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JULY-AUGUST 1923

NO. 4

The
LYRIC WEST

A Magazine of American Verse



IN THIS ISSUE

Mary Sinton Leitch | Mary Cormack McDougall

Mary Carolyn Davies | John R. McCarthy

Ethelean Tyson Gaw and others

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The Lyric West

Vol. III, No. 4

A Magazine Of Verse

July-August, 1923

Edited by Grace Atherton Dennen

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Double Summer Number

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Mary Sinton Leitch

Now I Shall March

Because the star that once had led the Wise Men
To Bethlehem's manger had grown dim and pale,
And cross was borne no longer against crescent,
Nor knights fared forth to seek the Holy Grail,
I broke my pilgrim's staff and sheathed in sadness
My sword beside my tarnished coat of mail.

But Beauty came and, pitiful, anointing
With tender hands my eyelids and my eyes,
She led me through sweet woods by dreaming waters
Till these were parted and I saw arise
Excalibur that flashed the ancient challenge
In mystic fire against the darkening skies.

Now I shall march with marching stars to battle,
Unfaltering still shall sound my bugle-call
Across the vales of doubt and disillusion
For Beauty I shall fight, for Beauty fall;—
The crimson rose, the bud of the arbutus,
The warbler's wing, the thrush's madrigal.

Narcisse Wood

Tapestry

The flowers that grow on Delphi's stones,
For bright Apollo's sake,
I saw them in a dream once
But they haunt me still awake.

To tell the tale of flowers
It takes a summer's day
And how they creep and cluster
To make their god's house gay.

The silver-fingered bell-flowers,
With trumpet throats milk-white
Were dark wine spilt in the shadow
And purple stars in the light.

The poppies that shed hot petals,
Their heart's blood, scarlet on grey,
With a reckless gesture of glory,
They flung their beauty away.

Like warriors stood the scabious,
Their helmets tufted with blue,
Through the grass at their feet, the coral
Pimpernel eyes looked through.

Strange love-in-a-mist I saw there,

Gladiolus like sunset skies,
And lemon and lavender vetches
With cargoes of butterflies.

And stalwart broad gold daisies,
Made with the sun's own face,
Stared and stared at their image
In that flower-worshipped place.

Clinton Scollard

A Pacific Dayfall

While failed the amber afternoon
There was the moon, the pallid moon,
 Watching the westering of the sun;
It poised, it hung above the brown
Bare hills, the riven hills that crown
 The beaches of Concepcion.

It saw the sun dip crimsonly
Into the bosom of the sea,
 Like a gigantic barque of fire;
Then gradually it too became
A radiant flame, a golden flame,
 The symbol of supreme desire.

It seemed to call the slumbering sea
That woke to sudden rhapsody
 (Major and minor merged in one)
In answer, and with rhythmic hand
Played on the harp-strings of the sand—
 The beaches of Concepcion.

Virginia Lyne Tunstall

Credo

The woods in summer are to me
My sermon, and my psaltery,
And myriad witnesses to God
The crowding blades which spread the sod.

Though my cathedral sounds no bell,
Nor trembles with an organ's swell,
My faith has built an altar there
And benediction fills the air.

Wherever trees have skyward grown,
There may I take, and take alone,
Communion at that table, spread
With peace, the sacramental bread.

Henrietta C. Barr

A Dune Song

I am the sand:

Toy of the waves,
Toy of the wind,
Toy of the child.
Voiceless am I.
Hear ye my song.

I am alive though you cannot see,
I have a song though you cannot hear.
Gently I move to the lullaby
Of waves soft lapping, and who shall fear?
Gaily I dance in the summer breeze,
Lightly I slip through the child's soft hand.
Clean and shining and safe am I.
I am the sand.

I am the sand:
Master of trees,
Master of towns,
Master of men.
Voiceless am I.
Attend ye my song.

Shrieking of winds and moaning of trees,
Crashing of waves 'neath the gray sky's arch,
Hear them and tremble thou impotent man,

For the silent, the pitiless sand dunes march.
I wrap in a shroud both cities and trees;
Against infinite patience strength cannot stand;
Death and oblivion march with me.
 I am the sand.

Edna G. Henry

Hesperoyucca

Green March yet lingered with his rain,
When April, mystic spinner, set
A distaff tall upon the plain
And wove a wondrous net.

