 Silent as moon-light lying
On the chill marble of a Venetian palace court-yard.
The winter, stripping the woods of their sheltering
 leaves,
 Betrayed its hiding-place.
So peaceful was it, I felt a rude intruder
And crept away treading softly on the soft pine-needles.
It was a little pond but it held in its bosom a vast
 stillness
 And the shadows of three cedars.

Dixie McCarty

The Ride

The endless trail winds over the plain,
The smell of sage brush after rain,
A sheep camp fire on the mountain side,
A starry night, and I ride, and ride.

Twirling romal, with stinging rap,
Straining cinch, and latigo strap,
Squeak of saddle, and clank of spurs,
Out of the brush the sage hen whirs.

Fresh on the cheeks the wind's wild rush,
A snake that glides away in the brush,
Far in the hills the wailing notes,
Singing the woes of the gray coyotes.

A desert night, and the nameless things,
That the wind and thudding hoofbeat brings,
Enter my heart, and that silent land
Is speaking, so I can understand.

Frank Ernest Hill

The Pass

The way goes up in dusk and cold
Amid the granite litter of the heights.
It climbs; the peaks press round it and enfold,
Shunting the sun in frosty lights
From snow to granite, granite back to snow.
The stumbling horses go
Ant-like among the rocks. Water seeps through
Debris of slopes, and makes
Under gray walls, gray lakes.

No air is here to breathe, sunlight falls dead,
Under the gray lake waters gleam
Gray rocks, like dead men,—jagged rocks that seem
Another moment, knives on which men bled.
There is a torrent under walls
That make a shadow till high noon;
Snow masks the charging flood, the waters sink
Under its crust; their roar becomes a croon.
Men test the top, the horses turn white balls
Of eyes away, and snort upon the brink.

You lured us up with spray-drenched pine,
Rainbows of foam, and cliff-hung columbine;
You give scant breath,
White skies, and snow
With torrents and the knives of rocks beneath.

We could have sung below
With gladness for the glory that you spread;
Now we must chant of walls to storm instead.
You promised an escape. We turned swift feet
To follow swifter hopes. We found in you
The hardness, the surprises, the deceit
Of a way through.

Reed Williams

Lines on a Piece of White Paper

Virgin foundation of a dream,
Inviting resting place for passing thoughts,
The butterflies of fancy.

Dream building butterflies.
Alone or grouped they flutter from the mind
And soon pass into darkness and are lost.
But let one settle on the snowy field
And others come and cluster at his side
To weave strange patterns with their colored wings
And build the dream,
The thing that cannot die.

Gordon Malherbe Hillman

Lucile

Shout it down the centuries, call it down the years,
” Hush the throb of drum-beats, couch the sullen
spears,
Whisper through the darkness; thunder through the
dawn,
Sound the crashing trumpets,—Lucile is coming on!

Shout it down the ages where the dim mists swirled,
Roar it through the caverns of a half forgotten world,
Ninevah and Ophir, Tyre and Babylon!
Stem the path of progress,—Lucile is coming on!

Pile the gold that glitters, pile the gold that gleams,
Bring the wares of romance, the stuffs of hidden
dreams,
Bring the silks and velvets, silver and saffron!
Bow in silent homage,—Lucile is coming on!

Robert Louis Burgess

I Rejoice That the Swallow

I rejoice that the swallow flies well without caring

Whether I praise her or not;

I am glad such strength is splendidly faring

Regardless of my taking thought.

For I have not strength to be lord of one feeling,

Surely not lord of her flight.

Thank God that the swallow goes endlessly wheeling,

Ignoring my weakness outright.

Floyd Meredith

Sacrifice

But—You loved her!”

I cried, after he had told me
He was off on a trip somewhere,
To hunt big game.

“Does that matter?”

He sighed. “It wasn’t to be,
You see—I played fair
After—my chum came.”

Men are a queer mixture,
But when ties are old,
I think Friendship the holiest
Thing the years hold.

