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NO. 2

The
LYRIC WEST

A Magazine of American Verse



IN THIS ISSUE

Vachel Lindsay | Louis Ginsberg

Margaret Tod Ritter | Mildred Fowler Field

Roy T. Thompson and others

GOTTFRIED HULT, A HUNTER OF SYMBOLS

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The Lyric West

Vol. V, No. 2

A Magazine Of American Verse

November, 1925

Edited by Allison Gaw and Ethelean Tyson Gaw

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The Lyric West

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Vachel Lindsay

The Parable of Deepness

In Glacier Park is a bottomless lake,” said a guide on
the east side to me.

“If you tie a big rock to a system of clothes lines,

“Tied end to end, forever and ever,

“You will find it more deep than the sea.”

“Now where is this lake?” I asked the smart guide.

“West of the Ranges,” said he.

“In Glacier Park is a bottomless lake,” said a guide on
the west side to me.

“If you let down a system of trout lines and wire,

“Tying on more, all your heart may desire,

“With a horseshoe for plumb on the end of the string,

“You cannot determine the depth of the thing.

“You will find it more deep than the sea.”

“Now where is this lake?” I asked that gay guide.

“East of the Ranges,” said he.

“In the ocean there sure is a bottomless place,”

Said a sailor in New York harbor to me,

“If you let down a cable with plummets to fit

“You will find it more deep than the bottomless pit.

“It’s a terrible place to get drowned at sea—

“We cannot dive down and rescuers be.”

“Now where is this water?” I asked the salt sailor.

“Just south of the North Pole,” said he.

“In the ocean there sure is a bottomless place,”
Said a San Francisco sailor to me.
“The sea spiders come when we ship in that sea
“And they fasten their threads to the ribs of the ship,
“Shark-proof-silk, resisting the lip
“Of sharks of the highest or lowest degree.
“And the spiders spin down and swim down and dive
down
“And bite everything in the green-weed-town,
“And clear things away and swim down and say,
“ ‘Oh where is the floor of this fathomless sea?’
“But the sea is as deep as the bottomless pit.
“No spider has ever dived down into it,
“Not a spider of highest or lowest degree.”
“Now where is this water?” I asked the proud sailor.
“Just north of the South Pole,” said he.

Now the China boy there in the chop suey dive
Serving us whisky in tea,
Sat down and continued the epic of deepness,
Delighting the salt and his sweetie and me.
He said, “There’s a well in Confucius’ back yard
“Overhung by a plain little cinnamon tree.
“The well has run dry, but is deep as the sky.
“There’s a star day and night you can see
“If you put your fool head in the shadowy boughs,
“Looking down through black leaves of the cinnamon
tree.

“You can let down a kite string as long as a river

“And tie on bright jades that will glitter and quiver
“In the light of the star in the depths of the well.
“It goes down like the slenderest glittering dragon,
“And passes all side-doors and cellars of Hell,
“Making dry rainbows there in the flagon.
“No thread has ever gone down to the star,
“The jewelled lost hub of Confucius’ blue car.”
“Now where is this well?” inquired the gay sailor,
“I would like to go there with a spider and trailer.”
“In Confucius’ back yard,” said the boy with a stare.
“I’m American born and have never been there,
“But I heard my great grandfather say it was there.”

When I climb on Sun Mountain and look up at noon
Then new revelations of glory come soon,
And the sky is a lake more deep than the dream
Of cowboy or sailor, or China boy gay;
And I need no kite strings to measure the way.

When I sleep on that height
There is midnight more deep
Than the bottomless pit, or the seas, or the wells,
Or the wise men’s great tales of sea spiders and hells.

When the great moon comes up,
I lie in a sea
Where the moon is the ship of God comforting me,
But between are wonders more deep than ever may be
In the lonely and strange lost green floors of the sea,
Or the deep drowned flowers in the depths of the Polar
Sea.

Miriam Allen de Ford

The Loveliest Things

Flame - points,
Gold - bright,
Quickened from the glow—
A fire and a sea are the loveliest things I know.

Wave - tips,
Foam - white,
Endlessly aflow—
A sea and a fire are the loveliest things I know.

B. Y. Williams

Forgotten

Beneath the great pine tree we rest,
 Dear John, Elizabeth, and I.—
I think I really loved him best.—
 Elizabeth was first to die,

And then I came. I knew his heart
 Was in the green mound on the hill;
But I was glad to have a part
 In caring for his comfort still.

