



GOLDEN
VERSE

WINTER



1935



"Poetry of
Lasting Brilliance"

THE POETRY FORUM

Some of the finest poems from all parts of the United States and Canada have been selected and placed side by side in this edition of GOLDEN VERSE. They have been contributed by members of the POETRY FORUM, the channel through which all poetry for GOLDEN VERSE is received.

The POETRY FORUM offers criticism, market tips, and timely suggestions of interest to its members, with the privilege of submitting their poems for publication in GOLDEN VERSE. Payment for accepted material is made upon publication.

Membership in the POETRY FORUM is only \$1.00 annually. It is suggested that those who wish to avail themselves of the services of the POETRY FORUM, take advantage of the especially low membership fee as it is not expected to remain at a dollar a year for a long time.

Where other magazines have disheartened the aspiring young poet, GOLDEN VERSE seeks him out. Through the POETRY FORUM he shall receive individual guidance and instruction, and through GOLDEN VERSE magazine, his worthy efforts shall find nation-wide recognition.

The POETRY FORUM will compensate you in many ways! Take advantage of this opportunity, and join now before the membership fee is increased.



GOLDEN VERSE

"Poetry of Lasting Brilliance"

PHILADELPHIA

P. O. Box No. 2528

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FOREWORD

This magazine is published for the welfare of readers of good, clean imaginative verse. The editor has financed GOLDEN VERSE and the POETRY FORUM without sponsors or outside support. He feels, however, that he is presenting before his readers a magazine of genuine artistic merit, and in introducing GOLDEN VERSE wishes to make it clear that this magazine is expressly published in the interests of the highest ideals represented by fine contemporary verse,—the "Poetry of Lasting Brilliance."

THE EDITOR

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THE EXILE'S RETURN

An alien race encroaches on these hills
And these long valleys no more know their prime;
Unharvested, the orchard bough distills
The attar of a long-forgotten time.

Where once my fathers plowed the dimpled field,
A stranger now has squatted in their stead,
Unskilled to garner in the hallowed yield
Of pasture and of meadow; he has spread
His refuse where the calm-eyed cattle grazed,
That gave their milk to nourish pioneers;
His spawn infest the roofs my people raised,
The pale, white houses sagging with their years,
The village brook, defiled, and dammed with steel,
No longer gurgles on its glassy way
To turn the wheel and grind a richer meal
Than any sold in this mill-town today.

All silent; though I shouted, "I am come!"
No greeting tongue, no echo has replied
From stream or house or brambly hill, or from
The ghostly comrades ever at my side.
The body of my people is departed;
The shepherd sleeps; nor will the plowman stay
And bend his naked shoulders, merry-hearted,
To guide his furrow through the rippling clay.
Nor shall I living see these fields again
Invested with the spears of sprouting wheat,
Nor hear the swish of scythes against the grain
That fell beneath the farmers' tireless feet.

All silent still; even the songful bird
Returns no answer to the exile's call.
The dully moving sap alone has stirred
The aspen leaf to quiver and to fall.

—Nelson S. Bushnell

BUILDER OF TALL BUILDINGS

He loved little things, and dare not
speak his love.
Lonely he went through life, twisting his
days into steel girders, thumping
his imagination into drills and rivets,
Seeing over the edge of the girders how
pantries nodded from his garden
walk, how humming-birds clung
with quivering feet to the locust
leaf.
When he slipped from the twentieth
floor girder,
Only his soul knew he was but
leaning to smell a violet in
a far-off field.

—Louise Ederheimer

MY HEART IS GRATEFUL

For all the lovely little things in life, . . .
For pen and ink, whence noble thoughts run rife, . . .
For silver slanting rains on thirsting soil, . . .
For iridescence in a drop of oil, . . .
For buttercups, the rainbow's pot-of-gold, . . .
For smoke upcurling from the campfire's fold, . . .
For winds that wait aside the cares of day, . . .
For music lifting souls from dire dismay, . . .
For clouds moon-gilded in a midnight sky, . . .
For friends who share a smile in passing night, . . .
For grass dew-pearl'd beneath the sun's first light, . . .
For one brown dog, my blithe and errant knight, . . .
For simple joys and mischief's merry pranks, . . .
For these and more, dear Lord, I offer thanks.

—Edna A. Boyd

I MUSED BENEATH AN APPLE TREE

I mused beneath an apple tree
Of all that trees and men must know—
The dawning and the even glow,
The grass that grows upon the lea.
And musing thus, unknowingly,
An apple fell upon the ground—
Green and unripe, small and unsound;
The apple lay alongside me.