Floyd Meredith

Heritage

Oh, you were garbed in modern clothes,
Chic, and fair to view,
Yet the throbbing soul of Egypt,
Shone through the eyes of you;

And you spoke in a modern tongue,
Yet underneath each word
The voice of age-old wisdom,
Was the voice I heard;

And though you do not wear the dress
Egyptian maidens wore,
I think your strictly modern clothes,
Have told me more;

And though your words, soft-spoken,
Are wise, or sad, or gay,
What tells me most about you,
Is what you do not say.

S. Omar Barker

Foreknowledge

Well if the brook can babble and sing,
And the pines only sigh,
That's not such a puzzling thing—
I can tell you why:

Daybreak brings to the gipsy clown
New paths for his rills,
But the pines see the sun swing up and down
Over changeless hills.

Brooks tumble along and never foresee
Their joys or tears,
But the pines have known what is to be
For years and years.

Edith Miniter

Flanders Field—Today

So still it is, the honey bee
His buzz is as the great army.

So peaceful it, the poppy's glow
Heart pierces, as a sudden blow.

So cheerful that a withered leaf
Becomes a very present grief.

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Mary Brennan Clapp

Honey 3300 Years Old

(Tutankhamen)

Fragrance unfading, from immemorial hours,
Gold of some summer's long-forgotten light,
Harvest of bees from the unwithholding flowers,
Garnered by slaves to make a king's tomb bright!

Oh my Beloved! When I am dead,
Place in my casket a little golden song,
Honey-sweet with rapture of vows our lips have said,
For whose renewal no waiting is too long.

Agnes M. Miall

To a Portrait

Within your frame, cold and sedate
(Photographers you always hate
And will not deign for them to don
Your smile so gay to look upon)
You gaze with honest eyes and true.
(No black and white can show their blue).
About your forehead, half a frown
Gives firmness to you, looking down,
And visitors, with easy grace,
Say, “What an earnest, steadfast face!”

That is by day. The night shades fall
About your portrait on the wall;
The babblers, with their casual talk
Drift homeward down the gravel walk.
Peace, lamp-lit, follows for a while,
And then,—I look, and see you smile!
The air of hidden force and stress
Merges in dreamy tenderness;
Gaiety into blue eyes slips,
And dimples laugh about your lips.

I cannot think, as others might,
It is some trick of candle light;
Comes secretly, when we’re alone,
The you that only I have known.

Andred W. Bunch

Sacrament

I

Dogwood,
Creamy-eyed dogwood,
A thicket of leafy branches
Hanging over the hilly ledges of rock,
With eager, peering eyes
In white, fluttering faces
That gleam like sallow stars:
But, no, not dogwood.

II

Calypso,
Single calypso,
A delicate, elfin orchid,
Emerging from the mosses of a somber wood
Calypso,
With exquisite pungence,
A tincture pinkly tinged,
An ethereal, ephemeral ether:
But, no, not calypso.

III

Violets,
Faint-blue violets
In half-hidden clumps,
Straining slender stems through fissured rock.
Violets,
Such fervid little flowers,
I'd creep with bleeding knees
To find them in sterile, stoney places:
Yes, violets, for violets are for love.

Jean Paine

A Worshipper

Other failures grieve because they were robbed of
 accomplishment
By greying hair of circumstance,
But I, who am young, was robbed by such little things
 as these:
The pagan chorus of blue-green waves against a
 complaining beach;
The inimitableness of a tiger-lily sheathed by its
 spearlike leaves;
An infant moon rocking in an ivory cradle.
Marveling at the perfection of these,
I forsook my ambition to be a creator, a god.

Let others sing or paint poor copies—
I am content to be a worshipper of the originals.

Ben Field

Winged Victory

Winged Victory!

I stand and gaze on thee

And in a dream

I see, I see

Old Thrace,

The Thrace of long ago.

Entranced I climb her crags

And wander to and fro

Amongst her marble fanes.

O Samothrace!

What is thy secret dim?

What is thy mystery?

Unveil thy face,

Give love for love

And as I cry to Greece, to Troy,

To men and Gods of centuries dead,

Touch thou my lifted head

And let me see

Winged Victory.

Susan Thompson

Prairie Night

Among the beautiful things that seek
Their being in the night,
And kind as all eternity
Is the prairie reaching silently
Under the wakeful brilliance
Of a quivering, gay starlight.