And did he learn to love me some?
 I never knew. With his last breath
He smiled and said his time had come
 To sleep beside Elizabeth.

I kept their graves, and still lived on,
 Until I too was called; and so
The neighbors buried me by John—
 I had no other place to go.

And here we've lain for many years.
 The hill is now a pasture field
In strangers' hands; nobody clears
 The sunken mounds by weeds concealed.

The clumsy cows above us tread

To gain the friendly pine tree's shade.
I shudder in my narrow bed,
A little lonesome and afraid!

I'd like to reach my hand to John,
But I am held by more than death.—
I fear to learn he thinks upon
None other than Elizabeth.

Sydney King Russell

Advice to a Lover

This is idolatry
So to bow down
To frail flesh enclosed
In cunningest gown;

To bow before woman
With heart and desire.—
Have not the prophets
Risen in ire?

To kiss the pale hands,
To worship the eyes,
These are vain gestures;
All words are lies.

This, then, is sacrilege! . . .
Cover the head.
Rise from the cool earth;
Psalms will be said

Softly at morning
Ere you awake,
For your forgiveness;
Prayers for your sake

Slowly ascending

Shall echo above—
Slave to the beautiful,
Lover of love!

Sarah Marie Cook

Green Corn Dance

Santo Domingo Pueblo, New Mexico

The sun hangs high overhead,
Like rain its rays sink into the sand.
All is still in the dusty street.

Slowly blending into the air with the beating of my
heart,
Throbs the drum,
Slowly beginning, quickening,
As voices begin to rise in the chant.
A chant rising and falling,
Now hesitating, now quickening,
To the thud of dancing feet.

Strong dark faces tense with feeling,
Blue-black hair in rhythm swaying,
Silver on bronze breasts agleaming,
Moccasin of skunk-fur padding,
Green fir branches waving.

The chorus swells.
The drum throbs in the sunlight
Like the throbbing of my heart.

Like patter of rain on the mesa,
Like the rush of rain falling quickly,

Is the rising and falling cadence
Of rattles, shaken in rhythm—
Like patter of rain on the mesa,
Or rustle of thirsty corn,
Pebbles dashed roughly 'gainst rawhide,
In the month of green corn.

Fade from concious thought the watchers,
Fade away all sense impressions,
Save the penetrating sunlight,
Save the treading lines of dancers,
Save the chant of earnest chorus,
And the throbbing of the drum.

Louis Ginsberg

The Watch-Maker Muses

There! It is fixed! At last it's done!
How beautiful to see it run!
For cogs, obedient to law,
Are intercaught without a flaw;
And with a calm, unhurried speeding,
A steady strength the springs are feeding.
How delicate and gossamer
The little springs and spirals whir,
Till wheel and coil and cog and catch
With mightier wheels and spirals match;
And all this ticking and this beating
Are but diminished sounds, repeating
The movements of a greater clock,
The thunder of whose *tick* and *tock*
Forever rolls without a pause,
Reverberating heavenly laws. . . .
The strength that stirs from out these springs
Goes leaping out in planets' rings,—
This spring, that's bit by bit unbending,
Is hurling constellations, sending
What spinning suns forever wending!
This coil winds out into the sky
To spirals of the Nebulae;
About this balance-wheel with ease
Are pivoted the Pleiades:
This little watch will but rehearse

The ticking of the universe!

Does Someone coil the cunning springs
Of all the whirling starry rings?
Does Someone wind, beyond recall,
The greatest ticking clock of all?—
What springs and spirals does He trace,
As I do o'er this watch's case?

Ethelean Tyson Gaw

The Voice of Francis Drake

from Nombre de Dios Bay

1914

Oh England, mother England, the blue waves cover me
Where rainbow fires are flashing on crests of silver
foam,
And strange flowers fling their cloying sweets over a
tropic sea,
And tall palms sway on coral reefs a thousand leagues
from home.

Oh England, England, England,
I set your empire's bound
When, my shadowy sails acrowding,
Through the star-strewn billows plunging,
I sailed the world around.

Oh England, mother England, I faced the might of
Spain.
In their shrouds of writhing sea-mist the huge black
galleons hung
But the God of storms fought for us and we beat them
back again
And the scepter of the waters from the lordly Phillip
wrung.

Oh England, England, England,
Hold fast the gift I won,
When, the wild gray waters ploughing,

To an unknown splendor hasting,
I outstripped the setting sun.

Oh, England, mother England, the foe is at your door,
And I cannot lie asleeping in this sun-drenched foreign
grave.

