



PAULINE B. BARRINGTON

*Collected Poems
and Literary Reviews*

1906–1924

EXTREMES AND MODERATIONS:
EARLY SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA POETRY

A TEXT-TECH PAPERS PROJECT

Extremes and Moderations

Early Southern California Poetry

Extremes and Moderations is a Text-Tech Papers project devoted to recovering poetry written, published, and circulated in Los Angeles and Southern California. Each volume brings neglected books and poems back into view through carefully prepared texts, archival images, biographical context, and a clear record of the surviving sources.

Edited by Brian Kim Stefans

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ARCHIVAL IMAGE

"Toy Guns" in The Masses, May 1916



Drawn by Frank Renne.

TOY GUNS

THE rain is slipping, dripping down the street.
The day is gray as ashes on the hearth.
The children play with soldiers made of tin.

While you sew,
Row after row.

The tears are slipping, dripping one by one.
Your son has shot and wounded his small brother.
The mimic battle's ended with a sob.

While you dream
Over your seam.

The blood is slipping, dripping drop by drop.
The men are dying in the trench's mud.
The bullets search the quick among the dead.

While you drift,
The Gods sift.

The ink is slipping, dripping from the pens,
On papers "White" and "Orange," "Red" and "Gray."
History for the children of tomorrow.

While you prate
About Fate.

War is slipping, dripping death on earth,
If the child is father of the man . . .
Is the toy gun father of the Krupps?

For Christ's sake *think!*

While you sew,
Row after row.

PAULINE B. BARRINGTON.

Frank Renne's illustration and the first printing of "Toy Guns," The Masses, May 1916.

INTRODUCTION

Pauline Barrington and the modern Southern California poem

Pauline B. Barrington's career joins several histories that are too often kept apart: the growth of Los Angeles newspaper culture, the city's experimental theater movement, the radical antiwar press, and the first Southern California magazines devoted to modern poetry. Born Pauline V. Bucknor in Philadelphia on July 11, 1876, she was the daughter of cigar manufacturer Charles Bucknor and Clara Reaney Bucknor. She married Charles Barrington in Pasadena in September 1901, raised two children, and made her adult literary life in Southern California. The surviving biographical record identifies her occupation as secretary and describes a wider body of verse, short stories, sketches, and book reviews than can now be located. Her literary work therefore seems to have developed alongside domestic responsibilities and paid employment rather than within a professional academic career.

Barrington first emerges clearly in the record as a Los Angeles dramatist. Her fifteen-page one-act play *When a Woman Is Poor* was registered for copyright in 1914 and announced for performance in the Los Angeles Graphic, though no copy of its script has yet been recovered. A second one-act play, *When the Young Birds Go*, won first prize in the Los Angeles Drama League Manuscript Play Contest and was published locally by C. C. Parker in 1915. Its domestic plot centers on a young woman's effort to establish independence from a controlling mother. The play's interest in women's autonomy anticipates the scrutiny of inherited roles and social training that gives Barrington's strongest poetry its edge. A modern claim that she was active in the suffrage movement remains unconfirmed by contemporary organizational records and should not yet be treated as established fact.

The Graphic became the foundation of Barrington's poetic career. Between 1906 and 1918 it printed poems that move easily among city life, music, painting, architecture, flowers, seasons, and new technologies. Their subjects reveal a writer alert to the sensory pressures of a rapidly modernizing region. A concert audience becomes comic under the force of music; abstract forms enter "Cubes and Cones"; a basement skating rink occupies the underside of a California skyscraper;

Redondo Beach changes from fish scales and wet nets at dawn to electric amusement and the casino drum at night. Even poems that retain conventional rhyme often depend upon montage, quick shifts of scale, or an unusually visual organization of the page. The result is neither simply newspaper verse nor fully programmatic modernism, but a local poetry discovering modern form through the scenes around it.

Her most historically important poem, “Toy Guns,” appeared in the May 1916 issue of *The Masses*, accompanied by Frank Renne’s illustration and published before the United States entered the First World War. The poem links domestic sewing, children’s play, diplomatic language, and battlefield death in a single chain of actions. Its bitter question about whether the toy gun is “father of the Krupps” makes militarism a learned habit rather than a remote political event. Barrington revised and shortened the poem as “Education” for *Poems Written During the Great War, 1914–1918*. Printing both texts here makes visible how the poem changed as the war itself changed. Her periodical range also widened: Harriet Monroe’s *Poetry* published “Sunrise at Santa Barbara” and “The Pomegranate Bush” in September 1918, confirming that her work circulated beyond local club and newspaper culture.

Barrington’s quieter poems also traveled. “A White Iris,” part of the four-poem sequence “In a Garden,” was repeatedly reprinted in anthologies and horticultural publications between 1917 and 1936. That afterlife shows how a compact California flower poem could migrate from regional modernist writing into a national literature of gardens and natural observation. The sequence’s other sections, “Stocks” and “Marigolds,” were often lost from later bibliographies and are restored here with “Impressions” and “A White Iris.” Other parts of her record remain incomplete. Newspaper evidence identifies “The Birthday of a King” and “The Orchid Hunter,” but usable facsimiles have not yet been recovered; the latter may prove especially important if contemporary descriptions of its psychologically complex dramatic monologue are confirmed.

In the early 1920s Barrington entered a new phase as both poet and critic in *The Lyric West*. She published a group of poems there in 1921, including “Los Angeles,” and then reviewed work by H.D., Marianne Moore, Adelaide Crapsey, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Sara Teasdale, Margaret Wilkinson, Sacheverell Sitwell, Elinor Wylie, Charles Vildrac, Robert Frost, D. H. Lawrence, and E. E. Cummings. These reviews place her inside an active Southern California conversation about Imagism, free verse, international writing, and the competing claims of experiment and clarity. A Glendale newspaper’s January 1922

announcement of her talk on modern poetry to the Central Avenue Parent-Teacher Association suggests that this interpretive work also extended into public literary education. Her criticism is direct, sometimes skeptical, and rarely deferential: she meets new poetry as a practicing poet deciding what forms of modernism remain alive on the page.

Barrington died in Los Angeles on December 3, 1956. No authenticated portrait has yet been found, and much of her prose may remain unidentified, but the surviving work is sufficient to recover a distinctive career. She moved between the newspaper, the anthology, the radical magazine, the national poetry journal, the little magazine, the theater, and the public lecture without belonging wholly to any one of them. This edition gathers every poem presently recoverable in the project's sources, including distinct textual states, together with the literary reviews that can be securely signed or assigned to her. Read together, they restore a writer who helped Southern California encounter literary modernism while bringing the region's streets, gardens, concert halls, beaches, and political unease into her own compact forms.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Scope, textual policy, and rights

EDITORIAL SCOPE

This edition contains 31 recovered poem entries (including two textual states of “Toy Guns”/“Education” and three multi-part sequences) and 17 literary reviews or critical comments. Texts were transcribed from facsimiles and source-controlled journal transcriptions. Obvious typographical and OCR errors have been silently corrected; period spelling and punctuation are otherwise retained. The October 1922 Apollinaire article is excluded because the issue signs it to Dorothea Moore, despite later bibliographical confusion.

RIGHTS

The included writings were first published from 1906 through 1924 and are in the public domain in the United States. The Frank Renne illustration first appeared with “Toy Guns” in *The Masses* in May 1916.

POEMS

Recovered poems, sequences, and a documented textual variant · 1906–1921

Mountain Vision

Los Angeles Graphic · 1906-09-15

I stood between two mountains in their might,
(A sparkling glory was that clear, clear day,)
I stood, alone, upon a narrow way
That joined the two still peaks, a band of light.
The peopled valleys far below, hid from my sight,
Shrouded deep in silent mystery lay,
From out their depths rose mountains cold and gray,
Range after range they rose to sumptuous height—
Until we seemed surrounded by God's Hosts,
And through the heat waves of the golden sun
The Glory of the Lord appeared to me.
I fell upon my face, as Sinai's priest had done
O'ercome with fear and former foolish boasts,
When darkness came I crept back to the vale.

A Query

Los Angeles Graphic · 1910-07-09

I'm only a little pool, left by a storm of rain,
On the face of a desert sear,
And I wonder why I'm here,
In this place so vast and drear—
For I'm only a little pool, left by a storm of rain.

II

I'm only a little flower, left by a gust of wind,
By the side of the king's highway,
And I wonder why I had to stay
Among the crowds that crush and slay—
For I'm only a little flower, left by a storm of rain.

III

I'm only a little soul, left by an unseen hand,
In a world of pain and woe;
Of mirth and joy, of friend and foe;
And I wonder why with them I go—
For I'm only a little soul, left by an unseen hand.

L'ENVOI

When the lands and seas rush together,
When space rushes space to meet,
Shall the pool, the flower and little soul
Help to make God's plan complete?

My Fire

Los Angeles Graphic · 1910-12-17

I gather my sticks together,
And lay them thus and so,
With a good back log, and a few besides,
Crossing it in a row.

Carefully, I plan and build it,
And starting with flickering light,
My fire, gone mad with freedom,
Blazes with color and might.

It sends out slender, violet tongues
That murmur its passion with me:
The logs sing like birds in the forest,
As they're fondled so lovingly.

O, the love of the flame for the log,
And the love of the sea for the shore,
Like the love of man for woman.
Enduring for evermore.

Equality

Los Angeles Graphic · 1911-02-04

From the foot-bound women of Asia,
To those soul-bound of the west,
A murmur is rising and swelling
Of revolt and bitter unrest.

They are lifting their voices together,
With a passionate cry to be free
From man-made laws and traditions,
That have shaped their destiny.

Through ages they've been man's chattels,
For him to govern and "keep,"
But the voice of the present is calling
The soul of each woman from sleep.

To awaken with clear-eyed vision,
To see small things in their place,
To strive for those that are greater
Till equality claims her race.