Of all the whispering hues that breathe
Their secrets to the morn
The quietest hue is that which creeps
Over the land while the prairie sleeps
And lends its vagrant colors
To the softening gray of dawn.

Susan Thompson,

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Pauline Garner Curran

A Lighthouse

The moon is a lighthouse
On the sea of night
For argosies of laughter and of love.
The winds climb the steep steps
To polish her so bright.
A little cloud floats round her like a dove.

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Pauline Garner Curran

Neisan

The koto loom is on the floor,
Her fingers weave a pattern gay
Across the strings,—my ear perceives
Hotaru, Little Fire-fly.

Pauline Garner Curran

Shadows

On the paper shoji rests a shadow,
A woman's head in grief upon her arms.
I would the shadows were all on paper
And none upon her life.

Marjorie Loomis Cherry

A Ride

The wind-shield misted with the rain,
The roofs of homes amid the trees,
Then sunshine thru the clouds again,
White petals falling with the breeze.

A little town thru which we pass,
A poor man trudging by alone,
Long shadows on the orchard grass,
A red flower by a graveyard stone.

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Vera Heathman Cole

An Offering

A dull sky over mountains of dark gray,
Orchards, just budding in soft pink and white,
The silver lake where deep cloud shadows stray,
And once, a scudding flock of geese in flight
Before the misty breath of coming rain. . . .
An offering like still hours after pain.

Martha Webster

A Wash-Piece

I will wring my linen out of clean water,
I will hang it out to the clear red sun;
I will bring my linen in
White and dried-hot before
Dew-dusk comes on.

Blue and cream blankets,
Sheets and cased pillows, too;
I will spread them all round me
When stars fill my window;
And wrapt in sweet covers.
Breathe deep a sky-fragrancy
The wind poured through them,

The sun burnt in on them
Before the dusk-dew—
Fresh linen, pure linen,
Sweeter linen than new!

Edith Gutterson

Yellow Acacia

I sat me down
Under a yellow acacia in bloom
In order to observe
And imbibe wisdom.
And as I looked up into the branches
I found that each tiny spray
Was a quaint lady
Dressed in a quilted gown
Of gold brocade
With a lacey grey parasol
Atilt the sun.
Now who can imbibe wisdom
When quaint ladies
In gold brocade
Are dancing stately minuets
In the sun.

Comment—The Dream

Conducted by Pauline Barrington.

By John Masfield.

The Macmillan Company. New York. 1922.

Weary with many thoughts I went to bed
And lay for hours staring at the night,
Thinking of all the millions of the dead
Who died, for all their power and delight,
For all their love, and never came again,
Never, for all our crying, all our pain.

This is the first verse of *The Dream* by John Masfield. As he lay sorrowing, music came to him and he walked apart in a dream. He gloried as he went, leaving trouble and finding beauty with a bright heart and quiet face. The dream unrolls like a bolt of shining ribbon and it seems we too enter a long gallery, ghostly and medieval, where the dream is stretched along the wall, a golden arras with its woven story of a castle “mighty and fair,” “the walls were i’carven with delight like stone become alive. . . .” “The woven chivalry” of swords and old armour, spears and steel gloves; old banners drooped and frayed, now, “housed the little mouse with pointed ears”; “the most intense souls painted in their joy” whose thoughts made their brows bright, as though they wore a jewelled crown; an old court of gray stone, old panels with their carven texts, dim passages and doors, beyond which one might meet a friend, and old music, all “dead long before.” A great bull paced by a brook wreaking his rage on the upturned sod. Along the worn gold of the arras came woven knights “in colored silks the running stag to harass” followed by lovely faces and “pictures came of water in a great sheet like flame;” cliffs and trees and water “in terror” and caves dim where the sound of water is “like sound in sleep.” “The walls change from toppling sea . . .