I hear your navies thunder and the North Sea billows
roar

Shattering the twilight silence where the deep-sea
grasses wave,

Oh England, England, England,
I see your white cliffs stand
With the gray fogs round them wreathing,
Though three hundred years I'm sleeping
In this painted sunset land.

Oh England, mother England, I rise to meet your foe,
And my Devon lads come thronging from a thousand
English graves.

As we launch our ghostly galleon in the stormy sunset
glow,

Clear we send our challenge ringing o'er the wild
exultant waves,

Oh England, England, England,
We break death's leaden thrall;
From flower-sweet turf awakening,
Or from ocean caverns rising,
We are answering your call;

For the scales of fate are wavering as the cannon
thunders roar,

And the lightnings flash and quiver where the battle
billows swell,
While the waves of living valor break on death's eternal
shore
And men's souls, undaunted, grapple with the
unchained powers of hell;
 So England, England, England,
 As of old my place must be
With the sons of Britain battling
Through the jaws of hell and crashing
Down to death and victory.

Rosamond Eddy

Earthquake

Buildings are such patient things!
They have no feet nor hands nor wings.
For years they sit and watch the sky
And all the people passing by.
But now at last their chance has come—
The Earthquake beats his throbbing drum;
They leap and dance and laugh and cry,
Tossing their brick-dust souls on high!

Joan Dareth Prosper

Chanson

Come not with music, O my lover, come
On muted, twilight feet
That echo to no viol's throb, nor beat
Of any restless drum.

Bring me the gift of your repose. Afar
The dancers sway and swing
With laughter-laden song and lifted wing.
Here, dusk and silence are.

Put your demanding love away. The tide
Of rest creeps slowly in;
Even remotest sounds are wearing thin,
This peace—how strangely wide! . . .

Yet known to me, as longed-for things are known
And tasted over-soon.
Mine is the prescience of the waning June,
The crimson rose, full blown.

Bow not with grieving, O my lover, here
Where the calm tide flows deep.
Your breath shall blow me to the brink of sleep. . . .
Then, bend a little near,

Your lips. . . your lips! Was it a dream that stole

Between us? Let me wake
To the mad hunger of your kisses—Break,
Rather than part, my soul!

By an unfortunate error a line was omitted in CHANSON when it originally appeared in the August-September number. We reprint the correct form with pleasure.

Alaine Boswell

In a Cathedral

Incense,
Incense and myrrh and swinging censers.
A babe, the hay, and a mother with a waxen face,
A face expressionless.
A railing, candles upright and white, with each its little
halo.
Roses, salmon and white,
Fragrant, overwhelmingly sweet and still.
A murmur of prayers, and a quiet tapping of heels on
stone floors.
A long pale pillar in the foreground
Vanishing into night at the top, and dimness all about.
Incense and roses and Rembrandt dimness.
Incense and roses,
Incense.

A blue mist of incense
Drenching the sight and the soul in color of mysticism
and worship,
A black figure passing, like a Greek column rounded
and slim,
Like the shadow of the cathedral pillar.
A white hand and genuflexion,
A ruby like a drop of blood on the fourth finger.
Incense and candles and Rembrandt dimness,
Incense and candles,

Incense,
Smothering, potent, insinuating.

Why are we here?
What are these waxen figures in the hay?
What do they mean?
A tap-tap of heels on the stone floor;
A faint incensuous wind stirring the candles;
The rose window, melting blues and yellow and the
color of wine,
Dark, gorgeous with age's softening hand.

A hush!
The black figure stirring where it kneels,
The nape of a neck bent in prayer, honey-colored in the
light,
The long drawing of the hip,
An Aphrodite of Cyrene swathed in black.
I feel the rosy blush of old marble through the
georgette.
(Heavens, I am in a church!)
Incense, pagan thoughts and color,
Incense, pagan thoughts,
Incense.

"Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners
Now and at the hour of our death, amen. . . .
Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord be with thee!
Blessed art thou among women,
And blessed be the fruit of thy womb, Jesus!"
Beads slipping through the fingers,

A prayer, "Our Father."
Honey-colored neck like old marble,
The arrested grace of a dancer in the long-drawn hip,
The ruby on the fourth finger.
(Heavens! I am in church!)
Incense, impious thoughts and old marble,
Incense, impious thoughts,
Incense.

