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NO. 9

The LYRIC WEST

A Magazine of American Verse



IN THIS ISSUE

Grace Atherton Dennen | Ted Olson

Frances Beebe | Medora C. Addison

Pauline Barrington and others

COMMENT

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The Lyric West

Vol. III, No. 9

A Magazine Of Verse

January, 1924

Edited by Grace Atherton Dennen

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Grace Atherton Dennen

Beginnings

There are beginnings of tides and beginnings of suns,
And of planets that move in their orbits.
And when their cycle is completed
They enter on their course anew.
There is the beginning of the year, the beginning of the
day
The coming of dawn when night is ended

And the stir of life in the city after the silence.

Life moves in cycles.
The least of numbers, increased or divided,
Sweeps on into infinity.

There is the end of joy, the end of hope,
The end of patience and of high endeavor.
There is the end of sin, the end of crime,
The end of history, the end of nations,
Broken nations, broken leaders.
There is the end of life—
And while our lips still murmur, “It is finished,”

Our feet have entered into newer paths.
A child looks up at a statue, struck with awe,
A horse and rider cast in deathless bronze,
Who falter with drooping heads at the cliff’s edge.

He spells the title out—"The End of the Trail."
"What does it mean?" he questions, and his father
answers,
"It means—Earthquakes that crumble cities in ruins,
Great fires that devastate, great frosts
That kill the fruits and crops, great storms at sea,
Great fortunes crashing, and the hopes of men—
It means—the end."
But the boy looks.
All about him the city springs anew,
And winter passes bringing another spring,
And there are many trials.

There is the end of war, ultimate peace,
And the end of hate which turns to understanding.
This I know.
For every end there is a beginning.
The rest belongs with God.

Clark Ashton Smith

A Precept

With words of ivory,
Of bronze, of ebony,
Of alabaster, marble, steel and gold,
The beauty of the Visible is told.
But how with these express
The unseen Loveliness—
Splendor, and light, and harmony and sound
The heart hath felt, the sense hath never found?

No shining words of stone—
Shadow and cloud alone
These shall the poet seek eternally,
Whose lines would carve the mask of Mystery.

Faith Baldwin

Words

There is a magic in words
An escape . . .
Words are little, luminous pearls,
Strung,
On a silver thread of fancy
Words are little tubes of colour,
Never quite satisfying; elusive; alluring.
Today, in a quiet room, the blinds drawn,
I hear the slurring fingers of the snow,
Against the panes. I am sure
That, in a forbidding sky,
Storm clouds scatter, like dingy sheep before
The black crook of the wind
Yet I
Am magically enabled to paint a little picture,
Of a moon in summer,
White as the young breast of a girl,
Delicately gleaming
In the dark, green arms of tall poplars
Look. I dare make gardens from such words as these;
Rose and ivory and emerald . . . powder blue and jade;
Perfume and langour and delight;
And, when I look at my fire, I transform it,
With a pen and a little ink,
To autumn leaves, amber, saffron and crimson,
Swirling, fluttering, up my chimney. . . .

Words are ivory keys, unlocking
Much. They are golden doors, shutting
The unhappy fret of living from us,
Even to sorrow they are enabled to bring
The regal release of expression; the dignity
Of purple robes
Only when Love and Death come must they depart,
Words . . .
For these two
Are most intensely centered
In silence.

Hazel Hall

Short Songs for a Long Day

WILD GEESE

There was a throb of singing
Warm upon my mouth,
But I have seen the wild geese
Flying south.

I have heard them calling
From a leaden space,
And like a wind their cold cry
Has swept my face.

OR ANY PORT

After the song, there comes an hour
When Silence has its way with you.
It lays you out and puts a flower
In either hand; it lights a few
Gaudy candles at foot and head,
Then weeps, and you are very dead.

THE CALLING

Many songs are mine to sing:
A morning song spun out of light,
A song for dusk like a swallow's wing,
A song to hold to my heart at night.