To a Dancer

Los Angeles Graphic · 1915-06-26

Pirouetting
'Round the setting,
Wing-ed butterfly of gauze.
Whirling lightly,
Built so slightly,
Passionate, breathless,
Each wing restless,
As you flutter to a pause.
Scintillating,
Palpitating,
Dream of motion, fairy tread!
Evening dusk,
Morning musk,
Sunset kiss'd,
Dawn's gray mist,
Gossamer veils wreath 'bout your head.

Child of sunlight, moonlight, starlight,
 Radiant Spirit of the air,
Dust our weary hearts with pollen
 From your purple wings and hair.

At the Symphony Concert

Los Angeles Graphic · 1915-12-18

The orchestra played, scraped, and blew,
Of life and death and things a few
To keep those thinking—those who knew.

From where I sat I watched them pass;
The young ones shy and green as grass,
The old ones wise and bold as brass.
The happiest of the bunch, I think,
Was she who wore the latest kink.

The orchestra played a passionate measure,
Come unto me and find your treasure,
All you, who're blind with lust and pleasure.”

She turned her head from right to left.
Her hat was black and shiny jet.
Her hair was held within a net.
How can a woman old as sin
Wear youthful togs so sheer and thin?—
One plainly sees her wrinkled skin.

And still that music plead, serene
Its spirit floated there unseen,
Searching out souls to make them clean.
The young ones wept, they knew not why.
The old ones breathed a weary sigh,
Forgot to pin their hats in place
Until the last note died in space.

The concert's over, a cheerful fact.
They rose together, their souls intact.

A Fire Star

Los Angeles Graphic · 1915-12-25

A little star
Felt the creamy radiance of the moon
One night in June.
She longed for him afar.
She desired the moon,
So, down
The crinkly, tissue-paper sky,
Deep, purple-brown,
That had been saffron-red,
She fled.
On six bright points she sped.
Her passionate spark,
With fiery grace,
Flaming a blazing arc,
Before her lover's face.

A young girl said—
“Quick, make a wish, before it fades too far!
There goes a shooting star.”

Carnival

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-01-01

Pierrot and Columbine driving through the streets,
Rolling to the rhythm of joyful heart beats;
Glad lights, carnival lights ever rushing by—
Columbine has a gay twinkle in her eye.

Pierrot and Columbine sitting at a table,
Eating, drinking all that they are able,
Golden wine, sparkling wine, flowing, gurgling bliss—
Columbine has a mouth red enough to kiss.

Columbine is dancing, stepping up and down,
In and out, round about, clinging to her clown;
Humming music, drumming music, music of the best—
Columbine has a foot lighter than the rest.

Pierrot and Columbine, lovers and romance
Wreath and whirl the Old Year out, in a mad last dance;
Folly, passion, revelry, ecstasy and joy
Wait to give a welcome to the Little New Year Boy.

Cubes and Cones

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-01-15

Again, we've quarrelled, my friend,
this is the end—
my heart is full of crashing planes of hate,
poisonous angles twist and irritate,
in my head, squares bang and jangle,
cubes of loathing block and wrangle.
My tongue
quick swung
the oblong words from off its point,
and all the values of my soul are out of joint.

Again, as usual, we have made it up,
with cone-like smiles,
and curving wiles,
the angles hid within the rounded cup
of the smug, smoking pipe of peace.
But, I know,
when you go
I shall not cease
to ponder, as I watch the smoke rings roll;
why you have power to break my self control?

Outside

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-01-29

Outside your window
in the street
I pass.

The square-cut panes of glass
protect you from the rain and sleet
and me,
who pass
with weary lagging feet.

Your lamplight
sends broad, yellow bands across the
 night;
but, they are not for me.

From a Persian tabouret,
smoke rings of your cigaret
lift and drift
in blue-green swirls,
and gray-blue whirls
about your head, bent low
above the Sporting Sheet.

As on I go
my heart cries in the cold,
“Ah, just to be
the Evening Journal that you hold!”

On Hearing an Etude by Bortkiewicz

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-02-05

Come gallop down the wind with me
beside the sea.

The storm clouds are his flowing mane;
his flying tail, the sheets of rain;
the pale foam blows along the shore;
the waves pursue him with their roar;
to stay his hoofs forevermore;
but, he goes on with thundering shock
above the surge and hidden rock,
and leaves them there alone
to fret and moan.

Salt and bitter is the sea,
but, we who ride, ride high and free.
Come, gallop down the wind with me.

A Day of Trees

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-02-19

O purple trees,
you brood on the edge of the orange orchard;
weave a veil of your blossoms,
a mauve veil of your shadows,
to cover her gold,
her red gold.

Pepper tree
adrift
in the gold dust of the sun;
you have decked yourself with sprays of rubies,
rubies, pink-red, sift in the noon of your hair;
you shake out your handkerchief of lace,
and the perfume;
you hide your blushing face
shyly,
against the vigorous young wind.

Eucalyptus trees,
tall and ragged,
blown by a green wind
along the sky-rim of the hill;
bunchy clumps of leaves,
you twirl and blur
across the lantern of the sun;
throw far your pungent cups,
cover us with your lemon-yellow spheres,
let your vermilion showers drift over us.

Pagoda of fir,
you stand against a saffron sky;
the little moon hides
among your tinkling bells,
among the shadows of your porticos,
from her lovers,
her lovers, the slim, young poplars,
who wait quivering.

The Casement Door

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-03-04

The room was high and dignified,
old and deep and long and wide,
 and languid with soft heat.
The polished floor reflected light,
as sidewalks on a rainy night
 gleam up and down the street.

Along the wall hung red festoons,
and hanging globes like crystal moons,
 that glowed with yellow light.
A casement door was at the end,
open, the perfumed heat to send
 out into the night.

The waltz called “triste” was soft and slow.
The dancers wove their patterns so
 intricate and fine,
between the shimmering silks and laces,
the passionate pallor of rapt faces,
 a circling, curving line,

leading, weaving through brocade,
tulle and chiffon, jewel inlaid,
 across the floor,
to where the perfumed, powdered light
sifted out into the night,
 gone to return no more.

Then the icy fingers of the dark
came creeping from the misty park,
 through the casement door.

Within the hollow of his arm
she rested, drifting in the charm
 and glamour of the dance.
The golden sheen of light and heat,
the swing and rhythm of gliding feet,
 the ardor of his glance.

The cold, long fingers of the night
crept in and touched them with delight,
 with swift and icy fire.

It ruffled her soft hair and laces.
It touched their clinging hands and faces
 with mad desire.

A dowager said with fretful ire,
“The draft! Please close that casement door!
My rheumatism is such a bore.”

Spring

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-03-18

Hyacinths and daffodils
 in the grass—
the hurdy-gurdy music shrills—
the kiddies dance in scanty frills—
a meadow lark his high note trills—
she, with the wind comes from the hills—
 Spring, the lass!

Impressions

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-04-08

Along my fence
The roses
Are a Ballet Russe—
A mad whirl of snow flakes,
Dancing, swirling, glancing, twirling,
Under the spot light
Of the sun.
The premiere danseuse,
A golden-eyed Cherokee,
In blazing white,
Pirouettes and poses among the roses,
Gloriously full
Of the passion
Of Spring.

Toy Guns

The Masses · 1916-05

The rain is slipping, dripping down the street.
The day is gray as ashes on the hearth.
The children play with soldiers made of tin.
 While you sew,
 Row after row.

The tears are slipping, dripping one by one.
Your son has shot and wounded his small brother.
The mimic battle's ended with a sob.
 While you dream
 Over your seam.

The blood is slipping, dripping drop by drop.
The men are dying in the trench's mud.
The bullets search the quick among the dead.
 While you drift,
 The Gods sift.

The ink is slipping, dripping from the pens,
On papers "White" and "Orange," "Red" and "Gray."
History for the children of tomorrow.
 While you prate
 About Fate.

War is slipping, dripping death on earth,
If the child is father of the man . . .
Is the toy gun father of the Krupps?
 For Christ's sake think!
 While you sew,
 Row after row.

Illustrated by Frank Renne.

Shakespeare

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-05-06

After the birth of two sisters
He arrived.
His parents thought there never was such a boy.
They had waited twice before for him.
And now in a cradle that rocked
On quaint rockers
He snuggled,
Making soft sucking noises—
Alive and theirs!

In the sunshine of peaceful days
He grew to a boy,
Wading golden streams,
And while he was pulling the girls' hair,
And making mud pies,
He listened to stories, of what went on in London
Before his time;—
King Hal's penchant for wives,
The loves of the poor ladies,
Their intrigues and their hates.
Of Edward, that weak sister!
And the unspeakable deeds
Of Bloody Mary.
Those were stirring tales
For an impressionable boy!

He loved and courted and married—
Anne Hathaway was her name.
Little is known of their life.
They went to housekeeping in Avon.
He wrote to keep the pot boiling,
For, the children came—
Two daughters and a son,
The son he lived to bury,
And he had experienced most there is.

He left home,
(It was hard for Anne)
To go up to London.
The theatres drew him irresistibly.
So, before their doors

He held horses
During the performance.

And all the world came to the show,
An ever moving pageant
Of silken gowns, jewels and brocades;
The young Elizabeth
And lovely Mary of the Scots,
Politicians and their henchmen,
Playwrights eternally disagreeing and dreaming;
Loud women,
Sports and rakes,
Beggars and street urchins.
The street gossip filled his ears;
While he waited,
With the velvet muzzle of a horse
Against his cheek,
He found out
That all the world's a stage.

Then he joined some traveling players—
Lord Leicester engaged him.
When plays were given him
He corrected and made them better.
Ben Jonson wrote for him,
But, even those they say,
He changed a bit.
He played tragedy with Alleyn
And comedy with Kemp and Pope.
Then, he began to produce his own plays,
Mocked and made light of by Greene,
In competition with Marlowe, Kyd, Lyly, Peele
And the rest.
But he was on the job
To keep the supply of bread
From running low
In a small family at Avon;
And always his vision—
All the world's a stage.

