

VOL. V

DECEMBER 1925

NO. 3

The
LYRIC WEST

A Magazine of American Verse



IN THIS ISSUE

Margaret Widdemer | David P. Berenberg

Lori Petri | Joseph Upper

Dudley Williams and others

REVIEW-THE ETERNAL QUEST

SUBSCRIPTION \$2.00 PER YEAR

SINGLE COPIES 20c

The Lyric West

Vol. V, No. 3

A Magazine Of American Verse

December, 1925

Edited by Allison Gaw and Ethelean Tyson Gaw

This edition is set from a page-by-page transcription of a scan of the issue. The transcription makes no editorial decisions; the decisions are listed in the file that produced this book. The advertising is not reproduced.

Set by LyricText on 08 August 2026 at 04:47.

CONTENTS

<u>Vision</u>	<i>Margaret Widdemer</i>	65
<u>The Dryads</u>	<i>Lilian White Spencer</i>	66
<u>Flame</u>	<i>Edith Mirick</i>	72
<u>Silver</u>	<i>Mirza French Mackay</i>	73
<u>A Sea Diver Speaks to his Inland</u>		
<u>Love</u>	<i>Walter Evans Kidd</i>	74
<u>The Romantic</u>	<i>David P. Berenberg</i>	75
<u>The Sea at Carrenage</u>	<i>Annicc Calland</i>	75
<u>Voices</u>	<i>Virginia Stait</i>	76
<u>In Heaven</u>	<i>Grace Reini</i>	77
<u>Hearing Debussy's "L'Après Midi d'un</u>		
<u>Faun"</u>	<i>John Jenkins</i>	78
<u>A Bookworm Speaks</u>	<i>Lori Petri</i>	79
<u>City Rivers</u>	<i>Frances Wierman</i>	79
<u>From off the Bay</u>	<i>Frances Hull Topping</i>	80
<u>Defiance</u>	<i>Mollie Prager</i>	81
<u>Inhibition</u>	<i>Joseph Upper</i>	81
<u>A Lad of Londonderry</u>	<i>Pauline Curran</i>	82
<u>The Witch Maiden</u>	<i>Beulah May</i>	83
<u>On a Wild Jack-Rabbit</u>	<i>J. Corson Miller</i>	83
<u>Symbolic Values in Stanzaic Forms</u>	<i>A. G.</i>	84
<u>Award of the Sarah Bixby Smith Prize</u>		90
<u>Review—The Eternal Quest</u>	<i>Dudley Williams</i>	91
<u>Our Contributors</u>		92

The Lyric West

Editors: Allison Gaw and Ethelean Tyson Gaw

Yearly Subscription \$2.00 Single Copies, 20 cents

Published Monthly, Except June and August, by the Editors

3551 University Avenue, Los Angeles, California

All Rights Reserved

All manuscripts should be accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelope. Otherwise The Lyric West cannot be responsible for their return

Entered as second-class matter, November 12, 1925, at the Post Office at Los Angeles, California, under Act of March 3, 1879. Copyright, 1925, Allison Gaw and Ethelean Tyson Gaw.

Margaret Widdemer

Vision

Oh, some are buried out of sight,
And some of them had better be,
Yet in warm dreams I walked tonight
With all who ever had loved me:

One had come back from being dead
And one from learning to be kind,
And gentle hands were on my head
As in one year too far behind,

And close their lips on my lips lay
(And I had thought I walked alone!)
And if they had forgot, this day
It was a thing they had not known:

And clasping close those leaned to me
I had forgotten till tonight,
And all was as it used to be
And all things had been always right. . . .

Oh, how can life be aught but fair
Whatever path we seem to go,
If past some curtain of mere air
All love is close, to give and know?

For all the dark is thick in flower

If only we could reach and see!
Tonight I walked for one bright hour
With all who ever had loved me.

Lilian White Spencer

The Dryads

I was a lonely seeker of lost Health—
Twin-brother, laughing at my side from birth,
Who won our games, though all the cheers were mine,
Where a white stadium in gracious curves
Bows toward her doughty knight, the college field.
He fled from me the day a ghoul of war,
Haunting far battles in a fetid shroud,
With poisoned kisses caught me, unaware. . . .

* * * *

I sought my brother in a lifted land
Of new horizons where the granite west,
As though directing to his hiding place,
Upraises stark brown fingers to the sky.
A cripple, maimed by men and capitol,
Diseased with plague of crowds whose high crusades
Are soon sick hopes that die of weariness,
I came to giant hills. Their brows of stone,
White-crowned or bare, serene against the sun,
Are adamant to puny frets of earth.
And I saw peace in that august retreat,
Kneeling with silence where great vistas spread
Unending rapture over range and range.
I too was dumb; for only He can speak
In light and shadow, forest, peak, and storm
Words that can tell the glory fittingly.