Robes, old white and purple and magenta.
Pillars—like a forest—Pan peeping around one.
(No, no! It is a church!)
The mutter of the organ—the trees will begin to wave
 and rustle their leaves
With the coming of the storm,
(No, no! It is a church!)
Pearly beauty, deep rumbling dissonance, and the
 pure glistening treble afar off,
The voice of Diana in the hunt.

"Our Father."
Incense and waxen figures and the manger,
Incense and waxen figures,
Incense,

Margaret Tod Ritter

To a Breasted Mountain

I curl my pigmy body
Between breast and swollen breast;
With white, exhausted body
I rest.

If smokes embrace thy ankles
I neither see nor care;
I lie five finger-lengths from heaven
And stare.

Upon thy fruitful bosom
I couch my pallid cheek;
There is no need, my beautiful,
To speak.

Alice Whitcraft Forsyth

“Sowing the Hempseed”

(All Hallows E'en)

*“I sow thee, I sow thee,
And he that is my true love
Come after me and pu’ thee!”*

Maid Kirsty, wi’ her hamespun grace,
Gaes steppitin’ ayant the town,
A-speirin’ Fate to show the face
O’ her true love where hemp was sown.
Maid Kirsty’s heart is sair an’ wae—
Her mither deaves her day an’ nicht
Tae wed wi’ rich auld Tam Macrae,
A dour, wart-nosed, gruitlin’ wight.

Maid Kirsty lo’es young Rabin Graeme
But daurna that her mither tell;
Much gear an’ siller has auld Tam—
Puir Rab has naething but himsel’!

*“I sow thee, I sow thee,
An’ he that is my true love
Come after me an’ pu’ thee!”*

Wi’ tears a-streakit doon her face
Maid Kirsty sows the witch’s seed
All braid an’ lang aboot the place,

But doots the charm's an empty deed.

*"I pu' thee, I pu' thee!
That hirplin' de'il, auld Tam Macrae,
May come, but ne'er he'll get thee!"*

Nae warlock's voice assails her ear—
Young Rab, behin' her, hauds her fast.
"Sing dool nae langer, Kirsty dear;
Your fate wi' mine this nicht ye've cast!"

Straight till the meenister's they ran,
An' there they vowed for guid an' ill.
Her mither an' that hyte auld man
Are yammerin' an' haverin' still!

Challiss Silvey

Chromatic

These are the little things,
Beloved,
Woven in my thoughts of you:
The sharp, sweet rush of words
Joyously tumbling from your throat
Like children on a holiday,
The scarlet music of your mouth
Living like a young wound in clear flesh,
And the shadowed fortitude
In the quiet evening of your eyes
When you knew sorrow. . . .

Desire

Beautiful at sea

Where the skylines fade,
Cargoes full for me
Is a ship of jade.

Old carved chests of coin;
Gems like rainbowed stars;
Ropes of pearls that join
With slim diamond bars;

Sculptured marbles white;
Mellowed canvases;
Shining, jasmined night;
Lover's fantasies;

Silver lutes that dare
Flaming ecstasies;
Perfumes rich and rare;
Red wines *sans* the lees;

Languorous, strange lands;
Unnamed, fragrant trees;
Level, shell-strewn sands
Fringing moon-washed seas.

There she rides and waits

Till her sails turn gold
At the warm, west gates
Where the day grows old. . . .

Day has aged to night!
Bearing but debris,
Waves of chrysolite
Foam their way to me.

Puppet of the tides,
Drifting aimlessly,
Derelict she rides,
Changeful as the sea.

Foolish heart to keep
Vigil all the day!
Childish eyes to weep
For a ship astray!

Ben Field

Paso del Norte at the Rio Grande

Proud city built on a fertile stream,
 Silent, and strong as fate,
Couchant, and dreaming in a dream,
 Yet importunate!

Like Egypt, on her rich Nile lands,
 Where centuries strangely creep,
You touch the outstretched, dark-hued hands
 Of peoples that fitfully sleep.

How many million years have frowned
 Your brooding, rock-ribbed hills?
God spelled you to be famed, renowned
 With the greatness that He wills.

Mildred Fowler Field

Purple Veins

He dreamed—just once—of touching a White Woman,
Slim, with hair like the sun on yellow elder;
Dreamed to writhe and curse in hungry fury—
Roused to curse the unknown White Man father
Whose thin, blue blood mixed with the native crimson
To burn a sinister purple through his veins.
He dreamed again. . . . but of life a field of cotton—
Green and brown and sometimes even purple.
When the day died. . . he envied his Black Brothers,
But hated them too, for singing at night in the
 canebrake—
Hated their “shine,” and the banjos’ whine, and the
 wenches
Fat. . . stinking of sweat and foul tobacco.
He knew they hated him for his yellow cunning—
Hated him—for his long, green eyes and his dreams.