And his plays became the thing.
They were put on at all the best theaters;
And Elizabeth's court came
To laugh and weep, to wonder—
Sometimes to rage.

But, he wrote on
Putting his world into sonnets, verse and plays,
Stories that will never grow old;
The littleness of kings,
Also their greatness.
The agony of the traitor,
The inefficiency of poverty and hate,
The love of a son for a wronged father
And the madness of revenge.
He wrote jests, vulgar horse-play,
And pure comedy.
He had mighty sympathy and tenderness
With lovers and beauty.
Through his mercy and pity,
Through the supreme majesty of simplicity,
He has left us—
The world on the stage.

When he grew old
He retired to Avon,
To live quietly and retrospect;
Wondering a little, perhaps,
How far his candle flame
Would light a naughty world.
Until Death came,
Making him
Deathless,

Vignettes

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-05-27

Stocks

Fluffy, beribboned damozels
In a row,
You have pinned rosettes,
Rosettes of chiffon,
Pink and mauve,
Purple and white,
White and a deeper red,
Pinned them here and there
About your hats
And
Your ruffled, green petticoats.
The jonquils,
Across the path,
Adore your flutterings
But
Shy, young things,
They can only bow stiffly.

Marigolds

When Spring passed
This evening,
Her head was so turned
By the young moon,
She left
Her purse strings
Untied
And a lot of gold guineas
Fell
In my garden.

Twilight

Is a frail woman
In a gray shawl;
She flees from the night,
She hides from the day,
Only the moon knows her secrets,
Knows how to penetrate
The smoky tulle
Of her gray, clinging shawl,
To find its rose lining.

A White Iris

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-06-10

Tall and clothed in samite,
Chaste and pure,
In smooth armor—
Your head held high
In its helmet
Of silver;
Jean D'Arc riding
Among
The sword blades!

Has Spring for you
Wrought visions,
As it did for her,
In a garden?

Ice Skates

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-07-08

A certain grill was nine steps down,
In a California town,
Under a skyscraper of renown,
 In the basement heat,
Here two eastern fancy skaters
Slide while ice froze in the shakers
 But never on the street.

A rectangle of ice pipe made,
Asbestos festoons, ceiling laid
With green light bulbs that flash and fade
 An artificial chill.
White covered tables clustered thick,
The band beat ragtime with a stick,
 Intoxicating, shrill.

A pause, she came, swift, vivid grace,
A Russian suit, a winsome face,
Her partner lead her to her place
 On ringing, silver skates.
Figure eights and strange devices
They cut while people ate pink ices
 And waiters clattered plates.

She looked down on them from her height,
A feeding mob come for a sight,
To see her skates cut keen and bright,
 Guided straight and true
In circling maze across the ice,
Her whirling feet like twinkling mice,
 Trim and sure they flew.

It was a cold, still moonlit night,
The Schuylkill River frozen tight,
Mile after mile lay smooth and white
 Resounding to the sound
Of skates and laughter come to woo
Under a sky deep Prussian blue,
 Where far stars blazed and drowned.

From where the bank in mystery lay,
He lead her arm in arm so gay,

She swayed and floated fair and fay,
 A high moon drifted pale,
His arm pressed close against her side,
Each step for step and glide for glide,
 Like gulls before a gale.

They drank the wind's fierce draughts divine,
Of snow-chilled, golden, heady wine,
His eyes—the moon—the stars—their shine—
 His kiss—
 she missed her cue—

She saw again the smoke filled place,
Her partner's strange distorted face,
 'As her skate hit his shoe!

Hundreds of fat feeding faces,
Waiters pushing to their places
 With trays of heaped-up food.
"Say—What's the matter? In a trance?
This isn't any phoney dance!
Look sharp or else you lose your chance.
 They're plenty more as good!"

What her partner said she knew,
It was the truth, alas, too true.
As after all good jobs are few
 She carefully watched her slide.
She skated on, slim, gay, as though
Worlds lay beneath her flashing toe,
She finished in a painted glow,
 Curling a spiral slide.

But for You

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-09-30

The sea is smooth and swings within its cup,
From rim to rim reflecting green and blue,
The gulls asleep float gently down and up:
I might find rest if it were not for you.

The level sands slope softly to the sound,
The liquid, lulling singsong of the sea,
Their sun-warmed arms stretch out to wrap me round,
And but for you, rest . . . rest would come to me.

California

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-11-04

Where are your strong men, O State of mine?
Where are their arms and their brains?
Long, I have watched and searched for a sign
Through your waterways, mountains and plains.

I see on the peaks of great mountains
A white mystery of silence and snow:
Who will conserve it in fountains,
To make valleys fruitful below?

And trees that had birth before Nazareth,
Who lift high their heads close to God:
Are there none to protect them from death
At the hand of an ax swinging clod?

The desert comes over our border,
Smooth rolling with blue hills that doze,
Indifferent to sloth and disorder,
When it might blossom forth like the rose.

And what of the Gate that is golden,
And the Harbor with space for a fleet,
And the Bay where still-wing'd birds fold in
To quiet their motor's quick beat?

Harbors whose wide arms are a Station,
Safe shelter for ships of the sea:
Ships come flying flags of all nations,
But not one belonging to me!

Give me dreamers, builders and craftsmen,
Who will harness the sun and the rains:
Give me tillers of earth and draftsmen,
Strong men with arms and with brains.

After

Los Angeles Graphic · 1916-12-02

When Europe's war is over and peace declared,
When armies unemployed go on the job
To fight each for his life and means to live:
Shall we at our ease watch and wait
Calling starvation fate?

When they return from trenches deep in mud,
From the drugged frenzy of the driving charge,
Maimed and twisted, broken in strange masses:
Shall we at our ease watch and wait
Murmuring sympathy to placate?

When they return to homes deep in ashes,
Fields whitened with a harvest of crude crosses,
Rivers flowing crimson in the twilight:
What shall we and our watching nation
DO before such humiliation?

When they return to women mad and ruined,
Their little children lost, slain or worse,
Their dear familiar gods obliterated:
Shall we at our ease watch and wait
The breaking of that storm of hate?

In that time of ghastly destruction,
Revolution and reconstruction,
Shall we strengthen the Phoenix golden wings
As it rises from the ashes of dead things,
Or, batten and grow rich
On those poor souls driven to the last ditch?

Sunday Afternoon

Los Angeles Graphic · 1917-04-21

He came to plead the needs of France.
We sat in rows diversely hatted,
Neatly gloved, discreetly spatted.
Our hearts bled to hear such woe,
The aching story well you know.
But, through the window, just by chance,
I saw a sycamore sway and dance!

To France, who would not succor bring,
To ease her sorrow, dry her tears,
To lift her burdens and her fears?

Into that golden, sun-filled room
Entered war's bitter, hateful gloom.
When through a door the wind let swing,
I saw the hills go mad with Spring!

Education

Poems Written During the Great War, 1914–1918 · 1918

The rain is slipping, dripping down the street;
The day is grey as ashes on the hearth.
The children play with soldiers made of tin,
 While you sew,
 Row after row.

The tears are slipping, dripping one by one;
Your son has shot and wounded his small brother.
The mimic battle's ended with a sob,
 While you dream
 Over your seam.

The blood is slipping, dripping drop by drop;
The men are dying in the trenches' mud.
The bullets search the quick among the dead,
 While you drift,
 The Gods sift.

The ink is slipping, dripping from the pens,
On papers, White and Orange, Red and Grey,—
History for the children of to-morrow,—
 While you prate
 About Fate.

A retitled revision of "Toy Guns"; the final stanza of the 1916 text is omitted.

Verse

Los Angeles Graphic · 1918-04-27

Francois, when you were dregs and lees,
 Weary, driven and spent,
With the world turning thumbs down,
 And not a sou for rent;

Did they say, “laugh and be gay,”
 With never a helping hand,
Did you ache and long to find one,
 Who knew and could understand?

Did they say, “look up and be glad,
 All’s for the best and is just,”
When you’d worked through a dying day,
 Your eyes blinded with dust?

And yet, when they tried to be kind,
 Were willing to take your part;
How you turned your face away
 To hide your heart.

Sunrise at Santa Barbara

Poetry · 1918-09

The sea hides its curious heart
Under a bridal robe of mother-o'-pearl,
Mother-o'-pearl flushed with rose,
Waiting.

Against a turquoise sky
The mountains kneel, mauve-gray
In the gray-pink sand
Of the curving shore,
Waiting.

The moon, pale and wan,
Hangs a flat design in silver
On the expectant sky,
Waiting.

The palm trees, in parallel rows
Along the Plaza, clasp
Nervous, wavering fingers,
Waiting.

Riding on a many-fluted shell
Held on the backs of jade tritons,
Comes Venus Anadyomene, straight and slim,
Combing the night curls
From her ruddy hair,
Blown by the four winds
To the meeting with her lover.

Then, he comes—the young Sun,
Glorious in amazing strength and splendor,
Striding across the mountains
To pave a path of brazen metal
For the whiteness of her feet,
The two little feet of his bride.
He surrounds, covers, hides her
In golden madness.
The sea roughens,
Sending her waves with the morning breeze
Against the shore.
It is day!

The Pomegranate Bush

Poetry · 1918-09

When she was alive
She moved like a frail ghost,
The spirit of a wraith.
Her chiffons trailed about her
Like spirals of smoke.
The wail in her voice was gray and pining
Like the sea after twilight.
She died and was buried.
Now, she has returned—a woman
Among us.

She passed down the street
Wrapped in a Spanish shawl,
Flaming with hibiscus
And amber roses:
The silk fringe caught in a small, green bush;
She stooped and swayed,
With long pointed fingers disengaged
The silk fringe of the shawl.
I closed my eyes,
So poignant was the grace
Of her swaying and stooping.
When I opened them again,
She had gone.
Up and down the street
I looked—
She had disappeared!
But the small green bush,
Where her long, pointed fingers
Disengaged the silk fringe
Of the shawl,
Was covered with vermilion flowers
Like her mouth—
A flare of color
In the sun.