Others are not yet mine; again
And again I hear them: words at dawn,
Syllables hushed beneath the rain,
Calling me into my future on and on.

Virginia Stait

Tethered

*I did not know that words could be
So forged that bolt and hasp replied;
To gyve the flesh beyond all plea,
A heart may make that is denied.*

Two acres of the blue-white, wondrous things,
That burn and bleed, as a bell tolls or rings,
Flowers with which we made a shield from debt,
And bargained bread—from purple violet!
And when the fight was won in after years,
And I would go a little way,
Beyond the circle trudged—oh sparks of tears,
That brand me now in all my prison gray.

Two acres—bounded on the west by rocks,
And east and west by fences that were locks,
But on the south, a rivered vista wide,
A place for dreams, to those who are denied
And early, when the stars were yet awake,
And late—when they would crowd the blue,
I would my circle trudge—around my stake—
And plant and prune, and ribbon-knot them too . . .

There was no need that I should go, you said,
To even send them off—the perfumed dead.
You could not know! For if I thought you had—

What is the thought when people first go mad!
And so the flowers were told, the purple things,
 That looked me in the face,
And are both dreams and long rememberings,
 And the first grass in a still, solemn place.

And in the cold—they wither fast in heat,
Ere they would go—and I to my defeat,
I used to whisper of my restlessness,
And that I would die too, might I possess
Just one long day, absolved from all the past,
 Just one new day, as free as death;
And they would answer, in purple—outcast,
 You shall know too when flesh is newest earth.

*I did not know that words could be
 So forged that bolt and hasp replied;
To gyve the flesh, beyond all plea;
 A heart may make, that is denied.*

Elizabeth J. Coatsworth

The Sandals of Fra Junipero Serra

At his death

The sailors begged for his two ragged sandals,
Thinking that the Virgin of the Sea must look
In tenderness on things so greatly worn
In her service.

Elizabeth J. Coatsworth

The Sword of Alvarado

I saw Alvarado's sword
That helped to hew out principalities
To throw into the brocaded lap of Spain.
It had a crown ending in a twisted cross
Above its bell-shaped guard, and on the blade
Was written: Do not draw me without reason,
Nor shield me without honor—
In letters stiff and proud as processional grandees
Carrying the looted banners of Aztec kings.

Elizabeth J. Coatsworth

Poem to Sleep

I cannot find the well-worn road to sleep
Which all the city travels by tonight.
There's not a child too young to know the way;
This great town lies beneath the heavy stars
Emptied almost of movement and of thought:
It seems that I alone have missed the cue
And through the thickets of the weary hours
Must wander, turning left and right and left
And back again, seeking that peaceful road
Or waiting the scant mercy of the dawn.

Elizabeth K. McGowen

Storm

You saw her pass . . . hair as a cloud
That soft with rain, the sky has known.
The grace of her a silken scarf,
Wind-blown.

From your grey eyes I saw your heart
Flee to her own as a gull, fear-free,
On wings of silvered swiftness sails
To sea.

My fire of faith shall I keep warm—
For gulls return with wings storm-wet,
And in the sun's warm comforting
. . . Forget!

Edwine Behre

Sketches from the Tyrol—IV

YEAR'S END

A grey sky overshadows like a pall
Pale birches in their shrouds of paler snow;
Guarded by mourning fires, majestic, tall,
And grave, dark cedar-candles burning low,
Within their glassy tomb dead waters lie;
Hushed is their plaint, spent is their passion's force,
Only the wind in this mortality
Lives on, and moans along its lonely course.

Ted Olson

Hieroglyphs

The wind is a half-word
The old gods whisper
The stars are a blind script
None may ever read.
Why does a blown leaf
In a blue twilight
Teach us more philosophy
Than wise men will heed?

Ted Olson

A Builder of Fires

The tiniest fire, even,
Is brighter far
Than the wide glittering waste of heaven
 Heaped with star on star.
Though I have only ashes
 For my brief delight,
All the sky was jealous of me
 Many a night!

