

VOL. V

FEBRUARY 1926

NO. 5

The
LYRIC WEST

A Magazine of American Verse



IN THIS ISSUE

Jessica Powers | Sydney King Russell

Katharine Washburn Harding | Margaret Duncan Dravo

Lois Burton Moon and others

REVIEW - PURITAN BY ISABEL F. CONANT

SUBSCRIPTION \$2.00 PER YEAR

SINGLE COPIES 20c

The Lyric West

Vol. V, No. 5

A Magazine Of American Verse

February, 1926

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>Silver Night</u>	<i>Jessica Powers</i>	125
<u>Two in a Seaside Garden</u>	<i>Beatrice Harmon</i>	126
<u>The Song Unsung</u>	<i>Jamie Sexton Holme</i>	129
<u>Harbor Dusk</u>	<i>Verne Bright</i>	130
<u>It Was Not Me You Cared For</u>	<i>Charles Wharton Stork</i>	131
<u>Montana Lake</u>	<i>Robert E. Wade, Jr.</i>	132
<u>The Snare</u>	<i>Sydney King Russell</i>	133
<u>After Rain</u>	<i>Louis Ginsberg</i>	135
<u>Three Visions of Death—</u>		
<u>Death at Dawn</u>	<i>John Jenkins</i>	136
<u>Omega</u>	<i>Jacques LeClercq</i>	136
<u>Swimmer</u>	<i>Geraldine Seelemire</i>	137
<u>Bells</u>	<i>Katharine Washburn Harding</i>	137
<u>City Sunrise</u>	<i>Winifred Davidson</i>	138
<u>The Lotus Pool</u>	<i>Anne Zuker</i>	139
<u>Desert Thirst</u>	<i>Samuel Alexander White</i>	140
<u>Variations and Fugue on a Well-Known</u>		
<u>Theme</u>	<i>Justus Grun</i>	141
<u>Compatibility</u>	<i>Margaret Duncan Dravo</i>	143
<u>Forests</u>	<i>S. Bert Cooksley</i>	144
<u>High Treason</u>	<i>Mollie Prager</i>	144
<u>Our Younger Singers—</u>		
<u>Carmen</u>	<i>Grace Randall</i>	145
<u>That Day</u>	<i>Elinor Fuller</i>	145
<u>The Theory of the Stanza, V</u>	<i>A. G.</i>	146
<u>Review — Puritan by Isabel F.</u>		
<u>Conant</u>	<i>Lois Burton Moon</i>	152
<u>Award of the Charles Granger Blanden Prize</u>		153
<u>Prizes Now in Competition</u>		154
<u>Books Received</u>		154

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, 1926, Allison Gaw and Ethelean Tyson Gaw.

Our Contributors

Jacques Le Clercq has formerly appeared in THE LYRIC WEST under the pseudonym Paul Tanaquil. He is a member of the faculty of Columbia University. He is a contributor to *The American Mercury*, *Smart Set*, and practically all the poetry magazines. He has published two volumes, *Attitudes* and *Sotto Voce*.

S. Bert Cooksley is associate editor of *The Overland Monthly* and of *The Wanderer, a Quarterly of Verse*.

Winifred Davidson is the author of more than two hundred stories for children. Twelve of her *Point Loma Sonnets* appeared in Braithwaite's *Anthology* in 1924 and six more in the same anthology for 1925.

Louis Ginsberg, well known to readers of THE LYRIC WEST, has contributed to *The Ladies' Home Journal*, *Munsey's*, *The Forum*, *Contemporary Verse*, and other verse magazines. He appears in Louis Untermeyer's *Modern American Poetry*, and is the author of a volume, *The Attic of the Past and Other Poems*.

Beatrice Harmon, a contributor to the *Bookman*, is the author of a volume of verse, *Mosaics*, published in the Yale Series of Younger Poets.

Charles Wharton Stork, for ten years the distinguished editor of *Contemporary Verse*, is now the President of THE POETRY SOCIETY OF AMERICA. His original verse, as well as numerous translations from the Swedish and German, have appeared in *Century*, *Harper's*, *Yale Review*, *The Nation*, and *The New Republic*.

Of the nineteen contributors in this issue two are from Massachusetts, two from New York, two from New Jersey, one from Pennsylvania, one from Wisconsin, one from Colorado, one from Oregon, one from Canada and eight from California.

Jessica Powers

Silver Night

This is my valley lying silver-still,
Dreaming away the indolent centuries;
This is my cup of unsung melodies
Brimmed to the top of every blue-black hill.
And the lost winds are strayed to other lands,
And trees are silent, guarding sleeping birds —
Night is a silver litany of words
That only a dreamer reads and understands.