Sequence

The Lyric West · 1921-04

1. WINGS

Life said, "My child, I have one wish for thee,
What shall it be?"

I said, "Above all else I long for wings.
Ah Life, be good to me!"

I thought, Wings wide and free
That circle, soar and sweep,
And rush high in the wide clear spaces
Of the air, where still peaks
Watch and never sleep.

Life gave me wings,
A sparrow's wings,
Brown littleness.
Had I not asked for wings. . . Wings!

2. THE MIRROR

The room is candle lit,
The fire burns clear,
Violets in dull copper faint and wait.
Like the mirror in its old Venetian frame,
I, too, reflect an empty room,
Waiting for you to fill it.

You come,
But with you thru the door,
The fog enters, too,
And fills the room.
Cold with night-chill,
It mists the mirror with a veil of white,
Only one corner left uncovered,
Reflects your hand,
Fine and strong and sure;
The hand that holds me,
How and why . . against all willing!

You are gone,
The fog curled after you thru the door.
The mirror and I reflect an empty room,

Save one corner where the trace
Of your hand remains,
The hand that holds me,
How and why . . . against all willing!

3. *THE HILL*

The hill was high.
The way was rough and steep.
I found to travel well I had to go alone,
I left you there behind.
It seemed strange to be so light and free!
I liked to feel the muscles strain, to find

Each step digging into the earth, making a path,
Pushing up higher and higher.
Twice I looked back but did not turn, I began to tire,
The climbing had soiled my hands and bruised them too,

But I was free and I had forgotten you.
When I reached the top, the great clear place
Where the sun and clean winds brushed my face,
Sharp and keen and living, then I remembered you.
With the sun and wind you had come to claim me, too.

4. *INTERIM*

You on one side in your corner,
I on the other with my back against the tiles,
Between us the hearth stretches miles.
The others in an after-dinner-golden blur,
Are sipping coffee and liqueur.
Smoke wreaths them about,
In frail patterns, weaving in and out.
The fire
The candle flame

Your eyes
Oh to live . . . just once to live!
The others sip and laugh and walk
Around the room and talk—talk—Talk.

5. *THE HOUSE*

They have just left.
They came to see if the house

Were worth a loan.
How the different hurts stared,
Broken plaster
Pencil markings
Finger prints on white paint
Worn spots, shabby places,

And every corner with its dust.
The house was indifferent,
Even curious to know these persons,
New and outsiders.
In this house I had built,
I felt myself a transient,
Perhaps my time is up!

Redondo by the Sea

The Lyric West · 1921-06

Dawn

Gray-all-gray.
The fish seller rises from his poor bed.
He is greeted by the old sounds, the same evil smells.
He opens his shop on the end of the wharf.
He hoses out the scales and entrails left from the day before.
The fish boats come chugging one by one
across the oily water, bringing their catch to market.
Slowly, in the East the gray changes to a pale rose.
It is dawn.

Morning

The morning sun shines on the children
building houses of sand on the edge of the sea.
The men play games. They watch the women,
The young women under their orange umbrellas.
The sea sends gentle foamy waves to the shore,
beckoning them to come and bathe;
she yearns to chill their warm blood,
to salt them white with bitter spray.
She sends her undertow to draw them to the deep,
the deep where she is waiting.

Afternoon

The sun glares.
The merry-go-round shrills its tune—
“Come, I have a ring of gold for you,
catch it if you can.”
The toboggan, the mystic maze, the man with the wheel—
All offer rides,
rides that are the “greatest things on earth.”
All for a nickel.
A nickel! The price of bread—
But what is bread to the joy of motion?
The sea sighs of eternity under the booth,
the stifling booth of the medium, who is foretelling the future.

Twilight

The sea is tranquil.
The evening star rises serene in the pale yellow sky,
above the red lantern of the setting sun.
The little waves make a rushing sound,
loving the shore.
A man, a woman, a dog, black silhouettes
against the shining sea.
A word, a laugh, they pass.
The lights on the wharf throw gold reflections.

Night

At last, night silently cradles this small city by the sea in her arms.
She covers its toys and dwellings with soft dark mystery,
passionate, restless, full of shadows.
She watches youth curving and circling
to the dum-dum—dum-dum—dum-dum-dum
of the casino drum.
She hears mingled with the moan of the sea
the sputtering of the last star as it snuffs out.
Through the steep streets a taxi rolls swiftly away
afraid to meet the dawn.

Los Angeles

The Lyric West · 1921-11

About a mission it began to grow,
The City of the Angels long ago;
A Spanish mission, red-tiled,
Whose palm-fringed plaza smiled
Near the desert's rim;
Built by the Fathers to the Cross,
Built by the Fathers to the Virgin.

Cars—cars—cars—
Steam cars, electric cars and gasoline cars
Overrun the city, crowding
The long roads to the sea and mountains.

Silver ribbon roads cut through
The orange and the lemon groves
The gray-green olive trees,
Dust-coated by the desert breeze
Blowing and spraying
The artesian well fountains.

Cars—cars—cars—
They have put out the stars
And filled the silence of the nights
With their horns and big headlights.

The clanging trolley cars blare,
“Watch us grow!”
The half-skyscrapers glare
And crow.

Chinatown with its lotteries and its tongs,
Sonoratown with its vendettas and its songs,
The Indians from the reservations
Watch with stolid grace,
And inscrutable face.
The tourists and their relations
From Papeete and Tokio,
Malay and Singapore,
Calcutta, Cairo,
Paris, London, Rome,
New York, Baltimore,
Chicago, Needles then—
All around and back again

Come looking for a home;
Come searching sanctuary, health,
Reputation, wealth
Or rest.
Men of all sorts
From far ports,
To this City of the Angels,
Where the sun burns in the West.
The City goes on growing,
Piling up houses, in a mad quest
To cover more space
On the earth's broad breast.
There is an ugly hurrying,
A hideous scurrying
Of the rats,
Of crawling vermin in the cellars,
And the bats.
There are the artificial and the stupid
Who do not care;
The old, withered, worn out, done,
Crowds of moving feet,
Up and down the dusty street,
Searching for God
Somewhere in the sun.

The Fathers built the mission long ago;
Around it the City began to grow.
The mission bells still ring against the sky,
Muffled with dust,
Crackled with rust;
Unheard in the crowded streets,
Like an old heart missing beats;
A song of days gone by,
Finding its way deep in the rhythm
Of the struggles and battles of today.

LITERARY REVIEWS

Reviews and critical comments from The Lyric West · 1922–1924

Legends

by Amy Lowell

Houghton Mifflin Co. · Boston

The Lyric West · 1922-05

Amy Lowell is an imagist, a writer of free verse, polyphonic prose and regular rhymed poetry. She is an experimenter with all forms, independently, using new or old as best suited to her purpose. Her technique is sure as she is well grounded in the traditions of English poetry, possesses a deep knowledge of Chinese literature and a strong sympathy for the modern French poets. Miss Lowell has defended well the faith and been true to her ideals of the craft of poetry making. Since 1914 she has published six volumes of poetry and two of prose criticism, not to mention her enlightening prefaces. “A legend is something that nobody has written and everybody has written, and which anybody is at liberty to re-write. It may be altered, it may be viewed from any angle, it may assume what dress the author pleases, yet it remains essentially the same because it is attached to the very fibres of the heart of man.” Thus Miss Lowell starts the preface to her last book, “Legends.” There are eleven legends, taken from Peru, China, England, Europe and North America. “From a Yucca to a Passion-vine” is the story of a small red fox, who loved the moon, and his journey to find her. At last, after traveling far, he reaches her and ever after

“Upon the disk of the moon are spots, black obscene spots,
the prints of a fox’s paws.”

Miss Lowell’s technical knowledge of porcelain, as manufactured in ancient China, is amazing. In “A Legend of Porcelain,” Chou-Kiou,

“White as milk in a tazza cup,
Red as a pear tree just dropping its petals,
Happy as the Spring-faced wind,”

is in love with a sailor. Thinking of love, she forgot her filial piety,” her father’s house goes unguarded and is accursed. To expiate her crime she first makes a bowl—

“She has blown upon the fire and kindled it,
She has set her fragile bowl in the midst of the flame,
She lifts her eyes from the red fire
For green spring is like smoke in the willow-trees.”

When the bowl is taken from the cooled kiln—

“Oh, marvel of lightness!
Oh, color hidden and all at once emphatically clear!
Like a bright moon carved in ice,
Green as the thousand peaks,
Blue as the sky after rain,
Violet as the skin of an egg-plant fruit,
White as the “secretly smiling” magnolia,
And singing a note when struck
Sharp and full as all the hundred and fifty bells
On the Porcelain Tower of Nankin.”

But the bowl is not enough to lift the curse from her father’s house, so Chou-Kiou makes a figure—

“More quaintly golden.
This face is clouds and flowers,
These eyes are wind and flame,
This body jade and silver.”

It is enough and little Chou-Kiou wins her lover,

“He is a straight shaft of sapphire,
He is a peacock feather borne upon a spear.
He and she before the Goddess—”

“Many Swans” is written in polyphonic prose and if read loud one may readily discern from its rhyme and assonance how it differs from ordinary prose. It is the story of an American Indian, who takes the “shining thing” he wants, even when he is warned against it. It kills all those whom he loves, all life everywhere he goes. “So he lifted himself against the weight of the sun and wished a great wish for men, and went on, with his desire sobbing in his heart.” But, the “shining thing” refused to leave him until at last Many Swans realized that he was alone, and he cursed the “shining thing” and longed to die. Then she, whose “eyes were moons for sadness and her voice was like the coiling of the sea,” came and took the “shining thing” and left him. The theme of “Dried Marjoram” was done by Tennyson in “Rizpah.” If one is not an admirer of the moderns, one should read the two, and see for himself how well an imagist can write in regular rhymed form. It is the best book Miss Lowell has written since “Swordblades and Poppy Seed.” “Legends” is like a white diamond. The facets are cut and burnished until they reflect the romance and tragedy of life, but, when one looks deep into the heart of the jewel, it is clear, cool, untouched by the thunder of color or the flash of lightning-keen description on its surface. Miss Lowell has a rare gift for telling a story.