on which a ship emerging . . . to harvest fields, whose corn, all golden ripe and ready to be shorn by sunburnt reapers singing staves." Once again the walls changed to dark and wandering caves "where men on anvils fiery secrets learned." The great Daniel, "in wisest age . . . deep in the red and black of books immerst" into which "all these forms of thought and myriads more, passed, smiled at having such great store All red and black as many as the sand, Studded with crystals, clasped with many a band Of hammered steel. I saw him standing there. After I woke his pleasure filled the air." And so *The Dream* ends and like most dreams, it leaves a delicious feeling of languid sadness and terror, of the fay land of chivalry which, though so far away in the past, is in the very marrow of our bones today. John Masefield was born in Ledbury, Hertfordshire, 1878. His father was a lawyer. When very young Masefield took to the sea and became a wanderer. The results of his wanderings are to be found in his books; novels, plays, crude, beautiful, marvelous, tragic, brutal poems of the sea. No one today or since Chaucer and Shakespeare has equaled his narrative poems. His high colored realism, physical exulting and spiritual exaltation are the stuff from which literature is made. *The Everlasting Mercy*, *The Widow in the Bye Street*, *The Daffodil Fields* and *Dauber* are four of the most remarkable rhymed narrative poems written by a poet of today or any day for that matter. The wealth of descriptions brutal and human; the wild thrill of the awful storm, when *Dauber* goes around the Horn, only to drop from the foretopgallant yard to the deck, crushed, in sight of the end of the voyage!—He who went to sea, that he might paint her in all her beauty, but filled with agonizing fear of her, to be afraid, horribly afraid and then finally to win his mates' respect; "to be ranked as man however much he painted." And as he lay broken on the deck, The pain was stunning him, the wind went by. . . . They glowed, the great storm glowed, the

sails, the mast. "It will go on," he cried aloud, and passed. No country but England could have made a Masfield. The salt wind of the sea has blown his spirit; the beat of the surf is one with the throb of his heart. He knows intimately the unlit alleys and waterways of cities and the dangerous and nameless out posts of civilization. The earth will grow cold falling into the abyss of lost stars, the sun will lose its light, drowning in a night of dead suns, but in the words of Dauber,— "It will go on!"—

—*Pauline Barrington.*

A Garland of Lyrics

Last Poems, by A. E. Housman.

Henry Holt. New York. 1922.

Mr. A. E. Housman in his youth published a single slender volume of flawless songs, *A Shropshire Lad*. For more than a quarter of a century, the poet has been silent, while the professor of Latin studying and editing the MSS. of minor Latin poets, has become probably the greatest living classical scholar. Now the silence of twenty-seven years is broken and the appearance of a little book of forty-one lyrics has been the literary event of the year in English poetry on both sides of the Atlantic. Housman calls his new volume *Last Poems*. It is really a continuation of *A Shropshire Lad*, for he says in his tiny foreword that most of the poems belong to that period. *A Shropshire Lad* reflected the disillusionment of the late nineties, and the same note in *Last Poems* fits in curiously well with our own after the war days of profound disillusionment. *A Shropshire Lad* and *Last Poems* will stand as most perfect embodiment of pathetic defiance, "the little bible of the spirits who know no god but sleep." The themes which Mr. Housman uses are few, and are among the most ancient themes of life. Mr. Housman seems consciously to have limited his form as well as his themes, and has confined himself to obvious and quite formal patterns. His magic lies in the unexpected turn of the simple phrase, and in the perfection of an economy that not even the Greek anthology transcended. The late Sir Walter Raleigh used to point to "With rue my heart is laden For golden friends I had, For many a rose-lipt maiden And many a lightfoot lad. "By brooks too broad for leaping The lightfoot boys are laid; The rose-lipt girls are sleeping In fields where roses fade." as the nearest approach in all of English literature to the classical spirit. Perhaps there is nothing quite so poignantly beautiful in the present volume as those lyrics we know so well: "Loveliest of

trees, the cherry now,” or “When I was one-and-twenty,” or quite so perfect as “To an Athlete Dying Young,” and “When I watch the living meet.” But how well “Oh stay at home and plough, my lad,” “The land and not the sea,” and “Star and Coronal and Bell” would have fitted into that first volume. And Eight o’clock with its atmosphere of mortal tragedy so perfectly rendered in eight lines, can well stand beside.

“Farewell to barn and stack and tree.”

“He stood and heard the steeple

Sprinkle the quarters on the morning town

One, two, three, four, to market-place and people

It tossed them down.

“Strapped, noosed, nighing his hour,

He stood and counted them and cursed his luck;

And then the clock collected in the tower,

Its strength, and struck.”