Nights he watched the stars, like ghostly buzzards,
Gliding white on the blue-black roof of the heavens—
Half in fear that they knew his purple passion.
Nights he watched the stars and saw Her coming.

Half in fear. . . the swirling mists of morning
Cleft to show Her there, in the path to his cabin.
There, with hair like the sun on yellow elder,

There, with a mouth like the folded bud of the
flame-vine.

White as a jasmine star Her throat and bosom,
And the red sun carved Her white for his eyes to
ravish—

Turned to stone by a mocking-bird's pipe from a
sweet-gum,

Swift to flee at a hushed, black step on the sand.

All that day still trees hung over the bayou,
Copper, bronze, and black in the forms of women;
Witch-birds wheeled. . . while mist that haunted the
marshes
Had throat, and breasts, and rounded flanks of purple.
Dead men came with the dark to moan in the pines!

But. . . every day She followed the dawn. . and
vanished:

The long, gray moss in the trees turned green at Her
coming;

And every day he hid in the sword palmettos. . . .

But every day, as he picked the prickled cotton,

He listened to the birds to mock their trills and
quavers:

"Who-eet. . . Who-ee. . . Who-eet!" he called to the cotton,
And the Black Men laughed and rolled their eyes. . .
and left him.

But all night long, and every night, he saw them—

The Purple Women dancing over the bayou:

Swinging long scarves, and calling. . . calling. . . calling!

He'd slip to the brink and dream of death by
drowning—
Slap. . . Cool! Slap. . . Cool!. . . . Cool death to quench
his flame!

Purple death! . . . But still the Jasmine Woman
Came with the dawn. . . But a noose swung high from a
live oak,
Or was it moss?. . . and white-clad devils farther
Deep in the woods. . . or were they only birches?

Came a night when the moon burnt blood in the
canebreak.
Stark trees hung close to the water's edge in terror,
Afraid of their silver ghosts with boles of crimson.
Old owls called "*Who-oo are You-oo!*" and he followed
Down through the fern to the crimson lip of the
bayou—
Down where She crouched. . . carved red for his arms to
ravish!

He whistled low, at first, for his teeth were
chattering—
The purple blood *beat. . . beat* against his throat—
Whistled and watched and quivered there by the
bayou. . .
He didn't see the Shadow behind Her shadow,
Only Her mouth like the open bloom of the flame-vine;
Only Her throat and the tip of Her breast dyed scarlet.

He whistled long. . . and closer creeping, closer—

Out of the jungle, creeping. . . creeping. . . creeping—
Jungle Drums. . . Gibbering Apes. . . Peacocks. . .

A yellow claw leapt out to clutch Her shoulder.
He had not seen the Shadow behind Her shadow—
The shape with arms of moss and the face of water—
Reaching moss. . . and purple, purple water.

How She wavered upside-down in the bayou. . .
Slap. . .Cool! Slap. . .Cool!. . . a silver *plash*, then
Silence!
Reeling trees and rippled purple Silence!

Dorcas Davis

Amalfi, Italy

More than a picture and more than a song,
Clinging to memory all the life long;
Lapis-blue water and opal-pink sky,
Satin-smooth waves where dream ships go by,
Dust-brown of villa, dull gray of crag,
Splashed with a flame where trumpet vines lag,
Pulsing of water and blinding of sun,
Scent of the salt and the flowers in one,
Crystal of spray, foam that is pearl,—
Like diving in silver, blue waters unfurl.
Amalfi's a dream—a passion—a fire—
That runs through the veins like a breath of desire;
More than a picture and more than a song,
Clinging to memory all the life long.

Portia Martin

When Sunset Called

When sunset called

I went into the garden.

I saw tall hollyhocks

against the low church wall. . . .

I faintly saw a little curving moon. . . .

Then ecstasy came winging from the sky!

Earth was no longer, save a single cliff

that jutted sharp against the sun's descent

and was true rock,

but formed itself of cloud

and rested on the wind.

And I beheld a girl come walking through the clouds

who wore their misty aspect in her eyes,

and stood undizzied on the cliff's high edge

and looked upon the sun;

and felt the firm hard pressure of the rock

beneath her feet;

and, vibrant with arrested motion,

reared her head against the wind

to hear its song of gladness whisper through her

hair.