The wilds, an eager gypsy host, swung wide
My inn, a poor deserted cabin. Spring
Laid flowered carpets to the door and rang
A welcome on the bells of columbine.
Kings have not ruled such splendid realms as I
Who owned the brown and green, the blue and gold.
I slept and heard a lost voice call my name
In lusty challenge from the utmost height.
Do they make answer who reply with tears?
The brown, white-tonsured hills made offering
To my wan misery of healing wine
Poured from a turquoise chalice on the world;
At night the cup was gold-flecked ebony.
I drank at evening's altar, lenten-draped
In purple vesture, lit by them that bear
The twinkling candles of the universe.
Low in the west blazed peerless Sirius;
The Hunter bowed by Taurus and his maids;
All, weary of the chase and reconciled,
Departing side by side to summer rest.
I thought with Job: "Canst loose Orion's bands,
Bind up sweet influence of Pleiades,
Or guide Arcturus?" Now that wonder star,
Heaven's most ardent runner, climbed the east,
Swinging his ruddy torch triumphantly;
And at his feet Virgo's bright taper burned.
Gold-haloed, treading rosy ways of dawn,
Each day came like a sweet girl-saint to prayer,
Telling on chaplets of auroral dew
Her happy orisons. The wide blue nave

Of her great temple echoed with the chant
Of swift-winged choristers that hurried north
For April matins. Ardent hours held
Life, in sharp nectar, to my thirsty lips.
Their jealous, watchful lord, the sun, looked on,
And when his crimson galleons set sail,
From ports of twilight carried them away.
I was not left unsolaced. Hesperus
Stole from the fading azure out to me.

Nor was I lonely now, for Health hallooed
In joyous hide-and-seek through near high zones.
My watchdog was a coyote. Does he bark,
I wonder, yet, beside the weeping rocks—
My spring that trickles down the mountain's breast?
Daily a messenger shrieked up to me
And waved a signal flag of thunder-cloud;
Then, pausing in the canyon rift below,
Threw off my mail and provender and went,
With one long piercing whistle of disdain,
About the trifling business of the world.
I saved the newspapers, unread, to use
For kindling.

I had neighbors, dryad girls,
Tall, white, and beautiful. June brought them gowns
Of shimmering jade. They grouped about the door,
Girdling my borrowed acre with a ring
Of magic, as they danced in every breeze
Like green light turned into a waterfall.
Men call them aspen trees, but they to me
Are song and laughter of the golden age

Still lingering upon these holy hills.
They were my gentle friends, saluting me
With fair leaf-laden arms, and when I dared
Lay reverent touch on their blanched loveliness
I found it marble cold, but hand and cheek
Bore fairy powder from their pure caress.
Aspens are always tremulous with joy
Save when a marvelous hushed moment comes
And kisses them to silent ecstasy.
They nestle, timid babes of yesterday,
Beside the age-old pines that dote on them.
The eagle from his eyrie in the spring
Beholds pale nymphs and sombre foster sires;
Then, they seem captive pools of far-strayed sea
Surrounded by dark jailers like its cliffs.

O here was balm indeed for all my wounds!

So, summer passed. . . . The hills dismissed me, healed,
But I was drugged with their sweet habit now.
The lost was found: Health clutched my arm's new
brawn
And cried: "Your work is waiting. Let us go!"
I had forgotten it. I would forget,
Who had been here before the Scorpion
Began his long slow crawl across the south
With old Antares, patriarch of suns,
Whose final glare bade me depart as well.
But the immortal shepherd lad and lass,
Altair and Vega, roamed high pastures still,
And why not I? The great horns of the Bull,

A down-arched threat, retreated up the east.
Aldebaran, his red eye, winked at me
In promise of rare sport should I remain.
Orion was in chase! How could I go
Where city walls shut out the friendly stars
And pavements spurn the press of dryad feet?
The birds went in my stead. Still in my grove
The darling witches danced, but now they told
Gay secrets to the first chill winds. I heard
The scintillating talk, yet could not guess—
And rabbits cocked their knowing ears in vain.
Now, nights arrived with menace from the north
And morning wore a filmy veil of rime
Whose white clouds lifted when the warm noon smiled.
Then—suddenly—the aspens blushed. I knew!
On all the hills it was their marriage day
To winter. They were decked in bridal gowns,
Rifled from autumn's treasure chest, and climbed
In blithe processions heavenward; their ranks
A dazzling panoply of quivering gold.

Gold! Gold! Wealth vast enough to ransom all
Life's ugliness as dower for a spouse
Whose kiss and bed are cold and withering—
Yet they but lie beneath his snowy sheets
Asleep until that gallant lover, spring,
Comes courting them again with gifts of green.
My dryads wore the brightest robes of all.