And then I thought of one who, too,
Had grown and died long ere his day—
The budding fruit that dropped away—
Before it yet had gathered dew;
I think of him whom once I knew,
His thread cut ere it had been spun—
The life which had not yet begun,
Fell by the tree whereon he grew.

—Bernard Tolle

AFTER YOUNG LOVE

Here lie white ashes,
Take them in the palm of your hand and breathe
upon them.
Be not afraid;
You can no more breathe life into them that have
been consumed by their own fire
Than into the little gods that little men hold dear.
So breathe upon the ashes,
That they may go out on the long wind's trail.
And where they fall a strange new flower may spring
That men will say, "Here is a blossom pale and pure."
They will not know it has been chastened by fire.

Here lie the white ashes.
Breathe upon them so

—Martha Wickham

ABSENCE IN MARCH

Far-off flutters of the footsteps of spring,
Late-loitering lover in the singing south,
Earth trembles with red remembering,
And waits fresh kisses on her eager mouth.

Yea, trembles and pulses to vibrate anew;
Yet the heart of me at the thought of you
Beggars this madness, its redness quivers
As the winds upon innumerable rivers.

—Scott Stewart Geesey

TO HELEN KELLER

If sightless eyes can see an evening cloud
Still burning with the sunset's dying smile,
And find that Death is comparably endowed;
If ears that hear no sound can reconcile
The unheard echoes with the Life-to-be
And find therein all beauty, still unknown,
To overshadow this Reality;
Then must a darkened, soundless life atone
For all the joys that we can realize.
The soul of Nature hides before our gaze,
But stands undimmed for any sightless eyes
That see, as hers, beyond our finite ways.
Oh God, if we've not faith enough to find
The world she has,—then make us deaf and blind!

—Shirley Virginia Eberth

SWEET MUSIC

Sweet music, soothing to the ear
Your charms are ever so sincere
That one cannot appraise your worth;
You soothe the heart and bring it mirth
And fill the soul with pleasant thought
And merriment that's ever sought.

Sweet music, through eternal space
You wander 'til the ear you grace
With pleasant sound, and then depart,
But in the soul and in the heart
Sweet memories are born anew
That live with one the ages through.

—Herman Grossman

FORGET!

Forget? Why not?
It has been done before,
Yet like an echo
(Maybe you and I are one)
I shall fade
Into that awful, woeful night
Of which you spoke.
Then, shall you forget?
Oh, no. Not you!
You shall remember!
Certainly!
My goodness still resounds
Within your heart.
Is there no reason?
Was I evil?
Oh, no! Not to you,
Nor to mankind,
Nor to all God has created.
You shall remember, too,
Of a cheerful, happy night,
Nay, not one,
But many!

—I. J. Mannings

THREE MORNINGS!

On a morning long ago
In a stable bare,
Cuddled close 'gainst Mary's heart
Wondrous Babe so fair.
Dreams she had, that mother sweet,
Of her Babe divine
As she crooned and sang to Him
Stabled with the kine.

On a morning long ago
Dark against the sky
She beheld three crosses rise,
On one He must die.
Gone were these dreams from Mary's heart
Shattered hopes held sway,
Night fell deep on mother-love,
He was laid away.

On a morning long ago
In a garden fair,
Mary found her wonder-son,
Saw Him standing there,
Saw her Babe, her child divine,
Saw her manly son,
Babe and youth, and splendid man
Moulded into one.

On a morning long ago
There amid the flowers,
Mary sang a song of joy!
Mary's hope is ours.

—Edna Greene Hines

MY GARDEN

Blossom buds in varied hue
Grow in loveliness for you,
All for you my work is done
All my hours in rain and sun.

Blossoms now of brilliant hue
Smile in beauty here for you,
Fallen petals fair and sweet
Grace my pathway, for your feet.

Blossoms now with faded hue
Droop and die for want of you,
Peace has left me; joy has fled;
Sorrow walks with me instead.

All forlorn my garden stands,
Asks in faith your eager hands,
Freely now my garden gate
Stands ajar. For you we wait.

—Alice Hirsh

From "Within My Heart" by
Alice Hirsh; Dorrance & Co.,
Publishers, Contempor-
ary Poets of Dorrance, Vol.
106.

REALISM VERSUS IMAGINATION IN POETRY

—0—

Modern American poetry is still striving for expression. Its form, in most instances, is a modified outgrowth of the "free verse" era. However, it has lost much of the cynicism and futility that is identified with that period. And yet the belief in Realism as a necessary artistic constituent continues to exist, despite the ideals that have passed with that topsy-turvy period. Other characteristics remain, and they are good.