Mary Carolyn Davies

The Wind's a Tramp

The wind's a tramp
Who walks the earth.
He knows, he knows
What life is worth.

The cynic Wind
Strays up and down,
He knows the folk
Of farm and town.

The folk who cling
To roof and door;
Who fear the trail
Who fear the moor—

The folk who shrink
From path or road,
Who sleep content,
And feel no goad—

The wind's great laughter
Shakes the trees,
When passing by
He looks at these!

Esther Clark Hill

The Gifts

*Softly, swiftly,
The light years pass;
Fugitive as shadows
On the grass.*

Youth was their first gift, gallantly free;
Love was the gift they denied to me.
Grief was their great gift, bitterly clean;
There is yet their last gift, cool, serene.

*Swiftly, softly,
The gray years fall.
I shall hold their last gift
Worth them all.*

Alice Barkley

Make Me Drunken with Color

I am so weary of grey;
Grey sky, grey hills, grey sea,
Grey houses everywhere,
Grey people passing by,
Enveloped in the fog
That wraps me all about
Like some mysterious veil,
I long to draw aside
But yet am powerless
To move.

Oh, city of grey, you dull
My soul. For I am starved
For color; for golden suns,
And copper-tinted moons,
For silver stars in midnight blue,
For turquoise seas and emerald hills,
And orange poppies bursting
Into bloom upon the glittering sands,
For scarlet snow plants flaming
In the hills.

Oh, sun, tear the veil,
Pierce the greyness,
Bathe my soul in molten gold,
Wash my body with glittering white,

Stain my mouth with scarlet,
Dust my hair with copper,
Drown my eyes in blue.
Make me drunken with color
For I am so weary, so weary
Of grey

Ellen Coit Elliott

Taurus

I met you in a quiet glade,
Boanerges, Son of Thunder.
A sparrow pecked your mighty flank,
Your shaggy humped shoulders
Acacia drift yellowed.

11] i—

I wonder
What your surly big brute head,
Your scimitar horns, would do to me
If you were flesh and fire
And living steel and thunder
(Your eyes dancing red with wrath)
Instead of bronze.
We would not stay long in this quiet glade
Eyeing one another,
Would we, I wonder?

Harold Herbert Rogers

Bizarre

Trees, a river,
Wind, and sky,
These are the things
That I linger by.

These are the things
That I love the best;
That stir in my heart
The old unrest.

The trees, lithe-limbed,
And tall, and free,
Talk in a tongue
Unknown to me.

The river's an old man,
Twisted and wise,
With an ageless life
In his laughter and sighs.

The wind is a lover,
Lost and alone,
Asking me things
I have never known.

And the sky is the answer—

Holding these;
The wind and the river
And the lithe-limbed trees.

Catherine Parmenter

The West

Across the undulating plains the evening dusk has
fallen
While low against the star-flecked sky a lonely
camp-fire gleams;
And beside the flick'ring fire, in the silence soft and
brooding,
A man is seeing visions, and a man is dreaming
dreams.

Lord God of Hosts, give Thou the West, unscathed by
worldly schemes,
The gift of seeing visions, and the gift of dreaming
dreams!

And miles away the sunset light is fading into
darkness,
As a dusty prairie schooner halts, to give the horses
rest;
A tired woman lifts her eyes that glow with buoyant
courage,—
To glimpse the rugged mountains—the mountains of
the
West. . . .

Lord God of Hosts, far, far beyond where prairie
grasses wave,

Give to Thy Western peoples, Lord, the courage of the
brave!

Lord God of Hosts, give to Thy Western peoples
strength—compassion

Give them the laughter and the tears of crystal
mountain streams;

Give them the cleanness of the hills—the courage of the
prairies;

The gift of seeing visions, and the gift of dreaming
dreams,

Lord God of Hosts, make Thou the West that land
where, fearless—free,

A man is judged by other men, as judged, O, Lord, by
Thee!