I looked. . . .

and from its cloudy den

beheld a beast come forth,
with high-pricked tasseled ears,
that ran to the cliff's edge
and lay along her feet
and watched the sun's fire with unblinking eyes.

I saw the sun go flaming down the day,
and knew it in themselves,
and they in it;
and all things Wonder
in the Mind of God.
I knew them for myself
and lived in them:
or separate,
or together,
they were I.

Then a great Voice cried out across the sky
and set the clouds in flight before the wind
that the red cliff dissolved itself in light
and entered in my being. . . .
and revealed the earth.

I saw tall hollyhocks
against the low church wall. . . .
I faintly saw a little curving moon. . . .

Herbert Rose

Ships of the Desert

Over the desert the yuccas are sailing,
Riding a phantom and moon-silvered sea;
Slender their spars, taking course in the starlight—
They sail, tall and frail, and beckon to me.

Over the desert the yuccas are plying,
Swaying masts eager to hasten the pace,
Whispering to me of their ecstasy
As they speed to their trysting place.

Tell me the port that the yuccas know,
Sailing the desert, singing adieu,
Like ghosts of the ships that follow the sea
To an unknown rendezvous.

The Artistry of the Stanza

II.

Some Onomato poetic Values

In our last number it was proposed in future articles to discuss stanzaic form, dwelling successively on interpretive values, connotative values, and purely aesthetic values. Pursuant of that intention, we present first a series of cases in which the movement of line combinations is clearly interpretive of physical movement basic to the thought of the poetic content. And at the head of the list may stand Browning's *Marching Along*, one of his three *Cavalier Tunes*.

Kentish Sir Byng stood for his King,
Letting the crop-headed Parliament swing;
And, pressing a troop unable to stoop
And see the rogues flourish and honest folk droop,
Marched them along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen singing this song.

And so on for three more stanzas of identical pattern. Note how the march movement is regulated by the drum-beat rhythm familiarly indicated by the syllables, *Rat-tat-tat-tat! Rat-tat-tat-tat! Rat-tat-tat rat-tat-tat rat-tat-tat tat!* or prosodically to be described as a series of dactylic tetrameter couplets with the second, fourth, and eighth feet regularly truncated, the truncated feet being further emphasized by rhyme-linking on heavy monosyllables.

Equally unmistakable is the gallop movement in Browning's *How they Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix*. That the gallop mood is the *motif* of the poem is clear, for the poet himself tells us, "I wrote it under the bulwark of a vessel off the African coast, after I had been at sea long enough to appreciate even the fancy of a gallop on the back of a certain good horse 'York' then in my stable at home." Thence

came the dream of that strenuous night ride with “the news that alone could save Aix from her fate,” upon the good horse Roland with

His low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track;
And his eye’s black intelligence,—ever that glance
O’er its white edge at me, his own master askance!
And the thick heavy spume flakes which aye and anon
His thick lips shook upwards in galloping on.

How naturally this trisyllabic tetrameter movement interprets the gallop is indicated by its reappearance in Scott’s *Lochinvar’s Ride* and, with the omission of the two syllables preceding the first accent, in *Boot and Saddle*, the third of Browning’s *Cavalier Tunes*. Compare, too, the effects in Longfellow’s *Paul Revere’s Ride*, where, however, the anapests of the tetrameters are mingled with iambs.

But this steady beat of hoofs on a hard road is not the movement of a horse over the shifting sands of a desert. Mark the change in Browning’s rhythm as he follows the Algerian tribesman *Though the Metidja* to the support of Abd-el-Kadr, leader of the native insurrection of 1833 against the French.

As I ride, as I ride,
To our chief and his Allied,
Who dares chide my heart’s pride
As I ride, as I ride?
Or are witnesses denied—
Through the desert waste and wide—
Do I glide unespied
As I ride, as I ride?

Here, not only does the mood refrain, “As I ride, as I ride,” appear as the first, fourth and eighth lines of each stanza, but the anapestic dimeter movement is oddly interrupted by the use of the rare four-syllabled foot regularly in each second, fifth and sixth line, while the rhymes on *ride* pulse steadily on,

thirteen to the stanza. This odd regularly irregular bounding motion, as contrasted with the movement of *How They Brought the Good News*, can be motivated only by the *lope* of the horse over the soft sand. The effect is unparalleled elsewhere in Browning.