Pauline Barrington

Hymen

by H.D.

The Egoist Press · London

The Lyric West · 1922-07/08

H. D. is like the swift wind blowing the skirts of the Victory of Samothrace: she is like the youth in the Hermes of Praxiteles: she is like an intaglio cut deep in an old sapphire, whose blue is one with the dancing spirit of the slim figure. A poet, who takes his craftsmanship seriously, should not fail to study “Hymen”, this pamphlet, done so exquisitely in blue and white.

H. D.’s name is Hilda Doolittle. She is an American and the wife of Richard Aldington, the English poet. H. D. is an imagist and has appeared in many anthologies during the last few years. “Hymen” is her second book of verse, it is as perfect a whole and as unique as any one of her poems, which possess a stark Greek beauty.

The title of the book is taken from the Masque, “Hymen”. It is a swallow-song of joy:

“Between the hollows
Of the little hills
The spring spills blue—
Turquoise, sapphire, lapis-lazuli
On a brown cloth outspread.”

Then this bit from “Circe”:

It was easy enough—
a thought called them
from the sharp edges of the earth;
they prayed for a touch,
they cried for a sight of my face,
they entreated me
till in pity
I turned each to his own self.”

Some of us have been struck dumb by what we have seen; others have written about beauty who have never looked into her face; but there are those who have seen and written it down for us to read—H. D. is one of the last. She has seen beauty, the ecstasy of it has pierced and wounded her—she has given it to us in this small book.

“The whole white world is ours
and the world, purple with rose-bays,
bays, bush on bush,
group, thicket, hedge and tree,
dark islands in a sea
of grey-green olive or wild white olive,
cut with the sudden cypress shafts,
in clusters, two or three,
or with one slender, single cypress-tree.

—Pauline Barrington.

Poems

by Marianne Moore

The Egoist Press · London

The Lyric West · 1922-09

We are not dreamers but explorers while reading Marianne Moore's beautifully printed small book of poems. Exploring a strange country of new unfamiliar paths, our way blocked by obscurities that are a bit difficult to understand, we plod on, however, finding stretches of a clean wind-swept country, interesting and keen, and a feeling of wings lifting us from the ground.

Here is a part of her comment on "Poetry":

I too dislike it: there are things important beyond all this fiddle.
Reading it, however, with a perfect contempt for it, one discovers that there is in it after all, a place for the genuine.

... In the meantime, if you demand on the one hand, ...
the raw material of poetry in
all its rawness and
that which is, on the other hand,
genuine then you are interested in poetry.

There is "stoutness of heart" about that which we have not found in a lot of the saccharine stuff written in poetry's name today. No one has written a lovelier lyric than the "Talisman":

Under a splintered mast,
Torn from ship and cast
Near her hull,

A stumbling shepherd found
Embedded in the ground,
A sea-gull

Of lapis lazuli,
A scarab of the sea,
With wings spread—

Curling its coral feet,
Parting its beak to greet
Men long dead.

Marianne Moore has made intricate patterns of her moods. She has made complexity effective and though difficult to understand and a bit irritating she is always interesting.

—Pauline Barrington.

Verse

by Adelaide Crapsey

Alfred A. Knopf

The Lyric West · 1922-11

Hear thou my lamentation,
Eros, Aphrodite's son!
My heart is broken and my days are done.

On one side stood Death with outstretched, thin, chill hands; on the other, beneath her window, was the graveyard, "Trudeau's Garden," she called it; they waited for her, but she was not ready for the tryst, and tragically she said, "I'll not be patient! I will not be still!" At Saranac, she spent her last year in exile, longing to live and in an agony of terror of Death waiting so near.

Song

I make my shroud but no one knows,
So shimmering fine it is and fair,
With stitches set in even rows.
I make my shroud but no one knows.

In doorway where the lilac blows,
Humming a little wandering air,
I make my shroud and no one knows,
So shimmering fine it is and fair.

Adelaide Crapsey died October, 1914, in her thirty-sixth year, leaving her life work, "The Analysis of English Metrics"—a scientific thesis relating to accent—two-thirds finished. This is the second printing of her one book of verse. It was written during that desperate last year when she was forbidden to work on her book of Metrics. She created a form of verse which she called "Cinquain"—in which she presents an impression in a single image.

Trapped

Well and
If day on day
Follows, and weary year
On year . . . and ever days and years
Well?

Shadow

A-sway,
On red rose,
A golden butterfly
And on my heart a butterfly
Night-wing'd.

Triad

These be
Three silent things:
The falling snow . . . the hour
Before the dawn . . . the mouth of one
Just dead.

Her verse is an ecstasy of pain and revolt, its passionate perfection is evidence of a deep technical knowledge of prosody. She has expressed heartbreakingly, her vivid unreconciled spirit longing to live out the beauty and finish the work of life.

Dirge

Never the nightingale,
 Oh my dear,
Never again the lark
 Thou wilt hear;
Though dusk and the morning still
Tap at thy window-sill,
Though ever love call and call
Thou wilt not hear at all,
 My dear, my dear.

—*Pauline Barrington.*

The Waste Land

by T. S. Eliot

Boni and Liveright

The Lyric West · 1923-02

The Dial has awarded its yearly prize of two thousand dollars to T. S. Eliot for his poem *The Waste Land*, which appeared in the November number of that magazine. To quote Mr. Edmund Wilson, Jr.: "Mr. T. S. Eliot's first meagre volume of twenty-five poems was dropped into the waters of contemporary verse without stirring more than a few ripples. But when two or three years had passed, it was found to stain the whole sea." Also Mr. Eliot is a critic and a creative one, bringing more to his review than is to be found in the thing he is reviewing. Mr. Eliot was born in St. Louis in 1888. He has received respectively the degrees of Bachelor and Master of Arts at Harvard. He studied at the Sorbonne, the Harvard Graduate School and Merton College, Oxford. He has been a lecturer under both the Oxford and the London University Extension Systems. He was assistant editor of *The Egoist* and is now editor of *The Criterion*. *The Waste Land* is written in four or five different languages, if one can read in only two, naturally there is a good deal one cannot read, must take second hand. However, the bigness of the beautiful verse, and the unconscious self-consciousness of it makes it alive, a poem of a man's soul. The search for the Grail which is going on today, complex and aching and full of boredom and dissatisfaction.

"What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,
You cannot say or guess, for you know only
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
And the dry stone no sound of water. . . ."

This from the lady of the boudoir:—

"My nerves are bad tonight. Yes, bad. Stay with me.
Speak to me. Why do you never speak? Speak.
What are you thinking of? What thinking? What?
I never know what you are thinking. Think."

And this bit of Jazz:—

"O O O that Shakespeherian Rag—
It's elegant—
So intelligent."

And this lovely verse:—

"The river's tent is broken: the last fingers of leaf
Clutch and sink into the wet bank. The wind
Crosses the brown land unheard. The nymphs are departed.
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song."

And this:—

"He who was living is now dead.
We who were living are now dying
With a little patience.
Here is no water but only rock. . . .
Rock and no water and the sandy road. . . ."

And further on:—

"If there were water
And no rock
If there were rock
And also water
And water.
A spring—
A pool among the rock. . . ."

Where is the prophet, who will strike the rock and quench the thirst of The Waste Land? The eternal longing! Longing and for what? This poem is the living modern life of today. The Waste Land takes place half in an imaginary world and half in that of London. Mr. Eliot states that he derived the title and much of the incidental symbolism from a book by Miss Jessie L. Weston called "From Ritual to Romance." Mr. Eliot writes beautiful verse and as we travel through timeless wastes, a London boudoir, music hall and are hit sharply by vulgarity and jazz, we know it is of today, living, alive, modern. It is so difficult to state just what it is to be modern, but if one is a genius and a poet, as is Mr. Eliot, one's hand is close on the pulse of his time . . . he is a modern.

—Pauline Barrington.

Rainbow Gold

Selected by Sara Teasdale

The Macmillan Company · New York

The Lyric West · 1923-03

It is something to be able to sing like a meadowlark; to set free a song so lovely, so poignant, it makes the heart beat in one's throat with an ache from the clear beauty of it! Yes, it is something, indeed, it is a great deal! What are politics, world or otherwise; old forms or new, to the lark, it knows it has a song to sing—and it sings. So it is with Sara Teasdale's lyrics and love songs published not so very long ago in *Rivers to the Sea* and *Flame and Shadow*. Her absolute sincerity, her direct truthful handling and her great simplicity puts her easily at the head of the women writing today. She who touches the fountain head where truth bubbles up, is forever young, it is fitting that she should be the one to make an anthology of poems for children, as she has done in *Rainbow Gold*. The much abused child will not find Mother Goose or dripping, sweet sentimentality here, but poems old and new written not for a child at all but for the world at large. Great poems by real poets. In the prefatory note Sara Teasdale says, "I have made a small collection of poems that would have pleased the child I used to be and the boy who was my playmate. . . . I have been guided from first to last by their enjoyment or their boredom. The poems that they loved best had highly accented rhythms, and took them into 'a land of clear colors and stories.' They enjoyed sad poems as much as merry ones; but meditative, moralistic and gloomy poems were never read but once, if they were read at all." Think of being a child and finding in one book, "The Lady of Shalott," "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," "Sea Fever," and "Lochinvar," just as marvelous as ever. Then "The Ghosts of the Buffaloes" and "Meg Merrilies" with "O Captain! My Captain!" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," and more and more.

—Pauline Barrington.