This heart of mine, that scorned the creeds of men,
Believes—converted by a hermit saint

Named Beauty, who performed a miracle
On those dear heights with yellow aspen trees,
Turning the universe and my gray soul
To flame . . . *God lives!* And I have seen His face.

My brother spoke: "The time has come!" I cried,
"No, not till I have walked with Him awhile!"

My dryads waved farewell. Their shimmering scarves
And hair and garments were a golden rain,
The sun my guide, the moon my sentinel,
I mounted as my heart sang *glorias*
Where saffron rivers at the flood tide ran
Between high-towered walls of conifer.
By far, still streams I came on tragedy
Of aspens slain for food and roof-tree use;
I had not thought that I could learn to hate
The beaver, master of such solitudes.
I dared the crags and wrestled with the winds;
Transparent pinions beat me to the ground
While pines but nodded. They were casual,
Indifferent,—so many storms had passed.
I reached the eagle's eyrie. . . God, Who gave
Eyes that can see all ecstasy at once,
Why not a tongue to tell it? Even here
Familiar loveliness soothed anguished awe
At too great vision of His world. Below
Aspens were burning lakes whose bright waves dashed
Against dark circling walls of evergreen.

From that high hour of pinnacle I turned

Toward home. My neat wee nest well merited
The sacred name, for it had mothered me
And soon would send me out to life, a man.
Down, down I hurried, laughing—then—I saw—
No little cabin set in groves of fire. . .
Here stood a squalid hut, a bare stripped field,
And their first owners. Paid assassins, all,
Though other men would call them woodcutters
And even kindly fellows! Never I!—
For they had murdered my girl goddesses.
O dear prone victims! Robes and hair of gold
Were strewn, soiled, trampled on by ruthless feet;
And in the shambles white limbs that had danced
Lay flayed, dismembered, piled in dreadful rows.
My nymphs and their enchanting sisterhood
On near-by hills had suffered martyrdom.
Like Ursula and her ten thousand maids,
Their pure hosts, girt with shining armor, fell
In the red carnage of barbaric war.
The butchers grinned at me. One yawned, one swore,
One shoved before my grief a printed page
Torn from the close-sealed stack of newspapers
I kept for kindling. On its pallid front
I read this legend: “Wanted aspen wood
For mattresses.”

O, may sleep wander far
From those who lie on dead joy of the hills!
Let nightmares gallop on the evil couch
Wrought from a slaughtered forest! There are shrines
That nature’s will declares inviolate.

It is not good to rob the spring of glee,
Steal summer's laughter, autumn's chant of praise—
The aspens are all these.

I bowed my head:
"Yes, brother, it is time. I wait the cry
Of that which seeks me in the canyon depths.
To-day it shall not summon us in vain.
The spell is broken, and those small white stumps
Are tombstones; each one marks a grave of dreams.
I go forever. Here spring comes no more."

* * *

And yet I bear spring always in my soul.
No thieving town can steal the blue and gold,
The green and brown, the dryads and the stars
From one to whom God spoke upon the heights—
And though I walk on crowded city streets,
Gray, like the rest, with weariness, I smile,
Knowing He lives, for I have seen His face.

Edith Mirick

Flame

I am cold as milk-white stone,
Snow for blood and ice for bone.
Goddess, thaw this chill of death—
In my nostrils breathe your breath!

*Mortal, framed of icy bone,
Blest is woman carved of stone!
I can give what you desire—
Breath of life and blood of fire.
Take, oh, take not what I proffer!*

Goddess, I take what you offer!
Paint my cheek until it glows
With the scarlet of the rose—
Warm my breasts, encarnadine
These hard, frigid lips of mine—
Tint the ivory of my flesh.
In my stiffened tresses mesh
Golden arrows of the sun!

Take my lips, Pygmalion!
Ah, sweet Goddess, see! the fire
In my veins leaps high and higher!
See the mad flames leap and dart,
Piercing, smothering my heart!

* * * * *

Goddess, shield me! Hide my face!
Once again I ask your grace!

*You, who once were ice and stone,
I have given blood and bone,
I have given flame and fire!
What, then, is this new desire?*

Of those gifts you gave me, all
Turned to wormwood and to gall,
And that devastating, rash
Flame has burned itself to ash!
You, who made of ice this bone,
Turn, oh, turn me back to stone!

Mirza French Mackay

Silver

Francesca della Gordia, the moon hangs high.
Do you remember such a night, when you and I
Walked softly in the moonlight, by the Bay of Napoli?
Ah, the silver of the olives, and the silver of the sea!

Francesca della Gordia, the years march slow;
That night beneath the olive trees was centuries ago.
My ships, abrim with silver, have all come back to me;
But—the silver of the olives, and the silver of the sea!