Winifred Johnston

The Wanderer

People were always less to
him than places.
From childhood it was so,
He tired so soon of mild
familiar faces;
Learning the catch which
closed the swinging gate
He left behind a mother
fearful of his fate,
While he went out upon the
highway, to and fro,
Enamoured of a life he did not
know.
Sometimes his father took his
hand,
And pattering, straining, at
the father's side
He ventured to The Town—a
far-off land
Where, to his fancy, wonders
might betide!
But though he sought, he
never found them there
(Bravura knights and
dragons—ladies fair),
It was always queerly true

in his mind, the giants grew.

People were always less to
him than places,
From childhood it was so.
He tired so soon of mild,
though well-loved faces!
A train—a loading boat—
A chance companion with a
tale of far-off lands—
These were enough, with him,
to set afloat
The tugging vision of sweet
sunlit strands
Where romance flourished
still.
Sometimes a mighty hill
Would make him catch his
breath—
Stunned with the far-flung
glories just revealed.
Spring came each year a
tempter in disguise
To lure his heart and feet, and
light his eyes.
Too much of life still lay
concealed
Taking root was death—
So out into the world he
slipped again,

Broke free the ties which
 bound him home;
Out into the world he
 went—to roam
The marts and mountains,
 bright islands of the singing
 seas,
Cities of the orient, the desert
 plains,—wherever the
 breeze
Of quick desire enticed
 him—And he found but
 men.

People were always less to him than places.
From childhood it was so.
Still—he missed the old familiar faces
When once again he fumbled at the gate.
He who had left behind those fearful for his fate
Now was grown old, and tired of wandering to and fro;
—And they had gone into a life he did not know!
Daily now he takes his cane in hand,
And tottering, dragging, at some youngster's side
He ventures to The Town—a far-off land
Where, to his fancy, dangers may betide!
But sometimes even now his faded eyes light up with
 dreams,
And for a moment, once again, he almost happy
 seems—
It was always oddly true
In his mind, the wonders grew.

E. Richard Shipp

A Murdered Monarch

Hero of a thousand hard fought fights
With your elemental foes
Your end is near!

The Chopper's axe is swinging,
Swinging in rhythmic rote,
Swinging, ringing, bringing
Death to you!

The Chopper's axe is singing,
Singing a murderous note,
Singing, ringing, bringing
Death to you!

Hero of a thousand hard fought fights
With your elemental foes
Your end is here!

Silent, sorrowful, powerless,
I saw the murder done!

Frances Beebe

Too Definite I Grow

Too definite I grow:
The fingers of my mind
Have learned to point
Too well for my soul's comfort.
Orchid on the oak,
Dew-silver grasses at the dawn,
What have I done with you?
Too definite I grow.
Yet when a friend I know
Remembers; or the summer breeze
Goes teasing tunes
From the orchestral trees;
When babies curl
Small fingers through my hair,
Or moonlight strikes across
White sails at sea.
I feel that all may yet
Be well with me
And life persist
A sort of lovely question
Till I die!

Ellinor Lehnherr Norcross

Barriers

All that I cannot say,
All I can never do,
You'll find somewhere, someday
Awaiting you.

And all our gallant dreams i
Broken against life's bars,
We'll find again sometime
Back of the stars.

Herschelle Bek

Consolation

What, if I have,
In my utter greed,
Dug too deep
Into your soul,
And found a chilling emptiness,
Where I had hoped for gems,
More brilliant
Than the ones I had. . . .

I still can hide
Within the cloister
Of my thoughts,
And like the miser that I am,
Gloat over the few frayed dreams,
Still left to me.

Credo

I do not care for one man more than another,
I do not feel superior because my skin is white
And there is not in the whole world a race I hold in
contempt.
I care as much for the codes and conventions of the
Zuni
Indian as I do for those of the Englishman.
For whether you are a Zulu chief with a ring in your
nose
or a herder on the Andean mountains or a banker in
Brooklyn
You are of the same family.
I am not proud of much that I see in civilization and I
do not patronize savages.
I had as soon talk to a sailor as to a statesman and I
am not ashamed to sit at meat with a black man.
I admire the Indian's blanket as much as the dress of
the
French woman.
Each is a form of self-expression.
I see you sneer. You say—She got it from Whitman.
Well, then I will tell you where I got it.
From my brother Christ Jesus who taught it in Galilee.