When many-colored April fled,
Bright Summer's soldiers marched abreast
All through the parching river-bed
And climbed the low hill's crest.

And then the purple mountain-slope
She dressed with candles waxen white,
God's candles, lighted for man's hope,
Pale flames upon the height.

Distaff, soldier, candle, thou,
White yucca of my homesick heart!
Thy fairy bells ring for me now
Though seas hold us apart.

David Morton

One Guest

When you—who were like twilight in a wood,
So thronged with shadows and cool note on note—
Entered the crowded, blazing room, and stood,
Puzzled and strange and curiously remote,—
To me there came a sense of hot days ending
In ferny hollows dipping for a pool,
And wet stones placed to mark the pathway's wending
Through cloistral chambers that were hushed and
cool.

The music stirred again. . . . the dance was calling.
But I had found a secret way to run
Through dim, invisible doors where dusk was falling,—
And out beneath the stars I went with one
Who climbed a long, dark hill beyond the town,
Wearing her twilight coolness like a gown.

Grace Clementine Howes

The Mountains

Like as the answer to a summons
They gather from the mist—
First, the grey, solitary peaks,
Grim, silent skirmishers,
Then crowding, tumbling, shouldering one another,
Till at the still Word of High Command,
They swing into martial rank on rank:
Titanic hosts white-helmeted,
Wheeling out from the shrouded North,
Scanning horizons beyond the moon
And marching down the continents.

Valor ribbons of rainbow,
Banners of silvering rain
Stream from their shoulders,
And the eagle rides on their bayoneted crags.
Sunrise and sunset invest them
With immortalities of beauty
And the stars by night
Are the blown sparks of their campfires
Fanned by the winds.

Though earthquake and avalanche,
And flame-riven summit
Cannonade their invincible advance,
And the enveloping storms

Roll their dark cloud-barrage
Rent by the lightnings.

Yet, held close
Against the mountains' mighty heart,
Unheedful of the snows
Or of the terrors that sweep over them,
Frail, star-eyed flowers
Of bewildering color
And profusion
Nestle lovingly,
And the man-hunted beasts and birds of earth
Find peace
Beneath their broad, green forest-shields.

Abigail Cresson

Distance

My house has many windows
Open to the sun;
I do not draw a curtain
At a single one.

My house has many windows,
But, be warned, my dear,
Although you may look in them,
Do not come too near.

Lest the magic of me turn
Suddenly too plain—
Be contented with the sun
On the window pane.

Abigail Cresson

My Field

My field is growing thick with weeds—
I cannot burn it over—
The yellow colt's foot, carraway,
The pink and white of clover.

White onions should be growing here,
Potatoes, greens and peas—
All sturdy, satisfying things,
Not useless, such as these—

The wind sways down on dancing feet,
How sweet the clovers smell!
Yet for this folly I may starve
Next winter—Who can tell?

Raymond Alvin Berry

The Buoys of Prayer

O Bark of Fancy, home again from far adventurous
sailing,
What are the seas which you have skimmed since
sunset coals burnt low?
What are the sights which you have seen 'twixt dusk
and daylight's paling,
That make your crew so starry-eyed, beneath white
sails that glow
Still filled with puffs of restless air, that move them to
and fro?

Oh we have furrowed a midnight waste where silver
foam was splashing,
Down haunted leagues of surging swell upon an
unknown main,
Past battered Argosies of Hope with wave-drenched
watchlights flashing,
Were lost for aye 'mid wreck of dreams in Silence's vast
domain
And only the rockets of men's Ideals have guided us
back again.

Then once we saw a raging surf and felt a strange wind
blowing
That fanned our spirits into flame and made us bold to
dare

An untried land, where mysteries dwell, beyond man's
power of knowing
And then were driven back again, through fogs of gray
despair
Until we heard by shores of home, the deep-toned
buoys of prayer.

Mary Cormack McDougall

A Woman's Song

The Lord God painted the sunset
And hung it against the sky
The Lord God tore up the great ribbed rocks
And flung them mountain high:

And I have ruffled the thin white lawn
To curtain the window pane,
And I have mended the broken wall
Uncertain against the rain.