Francesca della Gordia, I wonder if you care;
I wonder if a silver wreath lies on your dusky hair;
I wonder if it's moonlight on the Bay of Napoli—
Ah, the silver of the olives, and the silver of the sea!

A Sea Diver Speaks to His Inland Love

I bring from sea-cool depths
Gold-rust coins from a pirate ship—
Frail shells of amber gloom—
And flash of citron fish that slip
In phosphorescent-edging peacock flow—
The image of a quinquireme—
Vague moss and adroit ferns that bloom
In amethystine coral-caves
Where nereids pluck—slow, slow—
Their lyres to silken sounds of waves. . . .
And from a dusk sea-garrison
Where plants with sprouts of fire-green grow,
I snatched a mermaid's dream
And glassed it in a liquid sphere
Of the reverberation of a sunken bell.

These gifts I bring; take them from me.

But do not beg me to remain.
The blunt intrigues of life, the pain
Of a land-death—then worm-tormented flesh!
Oh, I must back, my dear,
Back to the black-bronze deep
To feel the booming sea
Heave tons of salt above my death—
Down there my flesh can sleep.

David P. Berenberg

The Romantic

When she held up her lips to him, soft, red,
Young as the butterfly whose torn cocoon
Still dangles limply from the branch, she said:
“I have not loved till now. I love you!” Moon
And the sea, and the white sand of the shore
Made her shine lovelier than dew and flame.
And lovelier than all, the smile she wore.
Night held her glowing whiteness in a frame.
He knew the heavy burden of long years;
The burden of cold embers, loneliness.
And she was golden youth that had no fears,
Not knowing even all her loveliness.

He kissed her lips, and turned to watch the tide,
And feared the virgin whiteness at his side.

Annice Calland

The Sea at Carrenage

Came fierce wild stallions racing in
Furious and free;
Their white manes flying in the wind
Across the purple sea.

Their sharp hoofs pounding on the rocks
Resounded through the hills —
Until the wild sea-clan in me
Roused to their savage wills.

Virginia Stait

Voices

To James Lane Allen

*"I should like the memory of my life to give out the sound of a
flute."*

—A Choir Invisible.

I am not dead, I think,
 But all unlessoned where the dead should know,
For every pipe that plays is still the link
 For thought to come and go!

The lyre strings are dear,
 And bring me to a halting place of dreams,
That every convoy takes down every year,
 And every ghost redeems.

And all the organ tones
 Of ancients still pass my narrow door,
And I march with the chords one longer owns
 When longer heard before!

And harp by harp I keep,
 With *falas* that the day and night have sung,
Unto immitigable things of sleep,
 Unto vales restrung.

But oh, the flute to me

Brings the abiding-places of the past
As close—as close—as shipwreck to the sea,
Or flesh to dust made fast!

Grace Reini

In Heaven

Oh yes, I know,
Here are the lilies
And the streets of gold;
But there, there he is sobbing.—
Let me go!

Ah yes, I know,
Here there is love
And joy untold;
But there, there he is yearning.—
Let me go!

Ah yes, I know,
Him thou wilt gather
Into thy fold;
But now, now he is calling.—
Let me go!

John Jenkins

Hearing Debussy's "L'Après Midi d'un Faun"

Softly through a greenwood
Quivers the simple melody of Corydon's flute;
A brooklet leaps in rhapsodies through cascades of
jewels
To a shallow quiet pool where float matinal-born lilies;
Upon the banks like altar fire leaps a flame of
marigolds.

There is a sound among the cypresses,
Hoof beating thick grass rhythmically . . .

O, could I be like some Endymion wandering for
shadow love
Through such enchanted woods;
Could I listen to a shepherd's flute;
Could I hide in the cover of peach-colored flowers
To watch a faun leap and dance!
Great praise of Pan!

Yet these I might consummate in some fanciful
Arcadia,
Listening to the enthralling wood winds
In that mighty painting of melody.

Lori Petri

A Bookworm Speaks

You pity me, who think I dwell apart,
Nurtured by pallid shadows and thin dreams.
And I—I pity you, knowing art
A lifted lamp that peers in Beauty's face.
I own no dusty bounds of time and place—
Brocaded queens bid me to meat and drink;
I steal thro' hidden groves where moonlight gleams
On elfin folk awhirl to reedy tunes:
I cheer the Grecian discus-throwers' grace.
My suns rise on forgotten worlds, and sink
In seas of crimson over unborn lands.
Roses for me bloom thro' perennial Junes,
And never shall the lovely lips and hands
I kiss yield to the lust of withering years!
So spare your scorn, I pray you, tho' I seem
A fool who wanders phantom hemispheres,
Hungering for life and gnawing husks of dream.