Poems 1918–21

by Ezra Pound

Boni and Liveright · New York

The Lyric West · 1923–04

I do not pretend to follow all his volts, jerks, sulks, balks, outbursts and jump-overs, but . . .” Mr. Ezra Pound said of Mr. Williams. I would say the same of Mr. Pound, continuing the “but,” Mr. Pound has been the sworn enemy of sentimental twaddle, clichés, the commonplace, puritanism, pollyannaism, babbetism et cetera. He has been the loyal champion, fighting the fight for the poets, by whom and through whom poetry has had its renaissance in the beginning of the twentieth century. He is continually asking the question, why James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, cannot be read by Americans, who may read freely Rabelais, Shakespeare and the *Odyssey*. He has upheld the hands of The Imagists and modern poets, who are trying to find new forms of expression. If he had closed the ivory gate of his tower against the warpath and tilting of windmills; if he had devoted all his energy to writing poetry, however, he might have given the world a better book of verse than *Poems 1918–21* including *Three portraits* and *Four Cantos* which, though it is not as good as *Lustra* or as interesting, is too good to miss reading.

CLARA

“At sixteen she was a potential celebrity
With a distaste for caresses,
She now writes me from a convent;
Her life is obscure and troubled;
Her second husband will not divorce her;
Her mind is, as ever, uncultivated,
And no issue presents itself.
She does not desire her children,
Or any more children.
Her ambition is vague and indefinite,
She will neither stay in, nor come out.”

His wide knowledge of language gives him the advantage of being able to read a fair part of the literature of the world in the original. He has plead long for an international interchange of literature and criticism, “English and French literature have stood in constant need of each other.” It would bring America, who has passed the monolingual stage, closer to a proper prospective. He would widen our horizon, push it back. Mr. Pound left Philadelphia to live in London, like Whistler he finds the artistic atmosphere there which he failed to find in America. He has some fine things in his books of prose: “A Study in French Poets.” His arrangement of an essay by Ernest Fenollosa, “The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry,” also “Translations of Greek,” his essays on Henry James and Remy de Gourmont are so

splendid one wishes there were more. The continual alluding to this in Greek and that in French, the other in German or Italian; the too much quoting—one feels that though Mr. Pound is good, it is all a bit bewildering; he is so clever but not clever enough to be a genius. Some of his early poetry is lovely; this one for example:

“I would bathe myself in strangeness;
These comforts heaped upon me, smother me!
I burn, I scald so for the new,
New friends, new faces,
Places!
Oh, to be out of this,
This that is all I wanted
—Save the new.

And this one:

An Immorality

“Sing we for love and idleness,
Naught else is worth the having.

Though I have been in many a land,
There is naught else in living.

Though rose-leaves die of grieving,
And I would rather have my sweet,

Than do high deeds in Hungary
To pass all men’s believing.

The Garden. En robe de parade. Samain

Like a skein of loose silk blown against a wall
She walks by the railing of a path in Kensington Gardens,
And she is dying piece-meal of a sort of emotional anaemia.

And round about there is a rabble
Of the filthy, sturdy, unkillable infants of the very poor.
They shall inherit the earth.

In her is the end of breeding.
Her boredom is exquisite and excessive.
She would like some one to speak to her,
And is almost afraid that I will commit that indiscretion.

The world would have been a poorer place without Ezra Pound. He has looked deep down in the darkness and seen a glimpse of beauty, beyond life and death, beyond time; he has never been able to catch and hold it, never quite . . . the iron of frustration has entered his soul. There is a bitterness and an over-reaching after effect about most of his writing. We taste the bitterness and feel the bite of the iron. “Beauty in art reminds one what is worth while. I am not now speaking of shams. I mean beauty, not slither, not sentimentalising about beauty, not telling people that

beauty is the proper respectable thing. I mean beauty. You don't argue about an April wind, you feel bucked up when you meet it. You feel bucked up when you come on a swift moving thought in Plato or on a fine line in a statue."—From *The Serious Artist*. It reminds me of a pen and ink drawing I have by Frederick Carter: The struggling mass of humanity is struggling upward, with outstretched clutching hands and straining backs, they have struggled a little above the surface of the earth and there is one who has pulled himself higher than the rest, though still held by the mass, who has lifted his head clear in the blazing sun and has wings of light about his head. Ezra Pound for all his struggling has not won the wings of light in the sun's high rays, but his stubborn back and stiffened shoulders have given brave support to others. For all his brilliance and courage and knowledge of literature and a real talent (if he had happened to have what T. S. Elliot has, but what's the use of it) he has somehow, somewhere missed the geste.

—*Pauline Barrington.*

The Great Dream

by Marguerite Wilkinson

The Macmillan Company · New York

The Lyric West · 1923-05

"I have dreamed a dream of my own city,
Manhattan of the tall towers, colorful as day,
A giant-striding dream of my own country
Where the three zones meet and the four winds play:
I have dreamed a dream of my own people
Many as stars thronging the Milky Way."

When *The Great Dream* arrived and I read the above opening to the poem which gives its name to the book, I remembered the first time I saw Mrs. Wilkinson. One rainy morning, in spring, about 1912, she came to a woman's club to talk about poetry. Up to that day, *The Ancient Mariner* was the one and only poem I knew or cared about, it filled me with an awful shuddering delight. That morning while the rain, like gray fringe, tapped against the windows with loaded ends, Marguerite Wilkinson talked, her pale brown hair soft in the half light, her true blue eyes shining with engaging earnestness. Then, another day, in an orange-grove-garden in Pasadena, Eunice Tietjens and Marguerite Wilkinson discussing the young poets and new forms; Mrs. Tietjens pushing wider the horizon, Mrs. Wilkinson more cautious, pulling it back into place. There were orange blossoms in the air and a mocking bird whistling from the top of a nearby chimney. . . . Mrs. Wilkinson had would keep to the straight broad road of conventional poetry. The side paths or the making of new ones never tempted her from the fair course she had chosen. She holds no brief for "Certain Radical Poets," the restless ones longing for the new. There are no quivering uncertainties, possibilities, the unknown . . . included in the terms of her art. She has written from a deep knowledge of the traditions of English literature and a thorough understanding of the craft of poetry. She has so great a love of nature, that sometimes she overlooks the fact that nature and art are not one and the same thing. She makes use of many rhythms, free verse, polyphonic prose, prose and regular old fashioned forms and as Mrs. Wilkinson is above all else a lyricist, the last is her best, when her poems have a regular quality of song. There is wholesomeness, sincerity and dignity about her books.

"Our Joys Are Many"

Our joys are many as the stars that quiver
Above us in the evening, many as waters
That underneath the starlight burn and quiver;
Our joys are many as all the shining daughters
Of mothering Heaven, and they shine as far;
Our joys are as many as our sorrows are.

Oh, who has numbered them all from the beginning,
Crying their names aloud, telling the splendor
Of joys that rise on terrible pinions, winning
The enchanted airs, of little joys more tender
That like young clover flourish in the grass
And kiss our feet too humbly while we pass?

Marguerite Wilkinson was born at Halifax, Nova Scotia. Her father, Nathan Kellogg Bigelow, an American citizen, brought her back to the United States when she was a child. She was educated in the public schools of Evanston, Miss Ely's School in New York and at Northwestern University. She wrote editorially for college papers and since has written extensively for magazines. She was leading critic of poetry for *The New York Times*. Her first book was called *In Vivid Gardens* this was followed some years later by *Golden Songs of the Golden State*, an anthology of California verse. *New Voices*, her next book, is a remarkable volume of criticism of poetry in general. *The Dingbat of Arcady* is a prose account of an adventurous trip. *Bluestone* and *The Great Dream* are both books of poems. Fundamentally there is something missing. Marguerite Wilkinson knows nothing of the by products of art and misses a keen ecstasy. She knows only the bright and shining side of the shield, keeping it gaily turned to the sun, ignoring the fact of the under side, dark and hidden. Poe, Whitman, Thompson, Verlaine, Villon and other driven ones knew that there is the intolerable, tragic, beautiful, yes, beautiful, mad . . . stabbing a barb to the quick. We write only what we are and Marguerite Wilkinson has given us her sweet wholesomeness, strong gentle poet that she is. She has written honestly and well, bringing poetry to literally thousands of persons who treasure her lyrics and find joy in her narrative poems. In *New Voices* she wrote, "Poetry is like the Pool of Bethesda. Until they have been plunged into the eddies of rhythmical and imaginative beauty, many human intellects are, to a certain extent sick and infirm." And there stands that rainy day, forever in memory; Marguerite Wilkinson with her soft hair and earnest eyes, her poet's voice ringing and clear and the shining rain . . . the rain like gray fringe, swaying in the wind, tapping . . . tapping against the window pane, or was it against my heart.

—*Pauline Barrington.*

The Dream

by John Masefield

The Macmillan Company · New York · 1922

The Lyric West · 1923-06

Weary with many thoughts I went to bed
And lay for hours staring at the night,
Thinking of all the millions of the dead
Who died, for all their power and delight,
For all their love, and never came again,
Never, for all our crying, all our pain.