I quote one other case of physical action from the same poet. It occurs in *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, the *jeu d'esprit* that Browning tossed off to amuse the little sick son of the actor Macready, and therefore it may well suggest how instinctively he suited form to thought. The Mayor and Corporation have refused the Piper his thousand guilders, and

Once more he stepped into the street
And to his lips again
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane;
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
Never gave the enraptured air)
There was a rustling, that seemed like a bustling
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and hustling;
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering,
Little hands clapping and little tongues chattering,
And, like fowls in a farm-yard when barley is scattering,
Out came the children running.
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

Note how the conventional tetrameter and trimeter of the opening pair of lines passes, with the pipe-music, into sustained tetrameters with the rhyme inverted, the movement cunningly slowed by accumulated spondees; how the rhyme of the fifth and sixth lines is interrupted and left permanently unfinished at the sudden outburst of noise from the children; how the outburst motivates a metrical shift into five lines of

bustling dactylic tetrameters with dissyllabic and trisyllabic internal and end rhymes; how the babble then subsides for a moment into trochaic and iambic tetrameters with simple monosyllabic end rhymes to give the rapidity of the running; and how finally in the last two lines it again bursts forth in merry dactylic tetrameters with dissyllabic internal and end rhyme.

The above cases have been deliberately chosen for their obviousness and all from the work of a single poet, and one frequently criticized as disregarding form! All these movements might be further compared with the slow halting march of *The Grammarian's Funeral*, and the perplexed, difficult advance of *Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came*, in both of which poems, however, the effects are more subtle.

See also the adroit *Green Corn Dance* on page 40, with its two metres against a background of *vers libre*.

We may at a future time give a parallel series of water effects, from the patter of Tennyson's *The Brook* to the gentle lappings of Rossetti's *The Stream's Secret*.

Here we have remaining only space to rise from these more pedestrian passages to the glorious opening of *Pippa Passes*, where as the sun-rise advances, Browning's lines climb progressively from monometer through all the intervening stages to their culmination in the long sweeping iambic hexameter at the close.

Day!
Faster and more fast,
O'er night's brim, day boils at last;
Boils, pure gold, o'er the cloud-cup's brim
Where spurting and suppressed it lay,
For not a froth-flake touched the rim
Of yonder gap in the solid gray
Of the eastern cloud, an hour away;
But forth one wavelet, then another, curled,
Till the whole sunrise, not to be suppressed,

Rose, reddened, and its seething breast
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then overflowed the
world.

In our next issue we shall examine a number of cases of
symbolism in stanzaic structure in which the relation of form
and thought is not so entirely on the physical plane.

A. G.

Gottfried Hult, a Hunter of Symbols

Here on the Pacific Coast we have been entertaining a poet almost unawares. In a cottage near the sea at La Jolla Professor Gottfried Hult, of the Department of Classical Languages, University of North Dakota, has been spending his summers for ten or more years. Like Richard Watson Gilder, whose friend he was, he has written poetry of a very high order, but has not achieved, nor sought after, wide recognition. He lives a quiet, reflective life, writing poems, or, as he terms them, "records" of his mental and spiritual experiences, because this creative function enables him to "live more fully." One is impressed from the very outset by his emphasis upon spiritual values. This was illustrated in a striking, if somewhat amusing, way last summer upon one of my visits to his cottage. Finding a spider in the house he set about killing it, but it made such a plucky fight that he desired, remarking, "The world needs such an example of pluck as a moral stimulus."

Professor Hult has contributed a number of poems to the *Century* magazine. He was represented in one of the first of the anthologies, *The Lyric Year*, published in 1912 by Mitchell Kennerley. He has published two volumes of poems: *Reveries and Other Poems*, 1909, and *Outbound*, 1920. He is now at work upon a play dealing with the life of Galileo, and upon a third volume of poems.

Hult's most individual trait is his unceasing use of symbols as expressive of our spiritual progress and destiny. As a spiritual adventurer he is ever alert for fresh meanings, fresh signs which might afford stimuli and encouragement in our dubious struggle. His success as a "hunter of symbols" is one of his outstanding achievements as a poet. While the philosophic impulse at the back of this constant search for symbols is not always conducive to the best results in poetry, Professor Hult

escapes the deadening didacticism into which he might fall because the boyish eagerness of his quest wholly occupies him. The reader joins hands with him in his search, and there is no effect of “pointing the way,” no suggestion of the moral teacher. The following poem not only illustrates his fondness for symbols, but his sense of beauty:

IF SWART DEATH BE A GYPSY

And if swart Death be a gypsy,
And Spirit a little child,
Whereof he reaves the mothering Earth,
Some night when the wind is wild,—

Crouched in the smouldering star-glow,
Or stretched before dawns ablaze,
Resting the vagrant feet; will it dream
Of ancient ways and days?