There are some things too deep for mortal sharing:
The cool thin peace of Death, or the delight
Of Beauty or its wounds beyond all bearing —
I would walk robed in solitude this night.
For Beauty's chapel doors are always thrown
Open to him who comes to pray alone.

Beatrice Harmon

Two in a Seaside Garden

I've kept you waiting long? Forgive me, pray!
I have been out to watch a ship go by
The cliff, that round, gray crag
That's like a mighty shoulder bowed
In some strange grief.
It was a brave boat passed,
All white, with crimson funnels, three
Trailing their long, black plumes athwart the sky.
The sea was calm,
Almost as quiet as a dead man's breast
That hides at last in long tranquillity
Its stormy secrets. See!
I found wild primroses, so thick
My careless feet trod softly, poppies, too,
Like yellow nautch girls dancing wantonly. . . .
You are so still. And pale, too. Won't you sit?
What is it keeps you silent? Tired, you say?
There's rest here in the evening, don't you think?
The sun seems always redder when he sets
Here. I have never seen the moon so white
As when she rises over yonder palms.
A curd she seems, a great, round cheese, new-made
And honey-sweet. . . . There! I heard the rain-dove cry.
She has her nest in that pomegranate tree,
The one in flower, like a wide, cleft heart
Tremulously bleeding all day long.

The yucca blooms — you've seen it? — like a slim,
Tall Asiatic princess wrapped in green.
The broom's in blossom, too.
I found it painting all the hills with gold
This morning. Will you bring a vase?
That old one, there, of copper *verd-antique*.
I love primroses in a copper bowl. . . .
. . . You are so strange! Why do you sit so still?
I have a chill foreboding in this gloom.
You're sad, you say? Well, life is sad,
But lovely, too.
You see that gull lift from the couchant wave?
What strength, what grace, what lightness
In his wings! There's beauty for you!
Yes, life's sad, just as you say.
But how can sadness reach or hurt us here?
Have we not marshalled lines of palm tree guards
(Mark how their fingers point, and motion! Why?)
And all of Beauty's valiant legions close
To see no skulking sorrow spy us out
And so lead war-like Pain into our realm?
(Just fancy evil Pain in this sweet place,
Crushing the canterbury bells with his hard foot,
Dashing the larkspur heads against the wall,
Ravishing pink and pansy and foxglove!)
What thoughts you frighten! See, it's growing dusk.
I'll make a light. You want the shadows? Well.
You always said you loved the friendly light. For me
I like the hushed, long evening, when the larks
Sing tender parting vespers, and the pale,
Still stars march out of heaven one by one,

Like youthful maiden knights who would defend
 Some fabulous, fair woman in duress.
 How odd your eyes are as they follow me!
 You want to tell me something? Well, then, speak!
 I've never feared. . . . You falter, turn your head!
 Ah, dear, I never thought to see you so.
 Speak on. . . I'm brave. You say?
 What is it?. . . Wait! . . . Just let me rest a space.
 A moment, please. I'll listen soon. . . . (That dove!
 She cries as if her lyric heart would break.
 Tomorrow I must see if enemies
 Have marked her place in the pomegranate tree.
 I've noticed many foreign birds of late.)
 Now then, speak on. And say it over, thus,
 Slowly, word for word: *I've ceased to love you!* . . . So
 I heard you then first time, it seems.
 I was not sure. . . . You've ceased to love me. So.
 I'll say it too. Again. Again.
 (How cold the room is. Will you strike a fire?)
 It's odd to think of that. I was so sure,
 So sure no furtive spy would find me out.
 Yet I have known. How is it women know
 When Pain is near? And knowing, taste
 The sweetness surer on unheeding lips?
 I knew, I knew! The very primroses did speak
 This evening on the hill. The very poppies smiled
 With pity in their faces. There's a joy
 Premonitory of the grief to come, a peace
 Too certain. Yes, I knew it well.
 (Stir the fire. How sad the sea is now

Beneath the cliff! Sometimes I think it is too quiet
here.)
Well, it is done. . . Don't grieve. Don't wear
That ashen, twisted look away from me!
You'll like to think you left it in this cheerful room.
You're free to go. I ever told you so.
(Let's have the lights, it's pleasanter. Not yet?
You fear to let me see you!) Ah, my friend,
It's over now—the shock that was no shock, the tale
I always knew that I must some day hear.
We women know. Yes, we are very wise,
As wise as Lilith was when young Eve came.
Eve always comes. . . . Don't wince, my friend!
She's here. I saw her in your eyes a moment since.
That's right. And good and wise,
Let's leave it so.
Lilith was old, I fancy, tired, at least.
And then she had her garden when they went.
That's as it should be. Women know
Love has his being only in their breasts.
He's constant there.
Don't turn away. I do not suffer. See
How steady is my hand that trims the wick!
Here. . . . Pull up the table. I will give you tea.
You're leaving?. . . Ah, I see! Eve waits.
Bring her to see my garden soon, my friend.
. . . . Good night. . . I saw a crushed rhododendron some
heel
Pinned to the garden walk. You'll set it free

In passing? Thanks, my friend.
Good night! Good night! God bless you!
(Ah, that dove!)