Frances Wierman

City Rivers

A vision of rivers! Turbulent traffic streams
That wind and mingle, clog and crash;
Rivers of jazz spurting thin cacophonies along
Shallow cabaret-beds; ribbonry rivers of girl-souls
Breaking athwart man-rocks. Muddy underworld
 sluices
Feeling their way to hidden sinks;
Rivers of shaded windows; rivers of lights;
Rivers of money sucking around the eddies
Of human hands. Rivers of talk that beat
Against shores of indifferent men. Far overhead
Pure rivers of sunbeam, starshine, and moonlight
Forever falling down unmeasured inclines
Of cloud and mist!

Frances Hull Topping

From off the Bay

All day
He goes his singing way;
Birds still their note
To catch the sweetness from his throat;
And little feathery grasses
Clap their hands in greeting
As he passes:
The willows,
Sobbing with delight,
Mingle their tears
Within the laughing waters
Of the Bay

And now
A shadow has fallen across the way,
Stilling his song:
And all night long
The silk and velvet mosses creep
To spread a canopy for his long sleep;
The white azaleas lift their pointed cups
To catch the spray
That drifts from off the Bay.
Touched by the breeze,
The whispering leaves
Make elfin music in the singing trees—
A tender, tinkling sound of silver strings,

Or fairy bells swayed to and fro
By unseen wings.

But yesterday
A soft wind blew from off the Bay,
And all night long
I heard the lilting cadence of his song.

Mollie Prager

Defiance

Breasts,
How I hate them!
White, mysteriously scented breasts
Of women,
Luring men with their promises;
Mocking pretense of forgetfulness
From murky, smoke-covered life;
Warm, full breasts of mothers
Suckling infants in false anticipation
Of happy, glorious Life;—
Hypocritical breasts,
I despise them!
(He told me
That mine were exquisite,
Tiny white hills,
And then he left me.)

Joseph Upper

Inhibition

The night is pointed
With cruel stars,
And sharpened
By the steel war chant
Of ambushed crickets.

If there were a blood-red moon,
One could carefully
Kill the thing he loved
And bury it
Beneath a monumental pine tree.

But the cold bayonets
Of the stars
Prevent me;
And the revengeful crickets
Have made me weary of both love and hate.

Pauline Curran

A Lad of Londonderry

My mother was a proud mermaid,
My father a Dooney fay,
And I opened my eyes where the river of night
Came down to the lake of day.
I dance to the laugh of the rising sun,
I flee the moon-god's tears.
My songs are flung from the mountain tops
And echoed by chanticleers.

I reach for the silver of falling stars
Where earth and water meet,
And I have stolen the gray gull wings
That flash on my dancing feet.
My food I seek in the white sea foam,
I drink of the pale wind's breath;
I look where the quickened Phoenix stirs
But my eyes are closed to death.

Beulah May

The Witch Maiden

Moon-arching eyebrows, long hidden eyes,
Mouth like a spear thrust, bloody and sweet,
Limbs taut as bow string, sharp narrow thighs,
Quick as a tiger on soft padded feet,

One with the jungle, the night, and the shade,—
Javanese maiden in *batik* sarong,
You hunted evil ere chaos was made,
Wove incantations and crooned ancient song.

Here by an altar I mumble a charm,
Take a live rooster and pull it apart,
That fighting or hunting I come to no harm
Nor wake to find bloody hands tearing my heart.

J. Corson Miller

On a Wild Jack-Rabbit

His legs, like well-oiled pistons long and lean,
Keep rhythm'd stride across the baking plain;
In motion he is nature's speed-machine,
That functions well in sun or snow or rain.
His chiselled nose cuts danger-scents in twain—
The wind—he can outrun it, cool and clean—
But now his foes are men of maddened mien,
Whose guns spread flesh as cyclones scatter grain.
The crafty jackal—the lewd hyena—these
He scorns; but once, when the Rio Grand' ran red
With blood of Mexicans, he sniffed hot lead,
As bullets spat black hate upon the breeze,
And, zipp!—he saw his running-mate fall dead,
Blood-punctured near the moon-drowned cotton-trees.

Symbolic Values in Metrical Forms

Symbols are of three types. They may be purely conventional as when, in the signal language of the railroad man, the green flag or green light is used to signify, "Advance with caution." There is no essential reason why green should serve to indicate such advance; that color has been arbitrarily selected by the railroad authorities for that purpose. Again, symbols frequently derive their significance from historical conditions surrounding their origins. Thus the green branch, among savages the equivalent of the flag of truce, was once symbolic of the fruitful earth and owes its power to the original veneration for Mother Earth in primitive nature-worship; and the thirteen bars of the American flag typify the original colonies. Or, in the third place, a symbolic relation may be based upon some natural parallelism between the symbol and the thing symbolized. Thus the circle, a line having neither beginning or end, is generally recognized as a symbol of eternity; red, the color of blood, is our sign of danger; and in certain church rituals three taps upon a bell (or three groups of three taps) symbolize the Trinity.