The Lord God measured the great green sea,
And counted its heart in hours,
He sent His forked fire from Heaven
To bring Him a chart of the flowers.

And I have made a rainbow thing
For a quilt on the worn old bed,
And I have drawn a magic ring
Where gentle words are said.

God made the world while lightnings played
Below the purple dome;
And under a roof I have made
The miracle of Home.

Anne Lloyd

My Iris Army

An iris army flanks my garden walks

 In gay platoons of purple, gold and blue,
As down the wind they march on slender stalks,
 I see green sabres flashing into view.

And sometimes drenched with light the soldiers
stand—

 Ah, then of loveliness I take my fill!—
Majestically waiting a command,
 With ranks at rest, and every helmet still.

But oh, I dread the night a certain tune

 Will bugle through my garden, with the tramp
Of flower-footsteps vanishing too soon,
 To tell me that my army's breaking camp!

A Tragedy

The sky a vast bright space
With molten sunshine, filled,
Quivering with Life and Love.

And one soft, fluffy cloud,
Of dainty shell-like pink,
So young, so sweet, so inexperienced,
Alone and undefended,
Beautiful.

The eager love of coming Day
Encircles her,
Close, greedy, warm, and soft.
His arms embrace, compel,
Glad, splendid in his strength.

The sky is empty,
Not a cloud in all the wide
Sun filled expanse.
The Day, full grown and satisfied,
Moves on,
A conquering god
Among the worlds.

Harold Herbert Rogers

To Fay

I have seen in your eyes
The loveliness of April things.
Though grave and wise,
They hold
A restless Beauty, as white wings
Flashing in morning sun-gold.

They keep, unstirred,
The hushed peace of after-rain, blue dusk,
When there is heard
Only a sweet, clear piping,
Dripping
From a silver-throated bird.

Jack Hyatt, Jr.

Steps on the Stair

It is so quiet here, now
One might think
This house deserted.

Comes a patter
Of bare feet on the stairs
And two tiny arms
Steal about my neck.

The stairs creak . . . that third step
 from the top
 always did creak. . . .
Grey-haired, brown-eyed,
Thin, bent-shouldered,
Comes mother
Tottering a bit, her
Hand groping for the rail;
She smiles
And the blazing chandeliers
Fade under rippling sunshine.

Firm then
Comes a step, ponderous,
None the less quiet;
Father. . . .
With his queer sideward step

As he used to descend,
Sword clanking at his side
In '61.

A silence
And then like thistle-down
Blown on a summer's wind
You come, dear girl,
And others, my friends, and all,

Say you, my own, are dead,
Yet I have but to sit here
. ANE lite with you « « and you; gteps on the stairs.

Jack Hyatt, jr.

Faith Baldwin

The Street of Fine Houses

I saw her, dragging limply down the street,
The street where rows of brownstone houses look
From curtained eyes, and wear, like some dim jewel,
Traditional indifference.

She was old,
And scarcely woman, scarcely flesh and blood;
Bone, merely, and a little, withered skin;
A shape, half-human, barely garmented
A body, like an outworn apron, fit
For quick discarding. . . . Hardly fit to walk
With us, the Others, on this cleanly street . . .
Yet—she had known youth, and she had known
Joy in the sunlight, sorrow in the rain;
Had sensed the great simplicities; the love
Of God; the fear of hurt; the need for bread;
Had dreamed a little; lain in some man's arms,
Felt the slow crouch of elemental things,
Borne children; watched them die; grown old.
All this she knew, perhaps recalls it yet,
There's nothing left, save Death, for her to learn;
And even that, vicariously, she knows.
We'll not know more, in time, we passersby,
We other women, when we reach the end.

Wright Field

Impressions

Out of the narrow night
Shutting me in, swathing me close—
In smothering ebon folds,
Where little sounds
Shake and affright me. . . .
Into the wide, white day,
Opening out, like a golden flower,
Into a hundred petals of light,
Where little sounds
Calm and delight me. . . .

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Belle Turnbull

A Woman's Diary

1

All the lazy afternoon
Under my purple beach-parasol
I heard the slow waves lap and croon,
Lap and croon.
The wise wind whispered me a rune:
Peace is all.