Jamie Sexton Holme

The Song Unsung

Oh, I may sing of trysts and battles,
Dawn and sunset, flowers and dew.
I may make songs of earth and heaven,
Never of you!

You are the casket of buried jewels,
The secret altar, the smothered flame.
I may breathe songs of wind and water —
Never your name!

When I pass you, two hearts stop beating,
Yet I greet you as strangers greet,
All around us are lovers meeting —
We may not meet.

Yet in my inmost soul is hidden
A harp with chords of silver strung,
And there a voice sings on unbidden
The song unsung!

Verne Bright

Harbor Dusk

The sea was talking silver to the moon

As I came into the street where the black wharves
are.

Pale in the mist a ship with a shattered spar
Nodded a friendly greeting . . . the slow croon

Of green sea-water climbing among the piles

Murmured of hidden beauty. . . a lone star

Glowed like a ship's light over the harbor bar. . .

And honeyed winds blew in from the wide sea-miles.

Brown-cheeked men with dark far-seeing eyes

Whispered of shapely ships and the sea's desire.

Nothing they saw but waves of singing fire

And slim palms dreaming under tropic skies. . .

Nothing they heard but an age-old melody —

The multitudinous music of the sea.

Charles Wharton Stork

It Was Not Me You Cared For

It was not me you cared for, but my praise;
My tranquil-seeming spirit was the pool
Where with a mild complacence you might gaze
On your own likeness doubly beautiful.
When first you saw and leaned down close above me
With swift abandon like some wingéd grace,
I dreamed in breathless joy that you would love me;
But 'twas the haloed image of your face,
Not me, you smiled at. Never shone more fair
In the deep crystal of adoring thought
A cheek's flushed ivory set in bronze-dark hair,
And seraph lips, and gray eyes mystery-fraught.
But passion vexed the pool to foam and spray,
Your glass was broken and you turned away.

Robert E. Wade, Jr.

Montana Lake

The Japanese painters know. —
Nothing so tenses the sharp beauty
Of mighty jagged peaks,
Topping sensuously smooth roundnesses
Of foothills, as a near bridge
Of wooden squares and triangles,
Angularly cutting a flat body
Of gentle sparkling water. —
This touch of man-made beauty,
As different from the majesty
Of the cloud-piercing masses of rock
As man is of a different order from the gods,
Serves as the spice to a savory dish. —
In the complete illumination of daylight
All things, forest, lake, mountains, and bridge,
Catch the deep-breathing eye;
But when an evolving sunset
Makes delicate chameleons of the cruel jags,
Pinked, purpled, and mauved in turn,
All other seen things are but a subsidiary background.

—
Then the bridge seems placed by inspired hands,
Making the tremendous, yet strangely intangible
beauty
The more mystical. —
The Japanese painters know. . . .

Sydney King Russell

The Snare

I passed by the Devil's doorway
When the day was young and fair,
And counted the sons and daughters
Of men, who tarried there.

I counted the cheery children
Of laughter, and sloth, and song;
I heard their medley of madness
And music, the wide day long.

I passed by the Devil's dwelling
Again, with averted face —
But Satan came to the window
And cried, "Come in for a space!"

Satan came to the doorway
And beckoned me within —
Waved me with greeting friendly
Into the house of sin.

The lanes were wide and soft to tread,
The gardens fair with flowers;
I marveled then at the daughters of men
Reclining in leafy bowers.

For the daughters of men were passing fair

And their bodies beauteous white,
But fairest of all was Lilith
With hair the color of night;

And gayest of all was Lilith
As she bore me the chaliced wine
And we drank the health of the sons of wealth
And the health of the daughters nine.

One by the pool was sunning,
And one by the marble stair,
And one lay deep in the arms of a lad
And kissed him, and stroked his hair;

And others were mine for the asking
(For the day and year were young),
But Lilith's beauty had burned me
And her name tripped on my tongue.

The day and year went to my head —
Or the look in a maiden's eyes. . . .
"Come out with me!". . . . Out and away
I bore my beauteous prize.

Away from the shouts and music,
Away from the mocking glare
Of Lucifer's lights I bore her
And oh, she was wondrous fair!

The road fell away behind us,
The stars drew near. . . and I knew

It was mine to be one with Beauty
Where the flower of wonder grew.