This is the first verse of *The Dream* by John Masefield. As he lay sorrowing, music came to him and he walked apart in a dream. He gloried as he went, leaving trouble and finding beauty with a bright heart and quiet face. The dream unrolls like a bolt of shining ribbon and it seems we too enter a long gallery, ghostly and medieval, where the dream is stretched along the wall, a golden arras with its woven story of a castle “mighty and fair,” “the walls were i’carven with delight like stone become alive. . . .” “The woven chivalry” of swords and old armour, spears and steel gloves; old banners drooped and frayed, now, “housed the little mouse with pointed ears”; “the most intense souls painted in their joy” whose thoughts made their brows bright, as though they wore a jewelled crown; an old court of gray stone, old panels with their carven texts, dim passages and doors, beyond which one might meet a friend, and old music, all “dead long before.” A great bull paced by a brook wreaking his rage on the upturned sod. Along the worn gold of the arras came woven knights “in colored silks the running stag to harass” followed by lovely faces and “pictures came of water in a great sheet like flame;” cliffs and trees and water “in terror” and caves dim where the sound of water is “like sound in sleep.” “The walls change from toppling sea . . . on which a ship emerging . . . to harvest fields, whose corn, all golden ripe and ready to be shorn by sunburnt reapers singing staves.” Once again the walls changed to dark and wandering caves “where men on anvils fiery secrets learned.” The great Daniel, “in wisest age . . . deep in the red and black of books immerst” into which “all these forms of thought and myriads more, passed, smiled at having such great store All red and black as many as the sand, Studded with crystals, clasped with many a band Of hammered steel. I saw him standing there. After I woke his pleasure filled the air.” And so *The Dream* ends and like most dreams, it leaves a delicious feeling of languid sadness and terror, of the fay land of chivalry which, though so far away in the past, is in the very marrow of our bones today. John Masefield was born in Ledbury, Hertfordshire, 1878. His father was a lawyer. When very young Masefield took to the sea and became a wanderer. The results of his wanderings are to be found in his books; novels, plays, crude, beautiful, marvelous, tragic, brutal poems of the sea. No one today or since Chaucer and

Shakespeare has equaled his narrative poems. His high colored realism, physical exulting and spiritual exaltation are the stuff from which literature is made. The Everlasting Mercy, The Widow in the Bye Street, The Daffodil Fields and Dauber are four of the most remarkable rhymed narrative poems written by a poet of today or any day for that matter. The wealth of descriptions brutal and human; the wild thrill of the awful storm, when Dauber goes around the Horn, only to drop from the foretopgallant yard to the deck, crushed, in sight of the end of the voyage!—He who went to sea, that he might paint her in all her beauty, but filled with agonizing fear of her, to be afraid, horribly afraid and then finally to win his mates' respect; "to be ranked as man however much he painted." And as he lay broken on the deck, The pain was stunning him, the wind went by. . . . They glowed, the great storm glowed, the sails, the mast. "It will go on," he cried aloud, and passed. No country but England could have made a Masefield. The salt wind of the sea has blown his spirit; the beat of the surf is one with the throb of his heart. He knows intimately the unlit alleys and waterways of cities and the dangerous and nameless out posts of civilization. The earth will grow cold falling into the abyss of lost stars, the sun will lose its light, drowning in a night of dead suns, but in the words of Dauber,— "It will go on!"—

—*Pauline Barrington.*

The Hundred and One Harlequins

by Sacheverell Sitwell

Grant Richards, Ltd. · London · 1923

The Lyric West · 1923-07/08

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

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

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

—First variation on a theme by George Peele.

The Hundred and One Harlequins easily puts Sacheverell Sitwell at the head of the young poets writing today. It is varied and interesting; written in metre and vers libre; imaginative, with a beautiful use of words and rhythm. If there is a fault, it is that there is much that is difficult to understand, obscure, but one picks up the slim volume to read over these poems and is rewarded by finding a wealth of material well worth digging for. Mr. T. S. Eliot has said somewhere, he would like to give Mr. Sitwell “ten years of hard work.” Then we shall see, for he is under thirty and an artist and a poet. Beauty is such an abstract, each one sees it from a different point of view; to express what one sees, honestly, without equivocation “is a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy.” Mr. Sitwell has undertaken the task with all his young energy and imagination. In “Two Variations on Themes of Zarathustra,” “The Hochzeit of Hercules” and “A March Past the Pyramids” there is true English poetry, but no suggestion of the past.

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

— A March Past the Pyramids.

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

A railway engine ran across the field
Gallop[ing] like a swift horse down the rails.

There they ride each person in a carriage,
Each of them steering his cloud through the air.

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

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

—*Pauline Barrington.*

Black Armour

by Elinor Wylie

George H. Doran Company · New York

The Lyric West · 1923-09

There was a long ride ahead of me. I settled myself in my corner and opened the black and silver covers of Mrs. Wylie's second book of poems, *Black Armour*. Poem after poem singing evenly, rhymed and metered, I read, until reaching the end of the book and my ride simultaneously. I had traveled far into a land of a

"... cool and laughing mind, renewed
From covert sources like a spring's,
Is potent to translate the mood
Of all distraught and twisted things."

I went on my way with a mysterious feeling of moonlight and silver, soft shadows hiding the unknown. If the car coming to a stand-still, had not jerked me back, I might have got it; however, it did stop and the "distraught and twisted things" were left undiscovered in the shadows. I held the small book close.

The poems *Lucifer Sings in Secret*, *Sequence* and *Peregrine* are admirably written, except in the latter, which is the history of a free lance, a Villon; the psychology of the last two lines, is bad; one who is a "good hater" must be a "good lover." Love and hate are opposite poles of the same degree. One wishes, perhaps, there were not such uniformity of rhythm and metre, not so much sameness in the smooth flowing lines. This is an interesting Self-Portrait—

A lens of crystal whose transparence calms
Queer stars to clarity, and disentangles
Fox-fires to form austere refracted angles;
A texture polished on the horny palms
Of vast equivocal creatures, beast or human;
A flint, a substance finer-grained than snow,
Graved with the Graces in intaglio
To set sarcastic vigil on the woman.

This for the mind, and for the little rest
A hollow scooped to blackness in the breast,
The simulacrum of a cloud, a feather:
Instead of stone instead of sculptured strength,
This soul, this vanity, blown hither and thither
By trivial breath, over the whole world's length.

Elinor Wylie builds adventures with words, entangling and disentangling them; adventures that we feel vaguely, but which she sees clearly with her eyes shut. These are not great poems. All through the book run keen and lovely lines, poignant and vigorous. It is a pleasure to meet her in the magazines and reviews. Her book is a

distinguished addition to the literature of today. She is one of the group of lyricists: Sara Teasdale, Edna Vincent Millay and Alice Meynell. Though she is absolutely unlike Marianne Moore in method or style, there is the same illusive quality beyond a world of dull routine.

Elixirs might escape;
But now, compact as stone,
My hand preserves a shape
Too utterly its own.

—*Pauline Barrington.*

A Book of Love

by Charles Vildrac

Translated by Witter Bynner · E. P. Dutton & Co. · New York

The Lyric West · 1923-10

From time to time, in the American Magazines, have appeared Mr. Bynner's translations from the French of M. Charles Vildrac. After having translated and printed every poem from the original French volume, Mr. Bynner says in the translator's note, he found himself questioning the form he had used. It took many months to change some of the translations, from the English free verse, in which he had printed them, to a measure nearer the rhyme and metrical norm employed by M. Vildrac. There is an interesting introductory note by Emile Verhaeren, which begins with, "To love beings and things!" He points out the great simplicity of these poems which, however, are free from any taint of sentimentality. These poems that make *A Book of Love* deal with the gestures of a day, of a world, or the little song to soothe a baby. It is a book of love of all things. It is not full of blazing sunshine but rather the lights of a gay sun that insists on pushing the clouds, that persistingly gather, out of his way. When a big poet translates the poetry of another, with sympathetic interpenetration, as Mr. Bynner has translated M. Vildrac's poems, the result is more than the original poems; a beauty from both, is added to the poems themselves.

Here is one called

Happy-Go-Lucky

Happy-go-lucky, to follow the road,
Is a better lot than you supposed,
Just to enjoy the to and fro
Of all the pleasant things there are.
Happy-go-lucky, to sail your life,
Is worth whatever pain be in it,
Just to feel how good the sun is
Every fleeting minute.

Come then, life allows you living,
Earth is not so cold as yet,
The intervals are not so rare
When you say to yourself that it's good to live,
When you simply undertake to live
In the cooling grass, in the warming sand,
Or along the street, and only care
For the easy course at your eyes' command
Of all the pleasant things there are. . . .

The problem of poverty and the spirit of brotherhood are to be found in Mr. Bynner's own books. He seems ever striving to find an answer to the cry of the handcuffed idiot, in *The New World*, "Non, Tu n'es pas mon frere." He worked seven or eight years on *The New World*, and revised it several times. He is a tireless worker and one feels that M. Vildrac was fortunate in having a translator whose impulses spring from a spirit without pretenses and one whose convictions are true. Some one has said, the knowledge of a language other than one's own, opens up a new world. Mr. Bynner, with his mysticism and keen sense of life and his gift of lyricism, has opened up a new world and passed it on to us, in translating the poems of M. Vildrac, for as he says, these poems are notably ours in their breath of kinship to the genius of Whitman.

The time of the great conquest,
When the people, with this ardour,
Ran from the thresholds of their doors
Toward one another.
And the time came in the land
For history to be fulfilled
With only songs that everybody sang,
A single cause, a single victory,
A single dance encircling all the houses.

—*Pauline Barrington.*

Selected Poems

by Robert Frost

Henry Holt Co. · New York

The Lyric West · 1923-11

Lyricism is not opposed to realism. Mr. Frost makes his stories all the more real by his bursts of lyric descriptions; the beauty of which, add strength to the accurate expression of his observations. Mr. Frost's people do not take him into foreign countries, or other men's writings, or use quotations; they stay right at home, where they live—really live and die. Robert Frost's father was born in New Hampshire, his mother in Edinburgh. His father moved to San Francisco, where he was the editor of a newspaper. Robert Frost lived there for the first ten years of his life before returning to New England. Those ten years when the boy was running up and down the hills of San Francisco, seem to have left no impressions for there is not a trace of them to be found in his poems. Yet the city must have been full of color as it was just getting over the gold fever. After all, Robert Frost is New England and one only expresses what one is. School and college were not very successful in Mr. Frost's case, in fact, he left Dartmouth after a few months. Later he went to Harvard, but it was after he was married and only for a couple of years. He tried farming and working in the mills, storing up impressions to make into stories, for Frost is primarily a story teller. He went to England with his family and settled in Beaconsfield in Buckinghamshire, finding himself in an England "full of poets." It is pleasant to think of the talks he must have had, but unimpressed by new ideas, holding tenaciously to the New England people, to the New England hills and farms and meadows which after all were himself. The poems in *Selected Poems* are taken from three books: *A Boy's Will*, *Mountain Interval* and *North of Boston*. *A Boy's Will* was his first book. It had an interesting table of contents. Each title is followed by an explanation:—

Ghost House

He is happy in society of his own choosing.