Floyd Meredith

Cause and Effect

My, but I'm glad you've come!
It was getting so tedious here
And then, I like to have someone near,
The hum
Of voices, even my own,
Brings a certain amount of cheer
With it—though, I suppose
Folks think I talk too much
—That's it, sit there!—
Though, goodness knows,
I have so many hours of just such
Silence, that I could nearly die!
—How is that chair,
Comfortable? Have a sweet?
This is a new box from the corner store;
Let's see, where was I—
Oh yes, speaking about this silence,
(I can hardly see any more—now,)
And silence is like an endless street
With a crepe on every door
Because of my eyes.

Blind? Bless you, no! Me?
Though the Lord only knows,
Who knows the whole of Life,
What earthly good are bodily eyes

When the soul can't see.

Well,
There's not much to tell!
It was this way:

These two pictures: one was a man of parts,
One a man of God,
—No, not a minister—unless, it be
That he
Was a minister of thought!—
You see, they trod
Such different roads;
Careless-like, though he was debonnair
And had an air
Of a drawing-room about him;
While the other had the slow,
Heavy tread of one who bore the loads
Of whole republics in his head

Funny, isn't it, that I should have been sought
By both?
—Thank you, that pillow I never use—
Now, which would you choose?
This one? That's right!
He has a fine eye and the chin to fight;
But, I let him go;
You see, I didn't just know
That he wanted me; he seemed
To give up so easily;
While I laughed and dreamed

With the other.
Strange, isn't it,
That the other should have hit me,
After I married him, and all
Because I called him by the wrong name
One day, when the two met!
—What's the matter with your lip?
It's trembling and your eyes are wet;
I guess, you're catching cold,
It IS draughty in here—
Yes, it is my hip;
I've never walked since; and then
He died!

But I like to lie here and hold
My hand fast to both of them,
—Have you got to go?
Well, come again!—
You see, it helps me to understand
The difference between a MAN
And men.
Not the heart of desire
From maid or wife
Or woman scorned
From white blossoms or white frost of winter
Both of purest snow.
Not love. Not the deep
Feeling of the heart and soul,
Not love. Not the sweet
Contact of soft lips
And the clinging of the snow-white

Sensuous, sculptored arms.

What tho
The pain drown my heart
And longing pierces
Deep down into my soul?
Not love. Not the winds
Not the tall stem
Of snow-white yucca
Nor flow'ring branch of fire-bush
Flaunting in vivid hue.
Not love, not the winds;
Ah, blossom of my heart,
Flower of red
Oleanders, petaling the grass
Reflection of the sun's fire
Holding such beauty and life
That shadows are bright
Seen through the blossoms
Of the orange, sleepy poppy.

Poppies—young love—or passion
Or nepenthe—or desire
Not these, or any flare,
But if you love again
Seek strength of mind and heart
Truth as the God;
Forget the lute's tune
Feeling that you shall know
Around your soul
No discord on the strings

But melody, sweet tuneful
Of string and the strong swell
Of eternal soul serenity.

Irresponsibilities

When I hold you in my arms,
I think that I am clasping all the flowers of the world.

In the blue of distance
That broods between the ivory of the birch trees,
I have found the melancholy colour of your eyes
In the clear pallor of your face.
Yet it is more sorrowful to watch your eyes
Than to look into the far blue between the trees.

He dances with his shadow
In silver and dove-colour,
In fragile wistfulness,
In delicate dream pallor,
In shadow-dress,
He dances with his shadow.

Marion Couthouy Smith

Recompense

Shall I move toward you or away from you—
 You who are all my goal—when I go hence?
 Shall I not lose you in that light immense,
As stars are lost in day? Or is it true
That only souls are counted, in the view
 Of those who gain the ineffable recompense,
 And they who seek us come, we know not whence,
From unimagined realms across the blue?