Poetry has found in the commonplace, subjects as romantic as Grecian mythology. We no longer see in the subway train an ordinary vehicle for transporting passengers; it is a mixture of human emotions, where life and death may meet at the exits. Drama exists before our eyes. What was once commonplace, becomes for the discerning poet the instrument of romance.

Also, in poetry, as in all literature, everything now tends toward simplicity—the simple words and the simple subjects. In this, we know, if we have not attained truth, at least our efforts shall have been clothed in her palpable garments.

The effort of the Realistic "school" to show life as it really exists, did not reduce the terms of poetry to its simplest components. On the contrary, poetry became more obscure, more freakish, more artistic, if you choose, and less wholesome than ever before. There was no effort to separate the chaff from the wheat. The good was thrown in with the bad, little thought being given for the consequence. And indeed, the ugliness of our existence was rather held up to view than the beautiful. The grotesque and bizarre, the unnatural and the coarse,—all were employed, seducing the reader with wit, and leaving the matter to take care of itself as best it may.

If through Realism these poets attempted to achieve truth, they gained the opposite effect. It was much like fancy in the true poet. There was artistic description, ardent effects, and all that could satisfy the outer senses. But fancy deals simply with externals; it does not know the heart nor the soul. It is the imaginative poet who delves beneath the surface and extracts the truth, the beauty and the genuine poetry.

We know there can be no art without beauty. We know there can be no exalted national consciousness when the ugliness of our life is made a subject for verse. We cannot dabble with our literature. It is the life-blood of the nation. Shall our

patriots have died for the glory of America that ill-chosen words should besmirch her name with slime? Shall you hold up to the world this spectacle and say proudly, "This is America, this is my country"? If this is poetry, then life has no meaning beyond words, and the grave entices us with alluring language. Sensationalism is employed merely to gratify the vulgar taste.

Great poetry flourishes when the poets themselves are filled with the joy of life, with hope and belief and trust in the future. Thus may their audiences reflect their feelings. But beauty was submerged beneath the depths. The glory and the dream were absent. In that past era, our poems and our poets were too self-conscious. We sought perfection of technique to the disparagement of the content. We had no heart in our work. Our poems were simply mental exercises, for which no one can have a kindredness of feeling.

Let us forget ourselves, annihilate egoism, and be simply the trees and leaves upon which the wind may play a tune, a tune spontaneous and emotional, a tune that reaches heart and soul and teaches the ultimate happiness of life.

BERNARD TOLLE

SATIETY'S LAMENT

What shall remain for sad satiety
That dimly looks from out the furrowed brow
And faded cheek? To death I would endow
My sated soul. Take from it what there be.
What shall remain—I have but ennui,
Full bloated to the skin, inside a bough
Thin-shrivelled as an empty core. Allow
The graves to open on the young, the free,
The active hearts, but give me all the world
To roam—to stench the air and foul the mind,
And leave to virtue what my soul resigned.
O, topsy-turvy world, to leave impearled
The noble hearts beneath, while aged Time
Allows his sons to tread the earth to slime!

—Bernard Tolle

RENAISSANCE

Ah! waning wasted moon;
Ah! bleeding leaves of autumn's death;
Ah! hope which turned to deep despair;
Ah! heart which broke in bits of stone;
These, these are life's residue.
Ah! altars which now are tombs;
Ah! sanctuaries lacking devotees;
Ah! kisses printed on dead memory;
This is the debris of the estuary.
Temples whose doors are sealed;
Academies windowless and blind;
Streets choked with dying grass,
And corridors down which senses steal
Brushing closed portals with tentative touch.
Ah! stars long dead, atwirl in space;
Ah! lovers of a hundred years ago;
Ah! past—static and embalmed;
Ah! back-wash of the sea of time;
This—this we have for heritage.
But here—here—here—
Through the darkness bursts the dawn—
Clang of pale light—
Radiating fingers of green-blue—
And the brass song of the sun
Behind the sleeping hills.
The cock's vibrant call to wake the world;
Birds' shrill sweet chirps—
The vital drench of dew-cloaked leaves
And dew-drenched blades of grass;
Flowers like fire-spots piercing the dusk.
Throb—throb—throb—
It is a new day.