Her lips were petals of roses,
Her body passion and prayer;
All night in my arms she tarried,
All night. . . a song and a snare;

Till I crept into fields of slumber
To wake to the cry of dawn
Alone in the somber stillness,
My love, my Lilith — gone!

I sought her on hungry hilltops,
I cried her in valleys lone;
But ever the answer was silence
And ever my heart a stone.

I passed by the Devil's doorway
And harked to the songs of sin,
And Satan he bade me welcome,
But I would not enter in.

I passed by the curséd dwelling
And shrank from the Devil's breath —
For love at an upper window
Smiled out with the eyes of death!

Louis Ginsberg

After Rain

O wayside puddles, boasting of the sky,
How you repeat a great All-seeing Eye!

All little flooded gutter-cracks, you, too,
Are stuffed with sky and hoarding Heaven's blue.

Branches of trees that strike such flame in air,
How you exult to vie with sunlight there!

Flagstones, embedded in the sunlit awe,
You imitate the Tablets of the Law.

Lawn-flowers, tingling tip-toe in the sod, —
Eavesdropping, have you been again, on God?

Three Visions of Death

Issue p. 136 · Scan p. 16

John Jenkins

Death at Dawn!

At dawn

The wings of birds are silver
Against the flush sky;
The sea is purple
Like the wine of Samothrace.

At dawn

I should like to meet Death
And pass with him nude, free,
Over columns of clouds
Stained with ruby fire;
At dawn I should love Death!

Jacques LeClercq

Omega

In the twilight, in the evening,
In the black and dark night,

Death will whirl in a gust of wind
Blowing the candle out. . . .

Hair, eyes, lips that were flame
Crumble to charred wick, blown dust

In the twilight, in the evening,
In the black and dark night.

Geraldine Seelemire

Swimmer

I shall arise when it is time for me to die,
And go with light, still steps into the hills,
Leaving my dress on some lone crag, halfway to the
sky,
And gathering the rain that fills
Blue gentians. I'll dash my throat with it,
And catch my breath to climb the highest peak,
And sit
Watching a great, black-feathered bird. We'll speak
Of wings. An then I'll stand like a clean, trained
swimmer
And dive into the sky. Quick shimmer
Of pearly body, and a rain-cool cloud
Will close around me like a shroud.

Katharine Washburn Harding

Bells

Crystal globules dropping through the dusk,
Each tone translucent sinking to the ground —
Far and faint, the evening bells,
Falling stars of sound.

Winifred Davidson

City Sunrise

Beneath a grim swift upward thrust of smoke
Drifted a thinning hesitant pink trail
Of clouds that must have veiled white mountain heads.
Here where a street-end frayed to tawny reds,
There where fell graying stars from fringed wharf
sheds,

 The city night went pale
And every ancient noise of toil awoke.

Strange majesty was in that hungry thrust
Of smokestacks mouthing at the breast of morn
And smudging down the white throat of the sky.
Wan Beauty lived where Beauty ought to die;
Sweet draughts tired Beauty drank, timed to that cry
 Of the city day new-born —
Fed and was satisfied with city dust.

Anne Zuker

The Lotus Pool

The marble coping by the lotus pool
One night was silvered by the pale, full moon;
So still it was, all sound seemed in a swoon;
The water a black mirror — drifting tulle
The milky clouds across its surface cool;
And in my hair your breath did importune
And crave my lips, a yet unasked-for boon;
How easy then my heart to overrule!

The tall-stemmed lotus-flowers were closed, at ease
Like folded hands upraised to God in prayer
Among the mirrored clouds and cypress trees.
I thought love would be safe forever there,
And might have stepped into enshadowed lands,
Had you not held me with your steadying hands.

Samuel Alexander White

Desert Thirst

Out from the sea's last boundary,
Shunned by the ones who may,
Hated by those who have crossed me
And cursed by those who stay,
I stretch from canyon to timber,
I reach from steppe to wall,
But never I hear the music
Of the mountain torrent's fall.

An oasis in my bosom?
Well, yes, it's a pittance slight,
Almost an ancient Tantalus —
It holds two stars by night.
A palm-tree of meager outline
Is growing forth from the spring,
And I've never a shade from Heaven
But this and the vulture's wing.

I seek no blessing or kindness
From those who hate me so;
I ask no boon of the tribesmen
Who vanish like early snow;
I am not hoping and pleading
For the level, chain, and rod;
But I crave the water of Heaven
From the hand of the living God.

Justus Grun

Variations and Fugue on a Well-Known Theme

Dear sir, here is my merchandise.

We only use the best.

Our make is fine,

Our prices right. . . .

Stop! What is it that I hear?

What might be that thin and weird —

What might be that high-pitched sound

Ringin' in my ears like mad?