All great fulfilments,—truths we have not guessed,
 Hidden by time, by blindness, or by fears,
May reach us when our spirits find their rest
 Outside the barriers of these measured years.
And one may say, “I loved you, there below.”
The other answer, “Dear, I could not know.”

John Curtis Underwood

Carmen de Ciudad

What shall we do for this city that we love,
Stately, time treasured and fair,
Quiet as her sky that lies softly above her,
Still as her crystal wall of air
With her bells' bronze sentinels for prayer?

Green and brown turquoise curiously set
In the hollow of her turquoise clouded hills;
He that has known her so shall not forget her.
Let him wander wherever he wills,
When he sees her at sunset his heart stills.

Tarnished dim silver, her gray trails run down
Where her lovers adventure and meet
What shall we compass to charm her and crown her,
She to whom living is sweet
Unstirred by modern years' hurried feet?

We have to listen to her heart and draw near
As one comes to a woman or a child,
Silent and slow; we shall see her and hear her
A voice and a vision that smiled
Through those long centuries sun shot and wild.

We come to echo where she dreams and does more,
Stirs in her sleep like the spring,

To wonder and worship; to serve and adore her,
We who would paint her and sing,
Learn of her loving—and listening.

Medora C. Addison

Careers

JOB

Once he was young and dreamed of high romance,
Wore rakish hats and faced the future gladly;
Now he is old and bald and rather fat,
And runs the elevator very badly.

THE GOVERNESS

Romance has passed her by, and love's fulfillment,
The children of her dreams are all unborn,
Yet she must mother those who will forget her,
Nor show the breast her hungry dreams have
torn.

ELMER

He left the farm because it was so slow—
Nothing to see but sky and fields and hills,
Nothing to hear but birds and cow bells tinkling;
Hard labor, and no thrills.

Now he is seeing life in Lebanon,
Tightening the bolts on antiquated cars;
His body prostrate under blackened gears,
His head among the stars.

Arthur H. Nethercot

To a Photograph in a Show-Case Near Hull House

Smash!

It would be so easy.

A stone, the twitter of slivered glass upon the walk—

And you are mine!

Why should I not take you?

Here you cannot live,

Smudged with smoke and sweat,

Prey to the gaze of all who pass—

The careless crowd which swirls around street corners,

With its lascivious remarks;

The night-loungers in the entry way,

Caressing every curve of your slight body

With flesh-pouched eyes.

Beauty belongs to its desirer!

Come, I will have you,

If only for the time in which a paunchy

crossing-policeman

May dog-trot half a block.

Then I will tear you into shreds

As tiny as your own finger-nails,

Knowing I have done well . . .

But, reading their papers next morning,

My friends will throw up their hands.
“Oh no!” they will cry; “it could not have been he!
He is a very respectable
Citizen!”

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Anna Kalfus Spero

The Progress of Youth

LAZY WATER

Youth looked for Lazy Water, wood-water where wind
knit torn sunshine
into gold nets, where burnished fishlets slipped
through.

PRESENCES

Under trees Youth and boys. Part
Of the woods a boy. Flicks
Of light on white tents. Noise
And scent of kindled sticks.

Earth sun-spotted like a fawn.
Green bushes' shimmer. Droves
Of midges—little stings!
Air pigeon-blue in coves.

Sunfall. Mottle of moonshine.
Wet sparkles—dew. Whirr—bat.
Small fur-feet tap like shoes.
Raid of rock-rats—pat, pat.

Woods black as bear. Thrills. Run of
Cave River. Swish of weeds.
The ooze at seeping spring
Gone drowsy in the reeds.

Wild things whispery as folks
One to another bent,
Low telling, "Among us
A boy has pitched his tent."

Plush! Plush!—flow of years—of years.

Youth and the boy surprise
Soul with their presences
If body shuts its eyes.

SPRIT RIVER

Youth looked for presences when spirit moods were no
deeper than flow of gentle music.