A new man called last night.
'Twas formal, quite!
We spoke of books;
Frenchwomen's looks;
A mutual friend, whose courtesy
Requested him to visit me;
Books, books again
(He's all books, then?)
Conrad's queer style—
And all the while
A mad rip-tide,
Racing outside,
Boomed.
Hissed. . . .
Boomed. . . .

3

When I met, yesterday, my young lover
 (Blue-chinned now),
 And we rattled the bones of the dead past over,
 Found that vow
 Fallen away from about the hoard,
 A snapped band,
 We were both of us thoroughly bored.
 . . « Understand,
 I am heartily glad to be done
 With it all;
 Content with the sand and the sun
 And my beach-parasol.

4

He is not all books, it seems—
 (But I wish—I wish he were!)
 His lips are quicksilver,
 Racing along the streams
 Of my beating veins. Tonight
 He tipped my head far back
 To find the haunted track
 Where Aldebaran burns white—
 And then, full on my mouth,
 Pulsed that deep kiss—As well
 Resist as try to quell
 A cloudburst after drouth.

I hate the sea. . . .

Can it be
The restlessness that is in me,
Made manifest relentlessly?
Is the sea nothing but a mood,
Never subdued?

Morning, I thought, is the time to face
 Sentiment, in a prosy place
 (I was undone by a star.)
 So I arranged to go in to town,
 Wearing my least becoming gown;
 And we met in the Model's waiting-room,
 Brisk and sunny and all abloom
 With rosy women, west-coast bred.

“Oh, these are sweet,” I said,
 “And I so mountain-tanned,
 So scarred with living, and
 So fearful to be stirred!
 My peace. . . .”

He scarcely heard.

He interrupted me,
 Speaking quite savagely:
 “When the South Sea women are free
 Loosed to love—they wear
 Hibiscus in their hair.

But you, lest love befall—
 That greatest gift of all—
 Run to put up a wall.
 You sickeningly prate
 Of peace, who were born my mate.

Are you a woman, you!

Or a bloodless image? Pooh!
I wish to God you were
A South Sea islander!"
Then he strode off on a darkening gust
Of anger. I saw his big shoulders thrust
Into the elevator throng.
Was that today? How long!

7

I will go back to where that Squaw in stone
Lies on the mountain ridge to watch alone
The marching stars deploy above her face
I will outmatch her calmness with my own.

8

From all my feckless flight
One thing to learn:
Aldebaran,
Whichever way I turn,
Burns on the night.

. . « If I should pocket pride—
Heed your behest,
Aldebaran—
Follow a star-path west,
Home, to his side. . .

How will he look, this evening, if I wear
A red hibiscus blossom in my hair?

Marion Ethel Hamilton

Phyllis

She is like an English garden;
Her eyes are dewey lilacs in late April;
Her cheeks are the petals of pink roses,
And her mouth is a red carnation.
Her breath is the fragrance of mignonette;
Her voice is young and silver,
And her laugh is ringing
And ripples like the river
Flowing back of the garden.
She is sweet and serene and restful,—
Like an English garden.

Mary Carolyn Davies

A Week-End Dance

They danced at Waterloo,
My ancestors, so I am told,
On that gay, bold,
Brussels night that history's made well-known
"There was a sound of revelry by night"—
"Her beauty and her chivalry and bright
The lamps shone on fair women and brave men"—
They were there, then,
Those officers whose blood has made my own.

They fought at Waterloo
But they danced, the two,
"Jones"—"Hugh"—
Welsh names! Welsh courage! As I dance tonight
The music says "Her chivalry and bright
The lamps"—What did you say? I couldn't hear?
The music sounds so strident and so clear:
"And Belgium's capital had gathered then."
"The lamps shone on fair women and brave men."
The time repeats, the words throb through the air.
You press my hand; I feel you kiss my hair
And yet it isn't you I'm seeing there.
Not you whose arms about me grow more tight—
"There was a sound of revelry by night."

Mary Graham Lund

At My Window

Far listening spaces,
Strange sweet fragrance of dark,
Pale patches of moonlight
Like favorite pictures
Against a restful dark wall.

My eyes rest on the pictures;
I bathe my forehead in the narcotic fragrance;
I speak to the listening spaces
What I might not say
All the day.