The Lancer reveals the power of Housman’s irony, and epitomizes by inference the deplorable madness of war and its romantic clutch upon youth.

Four poems strike a slightly new note. These are Epithalamium, The Oracle, Hell Gate, and that magnificent lyric, “West and away the wheels of darkness roll.”

From the preface—

“We’ll to the woods no more,

The laurels all are cut,

The boughs are bare of bay,

That once the muses wore,

a paraphrase of Theodore de Barvilles

“Nous n’irons plus au bois,

Les lauriers sont coupes”

to the last verse of the last poem,
“The lofty shade advances,
I fetch my flute and play:
Come lads, and learn the dances,
And praise the tune today.
“Tomorrow, more’s the pity,
Away we both must hie,
To air the ditty,
And to earth I.”

The new volume is worthy of a place beside the earlier book of imperishable lyrics. Higher praise is scarcely possible.

—*Katherine G. Smith.*

Books Received

Selected Poems by George Sterling. Henry Holt and Co., New York. The poems which comprise this volume have been selected from Mr. Sterling's published books of verse; *The Testimony of the Suns*, *A Wine of Wizardy*, *The House of Orchids*, *Beyond the Breakers*, *The Caged Eagle*, *Sails and Mirage*; also from the dramatic poems, *Lilith*, *Rosamund*, *Truth*. They comprise what Mr. Sterling feels to be his best work, those poems in which his mature judgment recognizes enduring values. It is very interesting to read these pages and follow the poet's fine, discriminating taste in his selections which result in a collection of rare beauty, the gems of a large and felicitous output.

Magic Flame and Other Poems, by Robert Haven Schauffler, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, Mass., \$1.50. This volume contains all of Mr. Schauffler's best poems, rigorously selected from his two first books, and combined with his new poems, *The Magic Flame* and others. It is an outstanding collection of vigorous verse, filled with passion and sounding the notes of human experience, both joyful and tragic. There is a haunting music in the lines.

A Prayer Rug, by Jessica Nelson North, from the press of Will Ransom, Chicago. A first volume of a young author whose work shows distinction and promise. In it we find echoes of a great city, rather than the oftener sung beauties of wood and field. The love poems especially have a fresh delicacy of touch.

Fringe, by Pearl Andelson, from the press of Will Ransom, Chicago.

Notes

The next issue of *The Lyric West* will be the double July-August number and will appear about July 20th. It will contain the work of many writers whose poems have given pleasure to our readers and are always warmly welcome in our pages, also some special articles of poetic criticism and appreciation. The July-August edition of last year was exhausted within a week of publication. An especially large edition has been provided for this year and it is hoped that all who want extra copies may be supplied. It would be well to apply early. We have decided to abandon the brighter tints of our outside covers with their suggestion of being "in colors of the West," and to appear soberly in our present neutral-tinted outer garment. Perhaps it is better not to imitate the chameleon—and thus avoid giving any effect of instability or light-mindedness.

Announcement from The Poetry Review, London, England

The Bartlett Prize — Fifty Dollars for a Sonnet on the Sea

To mark the inception of the American Section of The Poetry Review, our American Editor offers fifty dollars in competition for a sonnet on the most English of subjects, the Sea,—a subject, however, that since Swinburne's day has received curiously little attention from English verse.

While the subject is essentially an English one, the United States, like the United Kingdom, has thousands of miles of sea coast on the Atlantic and the Pacific; and the subject may appeal most strongly to writers remote from any ocean and stimulate the imagination of the Middle West more effectively than the minds of coast dwellers.

Anyhow the competition is not restricted to either United States or Great Britain, and to enable distant readers to enter on equal terms the closing date will be not earlier than July 25th. We hope this will encourage entries from India, Japan, Australia, Fiji, China, the Society Islands, Honolulu and wherever else we have readers within the seven seas.

MSS. must be addressed to the New York office of the Poetry Review (Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett, 27 West 67th St.), the envelopes identified by the words "Sea Sonnet" being written on the top left hand corner. A Board of Adjudicators will assist Our American Editor in making the awards.

As the Mss. submitted in competition cannot be returned, contributors should keep a copy of their poems.