It is, in general, to symbolism of the third class, natural symbolism, that we refer when we speak of a given stanza as having a symbolic value. Of course, symbols of the second class occasionally appear in this connection, as when in *The Temple* George Herbert built up upon the printed page combinations of lines in the form of *The Altar* and *Easter Wings*. But these require for their effect the cooperation of the printer, and have symbolic value for the eye only—they have no message for the ear other than the message contained within the words as words. We must not forget that poetic effects are

fundamentally appeals to the ear. We are therefore here concerned only with line combinations that through metrical movement, rhyme frequencies, and the like, reinforce by suggestion the message of the words, paralleling in sound-effects conceptions that exist in a sphere different from those of sound or motion. Such line combinations, while less artificially complex than Herbert's figure-poems above referred to, are, unlike his, within the domain of genuine poetic effects, and are dependent upon relations that are natural, not historical, still less merely conventional.

There is, of course, a natural parallelism between brevity of line-length and diminutiveness of size. Alexander Pope, who wrote little that was not in the iambic pentameter, made a striking exception in the case of his *Ode to Quinbus Flestrin the Man Mountain, by Titty Tit, Poet Laureate to his Majesty of Lilliput*. In this poem, written after Pope had read the then new *Gulliver's Travels*, the six-inch-tall Lilliputian, gazing at the six-foot-tall Gulliver, addresses him in couplet form, as was conventional in the age of Pope, but in a couplet appropriately reduced from five feet to two.

In amaze
Lost I gaze!
Can our eyes
Reach thy size!
May my lays
Swell with praise
Worthy thee!
Worthy me!
Muse, inspire
All thy fire!
Bards of old
Of him told,
When they said

Atlas' head
Propp'd the skies:
See! and believe your eyes! *Etc.*

At the other extreme Tennyson, writing on *Vastness*, appropriately chose the eight-foot line, the longest in which verse can easily be composed.

Many a hearth upon our dark globe sighs after many a
vanish'd face.

Many a planet by many a sun may roll with the dust of
a vanish'd race.

Raving politics, never at rest—as this poor earth's pale
history runs,—

What is it all but a trouble of ants in the gleam of a
million million of suns? *Etc.*

Companion studies of monotony and variety of mood, each cunningly reflected in metrical effects, appear in Tennyson's *Mariana* and *Madeline*. I quote first the latter.

Thou art not steep'd in golden languors,
No tranced summer calm is thine,
Ever varying Madeline,
Thro' light and shadow thou dost
range,
Sudden glances, sweet and strange,
Delicious spites and darling angers,
And airy forms of flitting change.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,
Thou art perfect in love-lore.
Revealings deep and clear are thine
Of wealthy smiles: but who may know

Whether smile or frown be fleeter?
Whether smile or frown be sweeter,
 Who may know?
Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow
Light-glooming over eyes divine,
Like little clouds, sun-fringed, are thine,
 Ever varying Madeline.
Thy smile and frown are not aloof
 From one another,
 Each to each is dearest brother;
Hues of the silken sheeny woof
 Momently shot into each other.
 All the mystery is thine;
Smiling, frowning, evermore,
Thou art perfect in love-lore,
 Ever varying Madeline.

A subtle, sudden flame
By veering passion fann'd
 About thee breaks and dances:
When I would kiss thy hand,
The flush of anger'd shame
 O'erflows thy calmer glances,
And o'er black brows drops down
A sudden curved frown:

But when I turn away,
Thou, willing me to stay,
 Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest;
But, looking fixedly the while,
All my bounden heart entanglest
 In a golden-netted smile;

Then in madness and in bliss,
If my lips should dare to kiss
Thy taper fingers amorously,
Again thou blushest angerly;
And o'er black brows drops down
A sudden-curved frown.

The key-note to the effects of this poem is the phrase "ever varying" in the thrice repeated refrain. This idea governs the form throughout. The material and rhyme sequences are subtly unpredictable. Opening in iambic tetrameter, the movement slips with the third line into a trochaic tetrameter rhyming with iambic line 2. Lines 4 and 5 are similarly rhymed but metrically mismated. Line 6 leaps back to rhyme with the double-syllable rhyme-word in line 1 although line 7 answers the monosyllabic rhyme-word in line 5. And in the second stanza note the studied disappointments of the reader's expectations and the careful mismatchings of rhymed lines. But the most striking effects occur in stanza III. With the word "sudden" in the opening line followed by "veering" in the second, the metre quickly twists for the first time in the poem into a swift-thrusting trimeter, in which movement it continues for ten lines. Then, in fear of the departure of her victim, the coquetry of the child assumes a smiling mood mirrored in eight tetrameters, mainly sweetly trochaic and flowingly versified, and then, with the recurrence of the frown mood, reverts for two lines to the jagged trimeters, with which the poem abruptly ends.