Nora B. Cunningham

Earth's Sweetness

I sometimes wonder if all earth's sweetness—

The wild, sweet mystery of the spring,
The deep-toned summer's divine completeness,
Autumn's flaming and flashing fleetness—
Profit the soul in its wandering.

Days have been when the whole earth quivered

With radiant rapture too keen to bear—
Cold, pure nights when the white stars shivered,
Golden sunsets from storm delivered,
Twilights holy and hushed as prayer.

But the fair dream fades and the wild joy wavers

And the light recedes on the farther hills,
Again the voice of the commonplace quavers
Through faery fancies, and dull life savors
Naught of the cup enchantment fills.

But a pitch-black midnight ablaze with pain

Through which my unstayed soul made way,
Losing its grief in a larger gain
Blossoms with beauty within my brain,
And shall sweeten my dying day.

The Haunted Ring

The old log ranch house by the chattering river
Is empty in the fields that no one tills.
The wild rose and the alder crowd its sills,
The giant cottonwoods around it shiver.
The roof is fallen, and the noisy wind
Sucks through the cracks and bangs the broken door,
The field mice rustle on the dusty floor,
The windows gape like sockets of the blind.
Within that whispering place of shadowy dreams
A magic circle of enchantment lies.
Once more the far wolf howls, the panther screams,
We hear again faint savage battle cries.
See, where the dry grass stirs in the wind's breath
Dim bodies lie in the long thrall of death.

The Archbishop's Garden

Behind a high, sun-baked adobe wall
In the old, old city of Santa Fe
Lies the archbishop's garden.

The sun and the wind have their will here,
The doves strut and preen on the gravelled paths
The old sun dial marks the tranquil hours
The bees woo the languid flowers.

It lies so still, this garden;
Like an enchanted dream of emerald and jade
No sound but the faint sound of the fountain
And the mournful voices of the doves.

Sometimes in the purple evening
A monk comes into the garden alone.
He wears the brown habit of St. Francis of Assisi,
The doves do not fear him. They follow him as they
 once followed St. Francis.
He walks with his eyes on the distant Sangre de
 Christi mountains,
His heart given to prayer.

Behind a high, sun-baked adobe wall
In the old, old city of Santa Fe
Lies the archbishop's garden.

Joseph T. Shipley

By Night

The boat came down the river like a grim
Old dowager, sailing grandly thru the scene,
Necklace of diamonds, earrings red and green,
No longer very stately, but with dim
Memory of command, that makes her still
Obeyed. Was it the revel of a slim
Maple she veered to, or the surging hymn
Of an oak? The silent laughter of the hill

Stirred in her youth's re-echoing, the fire
Of youth, and quick renewal of desire;
Then like a meteor by a Titan hurled
She flashed a sudden searching blaze of light,
Cut like a swordblade thru the shield of night
And bared the heart of wonder to the world.

Alice Rogers Hager

Remembered

“Lens and Loos and La Bassee”—

Hear them, half a world away,

Singing softly, singing yet

Names the heart cannot forget:

“Lens and Loos and La Bassee.”

Vimy of the bloody crown,

With its torn Christ shaken down;

Fleury, Mons, and La Tourelle,

Sadly as a passing bell,

Dead church-bells from Monchy-town.

Here a sunny garden lay:

—Ghostly blossoms, whist, away!

See you not that men have found

Your sweet close a burial ground?

Would you wreathe with phantom grace

Such a rueful, ghastly place?

Or, memorial, do you bend,

Silent flower to silent friend?

Tears are not enough for you;

Only work that builds anew;

Builds the wall for budding tree;

Builds small houses tenderly,

Homes where mothering care may shrine

Your meek services divine,

And recount for hours of need
Mortal love's immortal deed—
Lest the brave names pass away:
 “Lens and Loos and La Bassee.”

Margaret Tod Ritter

Sonata Pathetique

The galleon-sun sways idly on its keel
Lipped by the songs of that empyreal tide
Whose shores are night and day; whose waves are dyed
With purpling hyacinth, cobalt, vermeil.
I turn my eyes from those slow-pulsing sails
To your glad face. Dear heart, that you should be
So utterly oblivious of me.
Slow minutes throb away, the voiceless gales
Suck at the anchor buried in my breast
Dragging it free. And now the great ship thrills
From stem to stern; the main-sail leaps and fills
With eager winds. Into the flaming West
It turns, plowing the burnished waves apart,
Leaving the sword of midnight in my heart.