A Dream Pang

He is shown by a dream how really well it is with him. Etc.

Mountain Interval was his second and contains some lovely poems, particularly "Birches." It seems as though Mr. Frost might be the boy himself.

When I see birches bend to left and right
Across the lines of straighter darker trees,
I like to think some boy's been swinging them.

Some boy too far from town to learn baseball,
Whose only play was what he found himself,
Summer or winter, and could play alone.

North of Boston was the last one to appear and the greatest of the three. It is a sad book of a crumbling New England, of people living out their lives on isolated farms, through hard long winters. There are overtones of something uncanny and horrible and undercurrents that are fearful and mystical. “The Death of the Hired Man” is the story of the poor broken farm hand who comes back to die. Half crazed he is and Mr. Frost tells his story with fine tenderness. Then there is “Home Burial” with the mother’s stark cry of horror; and “The Mountain” with its colossal austerity:

The mountain held the town as in a shadow
I saw so much before I slept there once;
I noticed that I missed stars in the West,
Where its black body cuts into the sky.

“A Servant to Servants” is powerful in its truth, stark and appalling about the woman who has been to the State Asylum and knows she is surely going insane. It is interesting to note Mr. Frost’s development, and that is one thing a book of selected poems lacks; it is the result, whereas the three books, taken in their order, show the growth of the intellectual and spiritual grasp of the poet.

—*Pauline Barrington.*

Birds, Beasts and Flowers

by D. H. Lawrence

Thomas Seltzer · New York · 1923

The Lyric West · 1923-12

You tell me I am wrong.
Who are you, who is anybody to tell me I am wrong?
I am not wrong.

In this manner Mr. Lawrence begins his first poem, “Pomegranate” in *Birds, Beasts and Flowers*. Perhaps there is no one writing today who is discussed with more bitter feeling, more profound emotion, than D. H. Lawrence. Whether the criticism be for or against him, he is conceded by them all to be a poet and a genius, also a great modern writer. Freud discovered the unconscious and Mr. Lawrence is his prophet. The unconscious, the dark mystery of sex is the hard truth that he tries to crack; tearing old beliefs, reticences and taboos to shreds. With insolent courage he throws down his challenge to all manner of quackery; baffling the stupid and those who have not the courage to look at the hidden truth brought out and aired before their eyes. In this last book of poems, Mr. Lawrence writes of birds, beasts and flowers in his same amazing manner; seeking out the hidden mystery that lies hidden and dark in the very heart of each, whether he be beast or bird, reptile or vine; and we are attracted because of the hidden-dark little mystery in each of us, which is attracted to all mystery. Intellectual curiosity leads to wisdom and this book is full of essential wisdom. To quote from St. Matthew in “The Evangelistic Beasts”:

I have been, and I have returned.
I have mounted up on the wings of the morning, and I have dredged down to the zenith’s reversal.
This is my way, being man.
Gods may stay in mid-heaven, the Son of Man has climbed to Whitsun zenith,
But I, Matthew, being man,
Am a traveller back and forth.
So be it.

And this from the “Elephant”:

The elephant bells striking low, tong-tong, tong-tong,
To music and queer chanting:
Enormous shadow-processions filing on in the flare of fire
In the fume of cocoa-nut oil, in the sweating tropical night,
In the noise of the tom-toms and singers;
Elephants after elephants curl their trunks, vast shadows, and some cry out
As they approach and salaam, under the dripping fire of torches
That pale fragment of a prince up there, whose motto is *Ich dien*.

D. H. Lawrence is an Englishman. He has written novels and short stories; books of travel, poetry, essays and plays. His descriptions are superlatively beautiful and all

his writing has a radiant intensity. His books are not for the childish. They are grown men's meat. They are not pleasant but are often terrifying and revolting in their revelations of sex, of this dark night-consciousness. He writes of the moment beset with struggles and storms of sex. Mr. Lawrence says, "A novel is supposed to be a mere record of emotion-adventure, flounderings in feelings—also a thought adventure, if it is to be anything complete." His books are without beginnings or endings, yet emotion, flounderings, feelings and adventure . . . the gentle reader, out of all the disgust and horror, at seeing torn away the mask, which man ties so carefully over the world he does not wish to see, finds the only thing he has to fear on earth . . . is himself. It has been said genius is a little mad, it may be so but the rest of us are so abysmally stupid.

You tell me I am wrong.
Who are you, who is anybody to tell me I am wrong?
I am not wrong.

And perhaps he is right. Who knows?

—Pauline Barrington.

Selvage

by Dorothea Moore

The Stratford Company · Boston

The Lyric West · 1924-01

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

Talking of women in war time
This is how I think of her.
A well seasoned enduring tub.
Stout from the view biological
And shaped as it may please God and time
And often colored quite beautifully.

Again I say—endurable—
Meeting shocks—kind or cruel—
Perfectly firm on its own base
Neither too much nor too little concerned
About other tubs, good or bad.
But wholly adapted to contain
Full without slopping
All that is human of the Universe.

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

In "Circumstance"

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

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

A little grey ape has come
To stay with me.
Sitting close in the shadow
Of my shadow.
Shall I disguise him with a red coat and gold braid
Or introduce him to everybody by his real name?

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

—*Pauline Barrington.*

Tulips and Chimneys

by E. E. Cummings

Thomas Seltzer · New York

The Lyric West · 1924-02

Words are such amazing things! There they wait, longing to be woven into patterns intricate and interesting. Inarticulate until they are chosen and set in place, to live and be alive and thrill on through time that life to all who read. E. E. Cummings or Edward Estlin Cummings, to give him his full name, selects words as a goldsmith selects jewels, to fit nicely into each perfectly made setting. In *Tulips and Chimneys* (could there be a more arresting title?) Mr. Cummings has given us original jewels, flashing the joy of life and the essence of high adventure, set in modern settings and new forms, though he uses the sonnet form he makes it his own by its individuality. His book of prose, *The Enormous Room*, which appeared two years ago of the European War—prisoners and prisons, won a conspicuous place for itself among the literature of revolt. Mr. Cummings takes his material from the rhythms of American speech as do Sherwood Anderson and Carl Sandburg. Though written in prose the book is one mighty poem. *Tulips and Chimneys* is a book of poems that are poetry. Mr. Cummings smiles back at his experiences with exquisite finesse. He expresses the inquietude of the moderns with their self-conscious realism. But the astounding beauty of the words of these poems; the intense sensitiveness to men and women, love and hate, pleasure and despair—anguish and suffering. He sees—He sees—He sees—and dips his pen in genius and his writing is bold and amazingly accurate, with never a waste word. He understands well, the value of words and that for which they stand! This is the first part of *Chansons Innocentes*:

in Just—
spring when the world is mud—
luscious the little
lame baloonman

whistles far and wee

and eddieandbill come
running from marbles and
piracies and it's
spring

the queer
old baloonman whistles
far and wee
and bettyandisbel come dancing
from hop-scotch and jump-rope and

it's
spring
and
the
goat-footed

baloon-Man whistles
far
and
wee

And here is the first sonnet in the group. Sonnet-Unrealities:

it may not always be so; and i say
that if your lips, which i have loved, should touch
another's, and your dear strong fingers clutch
his heart, as mine in time not far away;
if on another's face your sweet hair lay
in such a silence as i know, or such
great writhing words as, uttering overmuch,
stand helplessly before the spirit at bay;
if this should be,—i say if this should be—
you of my heart, send me a little word;
that i may go unto him, and take his hands,
saying, Accept all happiness from me.
Then shall i turn my face, and hear one bird
sing terribly afar in the lost lands.

In a review in *The Dial*, John Dos Passos said: "When a book like *The Enormous Room* manages to emerge from the morass of print that we flounder in, it is time to take off your new straw hat and jump on it." And we add, when a book of poems like *Tulips and Chimneys* arrives, so sure in technique, original and varied; alive with color and beauty of life; let us jump—jump and sing, even if we haven't a hat—

—*Pauline Barrington.*

Anthologies and Books Received

The Lyric West · 1924-03

This is the day of Anthologies. There are Anthologies of various groups who stand for various principles, and Anthologies of poetry societies; Anthologies of new verse and old verse; Anthologies of college verse and high school verse. What does it all mean? Undoubtedly that the best and most promising verse of the period is being widely circulated among the people who read poetry, and that all writers of verse, young or old, are being given an unusual opportunity to bring their work before an audience. This should prove a stimulus to real accomplishment. One of the best features of this interest in Anthologies is that it is making students of schools and colleges familiar with the best in modern poetry and rousing a desire to experiment for themselves. A very interesting collection of high school verse comes to us from Paul S. Nickerson, Master of the High School of Middleboro, Massachusetts, himself a poet of distinction. Mr. Nickerson has gathered together what Charles Wharton Stork calls, "A harvest of poems by school children." He says of it that "it is a living document of the hope which, despite all caviling, promises a better America in the coming generation."

Books Received

A Half Century of Sonnets, by Gustav Davidson. This is a collection of sonnets by Mr. Davidson which excel in music and poetic material. The book is beautifully printed on Fabriano hand made paper and furnishes an artistic setting for artistic work.

Gipsy Gold, by Charles Divine; Thomas Seltzer, New York. This is a book of lyrics as full of color as its title. They revive love of romance and "beauty who walks unchaperoned, with poems in her head." The poems have a rare and lovely music and a delightful humor.

Montana Trails, by Edna Alberta Bailey. Erskine MacDonald, Ltd., London, W. C. A book of open-air verses, filled with the love of big spaces and reflecting their freedom.

Four, a Quarterly, Los Angeles. This is the second quarterly issue of the poems of a group of four young writers, issued by themselves, who feel that in this way they have solved the publication problem of the young poet. It is a collection of verse of broad range of subject and treatment and shows promise of good things from this group in the future.

SOURCES

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