With the coquettish, whimsical mutability of *Madeline* compare the studied monotony in mood, phrasing, and stanzaic construction of *Mariana*, of which we quote the first two of the seven stanzas.

With thickest moss the flower-plots
Were thickly crusted, one and all:
The rusted nails fell from the knots
That held the pear to the gable-wall.
The broken sheds look'd sad and strange:
Unlifted was the clinking latch;
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated grange.
She only said, 'My life is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said;
She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!'

Her tears fell with the dews at even;
Her tears fell e'er the dews were dried;
She could not look on the sweet heaven,
Either at morn or eventide.
After the flitting of the bats,
When thickest dark did trance the sky,
She drew her casement curtain by,
And glanced athwart the glooming flats.
She only said, 'The night is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said;
She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!'

Here there is only sufficient variation to keep the general monotony within the limits of what is artistically bearable. The deserted girl, "without hope of change," looks day and night upon the same forlorn landscape. In each of the seven stanzas the first eight lines are inevitably iambic tetrameter

with comparatively few substituted feet and with masculine rhymes in the scheme *ababccddc*. Lines 9 to 12, again rhymed *abab*, are alternately iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter with double rhyme in the first and third, but this slight relief is more than compensated for by the duplication of the “aweaary,” and by the almost identical reiteration of the entire quatrain in every stanza except the last, where it is intensified for climax. The insistent monotonous regularity here is as characteristic of Mariana’s situation as in the preceding poem the studied instability is characteristic of the child coquette.

A striking case of symbolically similar, yet contrasted, stanzas occurs in the joyful duet between the Earth and the Moon in Act IV of Shelley’s *Prometheus Unbound*. Sixteen stanzas of exultation over the downfall of the tyrant Jupiter are given to the Earth, interspersed with six given to the moon. The passage begins:

THE EARTH

The joy, the triumph, the delight, the madness!
The boundless, overflowing, bursting gladness,
The vaporous exultation not to be confined!
Ha! ha! the animation of delight

Which wraps me, like an atmosphere of light,
And bears me as a cloud is borne by its own wind.

THE MOON

Brother mine, calm wanderer,
Happy globe of land and air,
Some Spirit is darted like a beam from thee,
Which penetrates my frozen frame,
And passes with the warmth of flame,
With love, and odour, and deep melody
Through me, through me!

So the exultant Earth and his mild sister-bride float through space, each chanting in an individual mood and stanzaic form. The Earth's rhyme scheme is *aabccb*, with the first, second, fourth, and fifth lines in heavy iambic pentameters and the third and sixth lines in still heavier iambic hexameters, the last giving a characteristically masculine massive stanza ending. The Moon, his gentle satellite, deriving her light from his, parallels his stanza but softens it. Her rhyme scheme is again fundamentally *aabccb*, but the first, second, fourth, and fifth lines are now reduced to the milder tetrameter, often softly trochaic, while the third and sixth lines rise merely to pentameter, and the stanza is given a feminine conclusion by the addition of a graceful dimeter consisting of a one-foot phrase emotionally repeated. Here, as in many another passage, the deliberateness of Shelley's exquisite stanzaic artistry is indubitable.

Finally, we may quote a very striking case from Tennyson's *Maud*, Part II, section ii.

See what a lovely shell,
 Small and pure as a pearl,
 Lying close to my foot,
 Frail, but a work divine,
 Made so fairly well
 With delicate spire and whorl,
 How exquisitely minute,
 A miracle of design!

The passage especially stresses the wonder of the shell's spiral form, and the stanza sympathetically assumes the rhyme scheme *abcdabcd*, that is, it rounds the circle *abcd* twice while advancing, which is the exact form of the spiral! And that this is no accident is proved by the fact that on recurring to the thought of the shell in stanza viii of the same section, it repeats the form with one slight variation,

abcdabed.

Strange, that the mind when fraught
With a passion so intense
One would think that it well
Might drown all life in the eye,—
That it should, by being so overwrought,
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense
For a *shell*, or a flower, little things
Which else would have been passed by!

And excepting in these two *shell* stanzas, this form does not elsewhere occur in all of the many stanzaic forms of that long and complexly musical poem.

In our next issue we shall consider some connotative values of various stanzaic forms based upon an acquaintance with their various historical uses.

A. G.

Award of the Sarah Bixby Smith Prize

Board of Judges

JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE (Mrs. Clinton Scollard):

Poet and critic; formerly 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; former Editor of THE
LYRIC WEST.

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, is awarded to Joan Dareth Prosper for the lyric, *Faggots*, in the February issue.