Rolfe Humphries

Solitary

I like the time of day that brings
All kinds of lonely evening things:
Lavender hills where shadows go,
Darkly purple, very slow;
Colors for which there are no words;
Grey thunder-clouds on mountains; birds
Lost in the distance, sadly calling;
The sound of water, falling, falling;
The vague night breeze that smells of rain
And stirs the quiet lake again,
Ruffling the surface, not controlling
Long swells that come, a slowly rolling
Faint reminiscence of the way
The wind was blowing through the day.

And people rare of soul, unique,
Too lonely, wise and proud to speak.

John R. McCarthy

A Grey Day

No glory on the waters, love,
No sun-ships sailing free,—
Only the ancient murmur,
And the mist, and the sea.

The gulls have gone to dreaming, love,
Of old, forgotten days,—
Only the sea is singing
On the rocks, in the bays.

No heralds of tomorrow, love,
No gleam on sea nor land,—
Only the dreary breakers,
And the kelp, and the sand.

No glory on the waters, love,
No gold within the blue,—
Only the song of ages
For me, for you.

Katherine Howard

Coast Range

What giant sport was this that set the mountains
 romping porpoise fashion—
Laughing until the streams ran down their sides—
May be 'twas here that God pitched quoits with Adam
 while Eve looked on and smiled—
Then were the flowers born—such flowers—
For Eve looked on and smiled.
May be 'twas here He rested in the afternoons
Lying along the couch of flowers that Eve had spread
 and West winds cooled His brow
And Adam listened to His wisdom while Eve looked on
 and smiled.

Claribel Weeks Avery

Cinderella

“The Prince has come and brings the golden shoe.
Come, Cinderella!” But I run away
And hide among the evening shadows, blue
Save where the parting steps of lovely Day
Have left a dewy silver like a star,
As love has left its red upon my cheek.
I dare not venture where my sisters are—
If you would find me, Prince, you needs must seek!

Among the roses, not beside the hearth,
I choose to wait my fortune and my mate,
Flung on the bosom of the friendly earth,
Whose shadows screen me, for the moon is late.
But stars are hurrying out to be your guides—
They know the place where Cinderella hides!

Lillian Rogers

The Italian Church in Chinatown

In the half light the plaster saints looked down,
And yellow tapers glowed with still, gold flame;
Lone worshippers, with moving lips and hands
And silent beads, invoked the sacred name.

I knelt before Saint Paul and thought a prayer,
And poured out all I never dared confess;
Then lit a golden candle at his shrine,
And set it there to bring you happiness.

The waxen flame long since has flickered out;
The dusk, the beads and I—gone are we all;
But in the empty church my burning thoughts
Still beat their wings before the sacred Paul.

Martha Banning Thomas

Reward

And I will sing through centuries
Of other stars and men,
Until I hear your muted voice
Come answering again;

And I will kiss your lonely mouth
Those thousand years away,
And we will laugh a little while,
And maybe we will pray.

Your hair will pour across my throat.
In softly rilling streams,
And you will lead me through the surf
Of amber clouds and dreams!

Jessie Vaughn Harrier

The Campers

Are we the Nomads' children, you and I?
Are we some age-old tribal law obeying?
That each recurring June must find us straying
On shining high-ways to our motor's purring,
Or mountain by-ways where the deer are stirring,
Letting the cares and joys of home slip by?

Is this some heritage from old wandering folk?
We own no flocks, or herds of hungry kine
To urge to movement when the starry sign
Points that the summer solstice has drawn nigh.
Whence in our blood this too insistent cry
That calls us forth to breathe the camp-fire's smoke?

Are we the Nomads' children, you and I?
Descendants of some lean, hard-fighting race
Who drove the fat town-dwellers from their place,
Roving and ruling,—kindling then the fire
That filled the holy pilgrims with desire,
And flames in us beneath this Western sky?

D. N. Lehmer

The Stroller

A wind came wandering up the street,
And all the flowers made friends with him;
And every tree he chanced to meet
Was happy to shake hands with him.

And every loving mother tree
Her little leaves held out to him,
They laughed and clapped their hands in glee
And seemed to crow and shout to him.