Music, poet's airy sighing on account of speckled
fishlets tinkling up through meshes of gold netting
rippled.

Spirit looked in itself for human flowers reflected
as in a broad stream of sunbeams,
human flowers, love and friendship,
as on banks of bright water flowing in its own
rhythm.

Spirit looked in itself for Youth until through bluish
wet darkness, on shaken pale-silver wings
Youth had arisen, voyaging loose in the universe.

CAVERN OF SLEEP

Motion of rivers, origins and ends, life and death, are
mute mysteries
Yet would I keep my spirit beautiful and fine by
devotion to unwordable mysteries:

For I have taken harsh woe of incompleteness,
and thick tears for black mortal fear
of the Great Call
(fear that I shall miss my Youth)
into the Cavern of Sleep and found in dreams
the power and dominion there of peace.

And I would meet the force of Death
And wake from echoes of his great stroke
where light begins to shine in darkness
in the cavern of Sleep.

MEETING

I met Lord Death
 busy in the largeness of the universe.
I touched his sleeve.

He asked,
 “What will you have of me?”
scarce slackening his pace.

I said:
 “My Lord, stoop in the Cavern of Sleep
 to the manhood of one I left.
 See him before morning, my Lord.
 Hearten him.
 Say that I wait for him, wait for him.
 Say that I am long-memored Youth.”

Doris G. Wilson

Impressions

Out of the darkness you came to me,
Out of a moon-enchanted world;
And swiftly fleeting like a summer dream,
Past arms that ached to hold such loveliness,
Left but a breath, a fragile bit
To which I cling, though vainly
I can not follow, but I know, I know
That you are mine, though lost;
My clouds of silver, melting at your touch,
Drip rain upon the earth of my desire.

You had but to touch my hand to call me back,
And I felt only the wind's cool caress;
I asked for but a word,
And I heard my answer in your silence;
But the sea and the sands and the rocks all heard,
And made answer to my cry.
I asked for but a look,
And that you gave me, all unknowing;
Your eyes, like pale fires, burned
From a face, blurred, indistinct, in the twilight.

Down through the ages then,
We two shall pass,
Out of the mists of yesterday
But you and I in all the world,

With fingers intertwined and hearts attuned
To all the glories of the infinite:
Nor all earth's fears nor tears,
Nor all its strife shall be;
But two souls shall remain,
Yours, ever calling, mine responding.

Oliver S. Arata

The Chinese Dagger

Serpents,
Clinging reptiles
Encircle and entwine your handle,
A weapon from quaint shops of Yung-Li,
The tin-smith.

As I grasp you,
Friend of the opium-eater,
I dream queer dreams,
And hallucinations of Chinese lanterns
Swinging,
Swaying,
And rhyming, mysteriously,
From arched gardens,
From chopsuey restaurants,
Over emerald pools:
I dream of women with peacock coats
Singing and cooing sweet lullabies
To almond-eyed children—
Babes of Tokyo.

I discern the Chinese lad,
The heathen lover, and child of the Sun,
Kiss his beloved beneath the spray and boughs,
Bending with the breath of whispering tangerines.
Ancient relic,

That seems so mysterious, ancient,
You are entrancing. . . .

I fear you,
I loathe you,
O bit of antiquity.

Eleanor Hammond

From a Street Corner

Like snails I see the people go
Along the pavement, row on row;
And each one on his shoulders bears
His coiling shell of petty cares—
The spiral of his own affairs.

Some peer about, some creep on blind,
But not one leaves his shell behind.
And I, who think I see so well,
Peer at the rest, but can not tell
How much is cut off by my shell.

Wright Field

Embers

Out of the moments of my desire,
Burning the dross out with hidden fire,
My soul emerges, a white, cold nun,
Devoid of passion, bereft of pain,
You would know it never could dance again.

Its pale cold face and its pale cold hands,
Bound in the nun's chaste, narrow bands,
Devoted alone to the rosary
Cross-emburdened, on its black gown—
And yet, sometimes, in the somber eyes,
The ghost of a dream that will not down!