Honorable mention is given *A Marriage Ceremony*, by Velma Byers Hutchinson, in the April number. One of the judges, Jessie B. Rittenhouse, awarded this lyric first place.

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.

Review

“The Eternal Quest and Other Poems”

By MARY BRENT WHITESIDE

If one wished to define and illustrate the quality which forms the high merit of Mary Brent Whiteside’s *The Eternal Quest*, he might best quote the opening passage of her title poem and the final lines of the closing piece, *A Sculptor Speaks of Beauty*.

The roadside clay, baked by the flaming sun,
May yield a model for a chalice, meant
For some divine but yet untasted sacrament,
Nor is the infinite work of beauty ever done.

Between the first page of the lovely little book and the last lies the flowering of such an ideal, and the development proceeds in many a various and impressively beautiful expansion. The effect of that expansion is as if one beheld in his gloom one of the *Torches* of which the lady sings:

*The Eternal Quest, Erskine MacDonald, Ltd. London

New flames, new light, and over all,
The ringing challenge of a call
To pierce the shadows, and to mark
How flames leap brightest in the dark,
Lest we should fall.

That effect reaches us in brief lyrics, short ballads of soul venture, tenderly phrased pieces of *genre*, choric odes of aspiration, and, as her own invention in type and mode, those singularly moving “dramatic miniatures.” Beneath all these one hundred and thirty odd pieces lies the affirmation of the “chief end of man”—unremitting quest after higher and

further and more abundant life beyond mere living,— a progress along a highway where each experience is but a vantage point in an ever more and more realized potentiality of spiritual peace and power *sub specie aeternitatis*.

God, we have come so far!

What splendid way lies yet ahead?

Shall we not move until thy further word is read

In some diviner star?

Miss Whiteside has case and strength of technique; she has a buoyancy in epithet not unlike Meredith, though her daring is toned to the manner of the sweetness of Shelley's lyric swell; she is deeply humane in her vicarious awareness of pain and sorrow; she is tender in rendering the quiet emotion of souls too humble to be bold; she is luxuriant in presenting oriental places, far-off times, and ancient peoples; she is sensitive in her subtle perception of sensuous appeals in the ways of nature and of man. Thus to sing is to extend the life of the hearer, to transfigure it.

Dudley Williams

Our Contributors

Once again western poets lead in the pages of THE LYRIC WEST. Of our eighteen contributors in this issue nine are from California. One comes to us from Oregon, one from Colorado, making eleven from west of the Mississippi. One comes from Illinois, two from Washington, D. C., three from New York, and one from Virginia.

We welcome six newcomers—David P. Berenberg, John Jenkins, Lori Petri, Mollie Prager, Grace Reini and Frances Hull Topping.

Special Offer

A subscription to THE LYRIC WEST is an ideal gift for a poetry-loving friend. Until January 1, 1926, two subscriptions, one of which may be a renewal, may be had for three dollars. This will afford you a timely opportunity to renew your own subscription, and to send the magazine for one year as a gift. We will see that each person to whom you wish to send the magazine is appropriately notified on or before Christmas. Fill out the following blanks and mail at once.

THE LYRIC WEST, 3551 University Avenue, Los Angeles, California:

For the enclosed dollars,
please send THE LYRIC WEST for one year, beginning with
the number, to

Name

Address

Name

Address

**Statement of the Ownership,
Management, Circulation, Etc., Required
by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912,**

Of THE LYRIC WEST: a Magazine of American Verse, published monthly, (except July and August), at Los Angeles, California, for October 1, 1925.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES. ss.

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Allison Gaw, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he and his wife are the editors and owners of THE LYRIC WEST, a Magazine of American Verse and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to-wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher : Allison Gaw and Ethelean Tyson Gaw, 1915 Cordova St., Los Angeles.

Editor: Allison Gaw and Ethelean Tyson Gaw, 1915 Cordova St., Los Angeles.

Managing Editor: Allison Gaw and Ethelean Tyson Gaw, 1915 Cordova St., Los Angeles.

Business Managers: Allison Gaw and Ethelean Tyson Gaw, 1915 Cordova St., Los Angeles.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding

one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.)

Allison Gaw and Ethelean Tyson Gaw, 1915 Cordova St., Los Angeles.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.)

None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstance and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the six months preceding the date shown above is

(This information is required from daily publications only.)

ALLISON GAW

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 1st day of October, 1925.

CURTIS F. HUSE

Notary Public in and for the County of Los Angeles, State of California. My commission expires January 12, 1926.

Note.—This statement must be made in duplicate and both copies delivered by the publisher to the postmaster, who shall send one copy to the Third Assistant Postmaster General (Division of Classification), Washington, D. C., and retain the other in the files of the post office. The publisher must publish a copy of this statement in the second issue printed next after its filing.