Full many a roguish little bloom
As he went by would laugh at him,
While one old witch-tree, like a broom,
Cackled, and shook her staff at him.

But wistful Violet, in the grass,—
No one expected this from him,—
When she glanced up to see him pass,
I think she got a kiss from him!

M. L. Cherry

Coming Home

When you and I from gayety returning

All dim, our own house see beneath the stars,
And toward its silence all my heart is yearning
As lights leap o'er the road from speeding cars;

As lights, whose discontented, searching fingers
Illuminate the cross roads far and near.
So tho beside me in the dark there lingers
Faint memories of dancing partners dear,

Yet leaps my heart toward that most sweet reaction
Where groping mid the shadows by the door
I hear your sighing breath of satisfaction
And happily we are at home once more.

Dear One, I have not clever words nor power
To put to music joys like that sweet hour.

Aldis Dunbar

Forever and Ever

Of all my ways for wondering,
Time is to me the strangest thing!

Unseen, the south wind hurries by,
But ripples run across the rye,
And grasses whisper where I lie.

In the green shadow, splashing near,
A brooklet, swift and cool and clear,
Is always passing—always here!

Toiling can turn the water's way,
Yet can not make one moment stay!

I sit all silent in the sun,
And through my hands the minutes run,
Slipping behind me, one by one!

How can I breathe, for wondering?
Time is so still and strange a thing!

Comment—The Hundred and One Harlequins

(Conducted by Pauline Barrington)

By Sacheverell Sitwell

Grant Richards, Ltd., London, 1923.

I was lying in the dappled shade,
The lute hung lifeless in my lap,
When God stepped out of a moving cloud
To tread the tops of the mulberry trees.

I touched my strings, and God looked down;
He smiled on me, and gave me wings,
But e'en His plumes had not the glow
The fire of fruit lit in the air.

For with their help I bridged the air;
I perched upon the silent sill,
And from this height my lute will sound,
And I shall catch the whispered call.

—First variation on a theme by George
Peele.

The Hundred and One Harlequins easily puts Sacheverell Sitwell at the head of the young poets writing today. It is varied and interesting; written in metre and vers libre; imaginative, with a beautiful use of words and rhythm. If there is a fault, it is that there is much that is difficult to understand, obscure, but one picks up the slim volume to read over these poems and is rewarded by finding a wealth of material well worth digging for. Mr. T. S. Eliot has said

somewhere, he would like to give Mr. Sitwell "ten years of hard work." Then we shall see, for he is under thirty and an artist and a poet. Beauty is such an abstract, each one sees it from a different point of view; to express what one sees, honestly, without equivocation "is a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy." Mr. Sitwell has undertaken the task with all his young energy and imagination. In "Two Variations on Themes of Zarathustra," "The Hochzeit of Hercules" and "A March Past the Pyramids" there is true English poetry, but no suggestion of the past.

And so, while smaller men may make
the soft singing and the golden shake
into the joys for which they run
with which the ripe fields greet the sun,
tired lives into a broken mould,
and then renounce the joy and fold
crippled limbs, rehearsing in their mind,
sights to remember when quick eyes go blind;
I can reach above the crowd
without a mask, without a shroud,
and watch them counting grains of sand
to tell the height my buildings stand.

— A March Past the Pyramids.

The Selections from "The Hundred and One Harlequins" are so merry, so unbelievably gay! There is no cloying sentimentalism, no eroticism or beloveds and ladies "leaning on the bar of heaven!"

A railway engine ran across the field
Galloping like a swift horse down the rails.
There they ride each person in a carriage,
Each of them steering his cloud through the air.

All that goes on in the world they gather.
A visor to guard, and a mask to protect them.
Now, with their speed the white mane flows loose.
— The Hundred And One Harlequins.