. . . and only yesterday I sold

At higher prices, it is true. . .

I will not listen to these eerie voices,

These overtones which I cannot escape.

Back to your haunts!

Stay silent till I call you!

. . . a goodly lot —

To whom I cannot say.

A breach of confidence 'twould be.

But let me tell you. . .

Another voice now! Oh, where have I heard

This rustling mellowness before?

*Was it the night-breeze sighing through the branches
That night when you lay silent in my arms
And neither spoke for fear to break the spell?*

... that the line they bought
Does not compare in any way whatever
To this new shipment
Which we just have finished. . .

*Dead silence! . . . Have I stopped forever
All subtle longings for your voiced caresses?*

... I'm sorry. What you ask I cannot do.
I cannot let you have this part alone.
The whole or nothing. . .

*Heavens! What may be that flash?
A blinding, screaming flood of light,
Darkness fleeing panic-stricken
Over hill and over dale. . . .
And the sun — he rules the world!*

... Oh, that wouldn't worry me!
The largest order it would be
That your house ever placed.
Still, all your payments always
Are very promptly met. . .

*So long ago — and yet it's like today —
That on a mountain-top I stood,
The world stretched out before me*

For me to choose from.

*Then rose the sun, and my eyes saw
What's shown to mortals
Once in each one's lifetime.
This was my choice — and I have no regrets.
But from my mountain I had needs descend
And wander through the valley.*

*. . . And we are glad, if that's the only reason,
To have you pay us on the first of March. . .*

*I wander through the world and seek,
A stranger every place,
The overtones that thrill my very being.*

*And I'm a stranger, and my foot
No telling imprint ever leaves behind.
My trail is lost, and like a phantom ship
No wake I leave,
Nor are my footsteps followed by a shadow.*

*A world within thyself!
Ha! A shrieking peal of laughter
Seems the answer —
The only answer to that hoary jest.*

*. . . All right, sir. Very well.
I hope you are successful.
I think you acted wisely and bought well.
I'm sure that in a month or so*

You'll want more of the same.
Goodbye! Good luck!
My best regards at home!
And say, how is that little boy of yours?

Margaret Duncan Dravo

Compatibility

He admired deep-chested women
Who go in for politics and club life,
Whose names are constantly in the society columns
And the front pages of the newspapers,
Who trumpet about the world doing Big Things.
He married
A slender girl
Like a fringed gentian flower
Dancing along a breezy hill,
Full of fun and fire,
As intangible as an April cloud,
As inscrutable as the sphinx.

S. Bert Cooksley

Forests

The forest is a shadowed place
Where grow the young and old
In trees. And sometimes one can trace
Lines of blue and gold

Slanting down in dusty rows
From branches overhead.
The wind comes slipping by and sows
Old leaves, brown and red,

Until the forest's quiet earth
Is warm and soft and sweet
For very little things at birth
Who have such tender feet.

The swallows cheep and old crows caw
And very young birds squeak.
The brown squirrel with a dainty paw
Puts acorns in his cheek.

And very often one can hear
The winds come walking by,
And bugs and ants hold tight for fear,
And old bears close one eye. . .

Mollie Prager

High Treason

The eucalyptus trees glanced furtively round,
And bent down
To whisper to the graves
For silence,
As I was kissed in the graveyard!

Our Younger Singers

Issue p. 145 · Scan p. 25

Grace Randall

Carmen

Carmen has opened the balcony window
And fled to the soft-fingered night;
For the pain in her heart is increasing
Though the music is gone, and the light,
And the mad-hearted swirl of the flippant
Where the surface is always a lie —
For the fool must laugh though his heart be broken,
And Carmen must dance — though she die.

The jessamine fragrance but deepens the silence,
The candlelight flickers to gloom;
But Carmen heeds neither the scent nor the shadow.
She has lifted Life's web from the loom.
The feet of the dancer are swift in the starlight
For the eyes of the night to see;
'Tis the swan-song lilt of a spirit passing
Lit with a light to be.

Ah! The fool must laugh though his heart be broken —
The far stars gleam in the skies;
The river runs deep in the silence —
Carmen has danced — and she dies.

(Los Angeles High School)

Elinor Fuller

That Day

I saw her there upon a little hill;
I did not know a maid could stand so still;
I did not know a maid could be so fair
Until I saw her vibrant beauty there
Still-poised, to whistle to a tiny wren —
I did not know a goddess of the woods was on the
earth— till then.

(Girl's Collegiate School, Glendora, California)

The Artistry of the Stanza

V.