Its “Ave Maria” is frosty-clear—
A tinkle of ice on a frozen mere—
Ascending up like a string of pearls
On a silver thread, from the altar where
It bends the knee—but listen close
For the wail of passion that hides in prayer!

Eunice Mitchell Lehmer

The Poet's Voice

Long moved the creatures prone upon the earth,
Their eyes upon the ground, their speech a cry.
At last came man, who looked upon the sky
And found a voice.

The years have brought slow-fashioned words to birth,
Still man plods on, his thin lips sealed with pain,
His head bowed low by tasks that dull the brain,
And leave no choice.

The vague, unspoken feelings of his heart
Beat mutely, like a bird against the bars;
They long to reach the ever-singing stars
But have no wing.

At length with joy his pulse-beats quicker start
To hear some poet's song go floating past.
He cries, "My heart has found a voice at last!
O singer, singer, sing!"

Comment

*Selvage, by Dorothea Moore.
The Stratford Company, Boston.*

(Conducted by Pauline Barrington)

Selvage is the edge that holds the loose threads of a fabric together and an edge always has substance behind it. A sword has an edge, in fact sometimes it can be two edged, and the quality of the substance, from which it is made, can be tested by the keenness of its edge. Dr. Moore has named her book of poems, epigrams and stories wisely, *Selvage*, as there is plenty of substance back of the keen edge of what she has written. Dr. Moore was born in Chillicothe, Ohio; received her degree at the School of Medicine of the Boston University. She spent two years at Hull House, following it up with settlement work in San Francisco. She has written for some years for American Magazines and Newspapers. *Selvage* is her first book. It is divided into two parts: the first poetry, the second prose, which latter includes a play, fables, epigrams and several sketches. The general drift of her book has a tolerance and philosophy, that come from a deep knowledge of humanity, which gives it power and beauty. "Tubs" is the first poem. It is a bit of interesting insight:

Talking of women in war time

This is how I think of her.

A well seasoned endurable tub.

Stout from the view biological

And shaped as it may please God and time

And often colored quite beautifully.

Again I say—endurable—

Meeting shocks—kind or cruel—

Perfectly firm on its own base

Neither too much nor too little concerned
About other tubs, good or bad.
But wholly adapted to contain
Full without slopping
All that is human of the Universe.

Dr. Moore is a feminine writer, there is no masculinity nor trace of sentimentality about her poems. In many of them is a woman's longing for a child— "How proud I'd walk before the crowd Even to be such as she."

In "Circumstance"

Tawdry and tired, she flaunted in,
Dragging a child, neglected, thin,
Ill-fed, one ankle slightly lame,
A thing of accident and shame.
Bold glances and a painted smile
This mother wears. Across the aisle,
Watching the two with yearning eyes,
A wife, and childless, sits and sighs.

There is a sense of humor which sharpens the edge of
Selvage to keenness, take this one called "Age":

A little grey ape has come

To stay with me.

Sitting close in the shadow

Of my shadow.

Shall I disguise him with a red coat and gold braid

Or introduce him to everybody by his real name?

T. S. Eliot said: "Fine art is the refinement, not the antithesis of popular art." Under this heading Dr. Moore qualifies as an artist. Though her lyric sense is not strong, she has written honestly of the people of her experience, with deep

insight and feeling.

—*Pauline Barrington.*

The Changing Flame, by Sydney King Russell, The Four Seas Company, Boston, Mass. This is the first volume of a young man distinctly gifted in both music and literature. Many of the poems included here have been published in periodicals. Mr. Russell writes feelingly of nature, of young love, and often strikes a note of deep feeling. The poems are shot through with gleams of beauty. It is a volume of much promise.

Caesar Remembers, by William Kean Seymour. Thomas Seltzer, New York. A group of interesting poems picturing life in many phases. Most interesting are the narrative poems.

We wish to correct an error in the poem Songcraft by Julia Boynton Green in the November issue. Line seven of the first verse should read: To finish, smiles the picture; lovelier none.