Sacheverell Sitwell is an Englishman. He is a member of the "Wheels" group, whose varied poems make the "Wheels" anthologies the most distinctive published since they first made their appearance in 1916. There are nine of these young poets; modern, sophisticated and cultured, who lived and wrote through those years 1916-17, not to mention the years before and after the war, in England, when the old order came to an end. It goes without saying that these new births of poetry aroused the wrath of the Victorians, especially certain poets, high in-the-praise-of-the-many, who have drawn sweetness from Tennyson, but who have never written an original thought that is fit to touch the hem of the skirt of the "Lady of Shallot"; they criticise bitterly the modern movement, these young men and women who are finding expression in new ways. Saint George protect his own! Ah the eternal copyists, who see only the white temples of Greece; gleaming ruins above a blue sea, on green hills, under fair skies, or the glowing lost colors of the days when the Virgin ruled the world of men and affairs, or the later sentimentality of the Victorians! They stumble around blindly looking for yesterday; afraid, in mortal fear of the stress of their own present, which in time and space is all they can rightly call their own. To be young, to be aware, to have written that which one has clearly seen behind the eyelids, is what young Sacheverell Sitwell has done in singing his own song of living. The Hundred And One Harlequins is one chant of promise and with "ten years of hard work" Well!—

—*Pauline Barrington.*

Ethelean Tyson Gaw

Alice Meynell

An Appreciation

She roams maternal hills, and bright

Dark valleys safe and deep.

Into that tender breast at night

The chastest stars may peep.

She walks—the lady of my delight—

A shepherdess of sheep.

— *The Shepherdess.*

With the passing of Alice Meynell, we, her heirs, are moved to consider what manner of treasure she has left for our inheriting. Exquisite workmanship, a high and austere morality, a boundless sympathy for the inarticulate and suffering multitude, a keen perception of the loveliness underlying the relation between physical and spiritual law, a fine scorn for the stolid, the vulgar, the “mentally inexpensive,” and over all and pervading all, a spiritual intensity realizing a mystical union with God,—these are the treasures bequeathed to us in her slim volumes.

For forty years Mrs. Meynell wrote with “unhurried excellence,” to quote her own ideal. Her first poems met with immediate success, Ruskin praising them for the high seriousness of their thought, while Rossetti marked the sweetness of her lines. As a journalist she confessed herself trying to find a way to write “modern prose” free from heredity conventions. How well she succeeded is evidenced by the wide-spread, but discriminating, praise accorded her essays in the Friday column signed Autolycus in the Pall Mall Gazette. There was never any lowering of standards to meet

journalistic exigencies. Her prose work suffers, if anything, from undue austerity and brevity. The thought is often fragmentary, lacking in sustained development, though invariably expressed in words chosen with consummate skill and of great beauty. She was past mistress of the *Mot Juste*, that fetish of the literary nineties.

In spite of a certain modernity that links Mrs. Meynell's poetic philosophy with the problems of her own day, she is spiritually akin to the Metaphysicals of the 17th Century. Especially she has Crashaw's deep religiosity and Crowley's fastidiousness of workmanship. In her Introduction to an Anthology of 17th Century Verse she says, "The 17th Century had rapture, nature, spirituality and light." These qualities are also her own, but unlike the Metaphysicals, she never permits her delicate imagery to pass into verbal contortions and grotesque conceits. If there is a bit too much didacticism in her exalted morality, and a too narrow view of many-sided religious truth, if she is sometimes lacking in the saving grace of humor, if at times her delicate finesse becomes an austerity almost rigid, nevertheless these are minor and incidental flaws, while the sum of her work is a legacy of very real beauty to the literature of the English-speaking race. We may agree with Miss Repplier that "back of Alice Meynell's graceful, austere and beautifully finished work are the steadfast strength, the crystalline sweetness of religion. All her delicate processes of thought spring from that sure foundation, and reach upward into imperishable light."

Notes

The Lyric West is forced out of the market for new material until after October on account of over supply. The material on hand will be published as rapidly as possible. Hereafter the Lyric West will not pay for accepted manuscripts except in a group of prizes to be announced in the September or October issue. These prizes will be varied and offer a wide opportunity to many contributors. Among the interesting contributions to this issue are the two poems on pages 10 and 11, "A Woman's Song" and "My Iris Army." They won the first and second prizes respectively in a contest held under the auspices of the Colorado Federation of Women's Clubs. The contest was conducted by Mrs. Nellie Burget Miller, poet laureate of the state of Colorado. The first prize was won by Mary Cormack McDougall for her poem, "A Woman's Song," and "My Iris Army," by Anne Lloyd, won second place. Jessie B. Rittenhouse was one of the judges.