Connotation in Words and Stanzaic Forms

We have seen that the denotations, the intellectual or “dictionary” meanings, of a given word are constant for a body of readers addressed at a given time and in the same linguistic community; but that the connotation, or body of emotion-fraught associations, connected with that word is, for the same group, infinitely variable. Thus the word “Christmas,” denoting to all English and American readers the celebration of the birth of Jesus occurring annually on December 25, brings up in each reader’s mind a group of impressions that are a composite of the various Christmases he or she has individually known, probably enriched also by impressions of Christmases in other lands and times derived from reading and conversation. As no two readers have had absolutely identical experiences, so for no two persons will the group of associations be absolutely identical. On the whole, however, in a linguistic group of average size the great majority of readers will have experienced Christmases of the same general type and will tend to view them with the same general shade of pleasurable emotion based on somewhat similar recollections. And to the artist in words the arousing in the reader of this desired shade of emotional coloring in the case of a given word is, for his creative purpose, the chief end to be attained by its use; and it is the fact that in a not-too-large community he can depend, in general, upon a certain common basis of experience in his particular group of readers that makes his work artistically a possibility. Of overwhelming importance, then, is his judgment and tact in finding the right word, and in surrounding it with other words of similar emotional coloring that will blend with it to form an

esthetically harmonious, delicately mooded whole. Thus Thackeray surrounds the word “Christmas” with phraseology suggestive of its sacred origin.

My song, save this, is little worth;

I lay the weary pen aside,

And wish you health, and love, and mirth,

As fits the solemn Christmas tide.

As fits the holy Christmas birth,

Be this, good friends, our carol still,

Be peace on earth, be peace on earth,

To men of gentle will.

On the other hand, in his *Christmas Omnipresent* Leigh Hunt evokes and reenforces another group of Christmas associations, those of Yule-tide revelry, by surrounding the word with phrases redolent of old English custom:

Christmas comes! He comes, he comes,

Ushered with a rain of plums;

Hollies in the windows greet him;

Schools come driving post to meet him. . .

He’s a kiss that loves to grow

Underneath the mistletoe. . .

And he’s forfeits, cards, and wassails,

And a king and queen with vassals;

He’s a dinner where you see

Everybody’s family,

Beef, and pudding, and mince pies,

And little boys with laughing eyes. . .

Oh, right is thy instructive praise

Of the wealth of Nature’s ways!

Right thy most unthrifty glee,

And pious thy mince-piety. . .

Or by contrast, the ordinary associations of Christmas may be used to deepen pathetically the coloring of other scenes, as in Kipling's fiercely ironical picture of the Christmas of English exiles in India:

With the fruitless years behind us and the hopeless
 years before us,
Let us honor, O my brothers, Christmas Day!

 and its bitter ending,
We are richer by one mocking Christmas past.

The power of richly connotative words in key-note positions is beautifully illustrated in John Masefield's *Cargoes*. The first of its three stanzas begins,

Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir,

 and immediately the word "quinquireme" conjures up the days of gigantic rowed vessels, with their long sweeping oars rising bank above bank. The word even raises the conception to its highest power of massiveness, five tiers of oars being substituted for the three tiers of the more usual *trireme*. But the classical associations of the word are immediately modified by the strongly romantic flavoring of the older Nineveh and Ophir and by the mention of the "Ivory, and apes, and peacocks," and other Oriental riches the giant galley bears. The second stanza opens,

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,

 and the word "galleon" flashes before us in some detail the bellying-sailed, high-hulled, slow-moving treasure ship of the sixteenth century, the word being reinforced by the hint of the "Spanish main" in "Spanish" and "Isthmus", and the lavish opulence of its cargo of gold and jewels. The concluding stanza

shows us the

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke-stack,

and the word "coaster," not in itself necessarily suggestive of the third or steam period in the evolution of sea-craft, is immediately clarified by the detail of the "smoke-stack", while its suggestion of hopeless mediocrity is reinforced by the initial "dirty" and its listed freightage of

Fire-wood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.

Almost every significant word in the poem is worthy of study as an example of adroitly matched connotational values.

The fact must be emphasized that this is a question of artistic effectiveness, not of scientific correctness. For instance, it is more than dubious whether historically the quinquireme was ever known to Nineveh, the capital of an inland empire of about 700 B. C. and located on a shallow river meandering through clayey plains. The artistic illusion is nevertheless created by Masfield in masterly fashion. O. Henry phrased the artist's point of view with considerable truth when, asked as to his phrase, "the deadly aconite," whether the aconite really was deadly, he answered, "It doesn't matter; anything with a name like that ought to be, anyway." The artist works for sensuous effects, not for scientific accuracy. Only this *caveat* must be recorded, that when the well-informed reader perceives that the romantic illusion is largely based upon a radical error, unless the creation is one of the purest fantasy there creeps into his pleasure a discomfort that in part defeats the artist's purpose.