Perhaps Professor Hult's Greek and Latin training make him freer in the use of language than might otherwise be the case. He seems not only to have command of all ordinary words but to be able to coin words and phrases at will. Ordinarily, too many hyphenated expressions tend to slow up the *tempo* and retard the sense of the poem. But in Hult's poems, with some exceptions, they fit in quite naturally, and usually result in a delightful richness of effect. The two following examples lose their force when taken from their context, but will, perhaps, illustrate this phrase-making tendency: “The multi-myriad progeny of Spring”; “Million-funneled Industry.” A bed of kelp is described as “surf-buffed, storm-howled-at, ocean-hissed.” One is reminded, in this case, of the ruggedness of the *Beowulf*.

Hult's greatest single achievement, "The Great Refusal," is a twenty-two page blank verse narrative of the Biblical "rich young ruler" who refuses to sell his all and give to the poor. The story is told by the ruler himself on his death bed. Its quiet tone of sustained beauty, its emotional climax, its architectonic perfection make it comparable, if not superior, to Browning's "A Death in the Desert."

There are, of course, faults in these poems. Quite frequently words are too heavily freighted with meaning and thus retard the normal *tempo* demanded by the verse form. And, like nearly every other poet, Professor Hult is not rigorous enough in excluding poems of inferior merit. Many of the poems in the latter part of *Outbound* should have remained in the author's note-book or diary. But his best work is such as to merit high praise; he is one of America's authentic poets.—*Roy Towner Thompson.*

Announcement of Prize Awards

Judges

JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE (Mrs. Clinton Scollard)

Poet and critic—Former secretary of The Poetry Society of America.

HOMER A. WATT

Author, and Chairman of the Department of English, University of New York.

ROY TOWNER THOMPSON

Assistant Professor of Literature, University of Southern California and former editor of THE LYRIC WEST.

The Ben Field Prize of fifty dollars for the best narrative poem published in the fourth volume of THE LYRIC WEST is awarded to Lew Sarett's poem, *Angelique*, in the April number.

The Sarah Bixby Smith Prize of fifty dollars for the best lyric poem published in THE LYRIC WEST in the fourth volume of the magazine, *i. e.*, from October, 1924, to September, 1925, inclusive, will be awarded in the next issue.

The editors are happy to announce that prizes of fifty dollars each will again be offered by Mrs. Sarah Bixby Smith and Mr. Ben Field for poems appearing in Volume V. Further details will appear in a succeeding issue.

Between Editor and Reader

In selecting material for THE LYRIC WEST the editors take no account of the geographical distribution of their contributors. They select what is in their judgment the best that comes to their hand, and it is therefore purely fortuitous that the November issue appears to be a distinctly western number. Of the nineteen contributors appearing in this issue, ten are Californians. Of the nine others two come from Washington state, one from Mexico, two from Colorado, two from Iowa, one from Ohio, and two from New Jersey. Ten of the contributors are old friends of the readers of THE LYRIC WEST while nine come to our pages for the first time. The new comers are: Elaine Boswell, Sarah Marie Cook, Dorcas Davis, Mildred Fowler Field, Louis Ginsberg, Vachel Lindsay, Daisy E. B. Parrent, Herbert Rose, B. Y. Williams.

Vachel Lindsay is internationally known as one of the foremost living poets and is familiarly called "The Minstrel of America."

Mr. Ginsberg is a teacher of English, a graduate of Rutgers and Columbia, and the author of a volume of verse *The Attic of the Past*, published by Small, Maynard and Company. His poems have appeared in recent issues of *The Forum*, *The Ladies' Home Journal*, *Contemporary Verse*, and *The Measure*, and his work is represented in Louis Untermeyer's newly revised *Modern American Poetry*.

Sydney King Russell is the author of a volume of verse, *The Changing Flame*, published by the Four Seas Company.

Books Received

- The Eternal Quest.....Mary Brent Whiteside.
Erskine MacDonald Ltd.
- The Star Roper.....Russel Meriwether Hughes
Dorrance and Company
- Aflame and Afield.....J. George Brueckmann, Jr.
Dorrance and Company
- Candle and Cross.....Elizabeth Scollard
The Mosher Press
- Some Human Hearts.....Belle Willey Gue
Dorrance and Company
- Florida and other Poems.....Franklin N. Wood
Four Seas Company