Now, this principle of connotative power, fundamental to all artistic writing, is by no means confined, as is usually assumed, to the choice of thought-words. An *order* of words may have such value. "I will meet you at quarter after three," says my friend usually; but if his phrase is "at three-fifteen" it

suggests railroad punctuality. Or a usually colorless grammatical form may be richly suggestive. When in 1844 the first telegraph message was sent over the first long-distance telegraph line, "What hath God wrought!" the Biblical "hath" expressed a reverent awe that "has" would have utterly failed to convey. And to the well-read a stanzaic form may likewise be rich in connotation.

When Wordsworth visited Scotland in 1803 and wrote *At the Grave of Burns*, it was with a keen sense of fitness that he chose to write it in Burns' own favorite stanza.

I shiver, Spirit fierce and bold,
At thought of what I now behold;
As vapours breathed from dungeons cold
 Strike pleasure dead,
So sadness comes from out the mould
 Where Burns is laid.

The choice of this form was itself an added tribute to Burns' memory, especially as it is almost unknown elsewhere in Wordsworth's work; but as in all cases of connotation, the stanza form delivers its message only to those whose previous experience has taught them to associate it with the poet who most effectively used it.

So, too, when in his drama, *Sapho and Phaon*, Mr. Percy Mackaye introduces stanzas supposedly composed by the heroine, in what form should they be cast save the old traditional Sapphic stanza? — a form, however, that conveys its subtle suggestion only to him who has learned to recognize that stanza and who knows something of its history.

A peculiarly individual form is the "Omar Khayyam" stanza made popular through Fitzgerald's translation of the *Rubaiyat*. The thought of the Persian poet has been repeatedly parodied in the same mould; but it was reserved for Mr. Richard LeGallienne, with a whimsical sense of fitness (or

unfitness), to select the form made famous by the exponent of the charms of wine, and employ it to celebrate the reform of a drunkard!

It is difficult in many cases to distinguish between the connotative values of a stanza and its natural adaptedness to certain types of material. Certain it is that the very individual *In Memoriam* stanza rarely occurs except for thought tinged with melancholy. Is this because of its history or of its intrinsic nature? The Spenserian form, either on account of its use with ornate detail by Spenser, Keats, and Shelley, or because of its natural spaciousness, seems peculiarly to resent content without either colorful detail or richly romantic mood. And some of the complex French forms are traditionally limited to the airiness of *vers de société*. In short, the whole question of stanzaic connotations is in need of detailed study.

We conclude with a clever transcription by Thackeray, written under the general title, *Old Friends with New Faces*. He bases on the pseudo-ballad, *Wapping Old Stairs*, which in part runs thus:

Your Molly has never been false, she declares,
Since the last time we parted at Wapping Old Stairs;
When I said that I would continue the same,
And gave you the 'bacco-box marked with my name. . .
Why should Sall, or should Susan, than me be more
prized?
For the heart that is true, Tom, should ne'er be despised.
Then be constant and kind, nor your Molly forsake,
Still your trousers I'll wash, and your grog too I'll make.

Under the title of *The Almack's Adieu* Thackeray rewrites this in the key of aristocratic English life of the mid-eighteenth century — characterization, mood, stage properties, phrasing, and stanzaic form, all being recast in perfect accord.

Your Fanny was never false-hearted,
And this she protests and she vows,
From the *triste moment* when we parted
On the staircase of Devonshire House!
I blushed when you asked me to marry,
I vowed I would never forget;
And at parting I gave my dear Harry
A beautiful vinegarette!

We spent *en province* all December,
And I ne'er condescended to look
At Sir Charles, or the rich county member,
Or even at that darling old Duke.
You were busy with dogs and with horses.
Alone in my chamber I sat,
And made you the nicest of purses,
And the smartest black satin cravat!

At night with that vile Lady Frances
(*Je faisais moi tapisserie*)
You danced every one of the dances
And never once thought of poor me!
Mon pauvre petit coeur! what a shiver
I felt as she danced the last set;
And you gave, O mon Dieu! to revive her
My beautiful *vinegarette!*

Return, love! away with coquetting;
This flirting disgraces a man!
And ah! all the while you're forgetting
The heart of your poor little Fan!

Reviens! break away from those Circes!
Reviens, for a nice little chat;
And I've made you the sweetest of purses,
And a lovely black satin cravat!

A. G.

Review

Puritan, By Isabel Fiske Conant. New York: Harold Vinal

Like a continuous and subdued carillon is Mrs. Conant's tone of surety and lustrous faith, of peace in the midst of unrest; and like chords in the music of her song is her employment of phrases long-established as connotative in poetic power, "vanishing, proud race," "pomp and circumstance," "shall be with me today in Paradise," "But if it were not so, I would have told," echoes of which familiar sounds she re-invests with significance.

Nearly all are quietly philosophical poems concerned with depth of character, with stability and equilibrium of the soul, mind, and heart, as their balances now represent a three-hundred-year-old talisman of Puritan strength. They are religious poems in the sense that they bear thus the informing spirit of creed without hampering forms.

Sonnets, lyrics, and Bible sonnets alike are timbred from the prefatory stanzas, in which the Puritan tradition is shown to be a thing of "high beauty,"

Like a slow anthem
Measured for the Lord,

recognizable as such yet, although it is true that

now they say that steel and stone
Went back into their lives.

There is especial force in the opening sonnet group. *To a Vanishing Race*, and *A Puritan*, which is written of

A rugged man sprung from enduring ground.
Into his weaving went these windy hills,
And season-weathered patterns of his dream;
The blending of the generations' will.

The dignified charm of a well-bred imagination proceeds from *Blown Fuse*, a poem of “shadowy retrospection” and of “candles that flare upon the Gregorian landing”; from *City Event* with its beautiful last six lines that describe the “undecipherable rune” of a city soul, “kept in ancient amber of the sun”; from *Elements*, prismatic and rainbow-like; from *Still Laughter*, exquisitely lyrical as a wave-crested echo from “Full fathom five thy father lies”; from *Follower* and *Homestead*. Beauty of natural symbolism with a feeling of etched motion makes lovely the poems *Rain* and *Wild Geese Fly Over*, the latter perhaps the most effectively symbolic and pictorial single poem in the volume. Compassionate expression in *Cedar of Lebanon* and in *Mary of the City*, “a light foot in scarlet,” whose feet are “shod bravely,” but whose “heart goes lame”; simple unquestioning recognition of death in *Secret*; breadth of vision in *What if a God*; diamond-cut “forked laughter” in *Unimagined*; resurgent inspiration in the three finer of the Bible Sonnets, *Version*, *Ninety-First Psalm*, and *New Testament Apocrypha*; — these are the qualities that give color and harmony more for the mind than for the sense, and that will have for audience only the discriminating and the sincere, who will recognize that Mrs. Conant’s work goes beyond fulfilment of the wish she expresses in *Zeal for a River*:

I would I were a river
Not shallow or too deep,
But quiet, so that tired folk
Might muse by me, or sleep.

Lois Burton Moon.

Award of the Charles Granger Blanden Prize

The CHARLES GRANGER BLANDEN PRIZE of Fifty Dollars for the best poem in blank verse published in THE LYRIC WEST between January 1 and December 31, 1925, has been awarded by decision of the Board of Judges to *The Dryads*, by Lillian White Spencer, published in the December issue.

The Board of Judges consisted of Miss Jessie B. Rittenhouse (Mrs. Clinton Scollard), poet and critic, former secretary of THE POETRY SOCIETY OF AMERICA; Samuel Travers Clover, author, and editor of the *Los Angeles Saturday Night*; and Roy Towner Thompson, Professor of Literature at the University of Southern California and former editor of THE LYRIC WEST.

Honorable mention is given to *Giovanni Malatesta*, by Miriam Allen de Ford, in the May issue, and to *Angelique*, by Lew Sarett, in the April issue, both of which also stood high in the lists of the judges.

Prizes Now in Competition

The Sarah Bixby Smith prize of fifty dollars will be awarded to the best *lyric* poem appearing in Volume V, i. e., from October, 1925, to September, 1926.

The Ben Field prize of fifty dollars will be awarded to the *best* poem appearing in Volume V, irrespective of type. This award of a prize for the *best* poem renders it possible that an author may receive a hundred dollar prize for a given poem, as the “best lyric” and “the best poem,” may possibly be one and the same.

Books Received

Mention here does not preclude the possibility of a review later.

Les Fleurs du Mal, The Complete Poems of Charles Baudelaire, translated by Lewis Piaget Shanks, Holt, N. Y. C.

Poems from the works of Charles Cotton, Holt, N. Y. C.

Wandering Fires, Mary and Violet McDougal, The Stratford Co., Boston.

Heritage and Other Poems, Molly Anderson Haley, Dorrance, Philadelphia.

Poems from Old Champoeg, Clinton Frederick Blake, Dorrance, Philadelphia.

Provincetown Sonnets, Antoinette Scudder, Dorrance, Philadelphia.

Pilgrimages, Sydney King Russell, Harold Vinal, N. Y. C.

New York and Other Poems, Mary Dixon Thayer, Dorrance, Philadelphia.

Echoes From India, Julia P. Dabney, The Torch Press, Cedar Rapids, Ia.