—William J. Server

POET HEART

Had I the skill to pluck the strings
Upon your poet-heart and play
With these coarse fingers all the things
That lie within you! Ah, to reach
Those hidden depths of yours some way!
Yea, all the melody of speech,
And all the poetry of words,
And all sweet things your lips suggest
Can be as nothing to the chords
Of music that must lie at rest
Upon your soul. I hope some day
To break their sleep and play,—and play . . .

—Kenneth Seehler

SONNET

If love should run before me and declare
My state to you, if in my searching eye
And parching lip you could anon descry
What lovely bonds hold me in thrall—is there
A spark within you that would kindle at
My earnest gaze? Would not your luscious lip
Look on my thirst and cleave in fellowship
To mine? Oh, do not play the toying cat!
Say, would you speak, or laugh, or weep—please say!
If I should humbly fall before your feet,
Would you upraise me with your kisses sweet,
And wish that night might never turn to day?
If there is naught of love to see in me,
Pray, give me love of cheerless misery!

—Benjamin Corday

SANCTUARY

They stream along the noisy streets
In garments rich and fair—
The women with a brazen glance,
The men with hardened stare,
Upon their cheeks the women flaunt
The wanton's blush of paint—
And ribald jest and empty laugh
Are heard without restraint.

Through shining gilded doors they pass
To brilliant halls of light,
Where endless jarring music beats
Throughout the poisoned night.
The heavy air reeks thick of scent,
Of wine, and cigaret—
And here they leer, and smile, and lie,
And think they can forget!

But O, today I wandered far
Across the shining fields;
I saw the silver slanting rain,
And smelled the praise earth yields.
A meadow-lark flung melting notes
Through all the perfumed air,
And peace of God, and love of man,
And life, and joy, were there.
The breaking clouds spun veils of white
Across the laughing skies;
I watched a slender flower unfold—
And looked into God's eyes!

—John Gilbert Holman

THE BROKEN FOUNTAIN

In a garden place she stands,
Holding in her firm, cupped hands
Just a small dead pool of last night's rain;
No more the happy water bubbles over
To cool her sun-warmed feet,
No more her lover
Comes through the red rose hedge when night has lain
With mystery on the grass;
No more, beneath the sweetness of her gaze
He dreams, as poets will,
Of some great beauty that will never pass.
The night comes still,
Here, where she stands alone, to watch the hours
Of change and flight above the upstart weeds
That mark the burial place of long dead flowers.

—Florence Martha Brewster

DREAMING

My eyes are not deceiving, for I see
Most things that lie beyond the casual view:
I know the rose takes on its vermilion hue
To fascinate the nectar-drawing bee
And butterfly. Yet there is that in me
Which cannot look on earth, or grass, or dew,
But looking, straightway does in me imbue
All countless beings of imagery.

All beauty has the entity of dreams
Within the compass of its gracious sphere,
And soon can form those thoughts so bleak and
drear,
In endless chains of gay fantastic schemes,
Once clear of earth, we shall on wings have
wrought,

A beauty that is countenanced in thought.
—Gregory Anders

MY CONVENT

My convent is my garden
Where I go an hour each day
To leave the world behind me
As I seek a better way.

There I find in four o'clocks
And the morning glory vine
That sweetness of the morning,
Full, uplifting, and divine.

I find an understanding
In the quiet resting there,
That leads my heart to reverence
As I give my mind in prayer.

I dig a hole each morning
For the trials of the day
And place away my troubles
Before they come my way.

I find most joy in beauties
That live here in the sod,
I find most love each morning
In my convent with my God.

—Lucie M. Kyle



THE ISLE OF DEATH

A lofty peak of rugged rock
Extends above the pale blue sea,
As lazy clouds of grayish hue
Roam innocently on their way,
Unmindful of the tragic fate
That lingers 'neath the skies of blue.

The tempting odors of the pines
That flourish on this giant isle
Like towering beacons on a sea
Are void of message of existence
To the clouds that idly loiter above
This ancient isle of mystery.

Valiant souls, in countless numbers,
Have passed these dark and stormy seas
That reach out to its quiet shore,
One by one they slowly gather
At this massive isle of loneliness,
In solitude to rest forevermore.

Here they find in peaceful slumber
The relief they fain had welcomed
Ere they parted from our Mother Earth,
Deep into the quiet night the clouds
Sail mutely by, apprehending naught
That thrives upon this somber
Isle of Death.

—Harriet Goeden

ETERNAL STRANGER'S CALL

Heart, burst your sheath of gold
Eternal Stranger sings,
Sweet melodies of old
To memory he brings.

Alas, poor heart, it pains,
Its breast hears footfalls light,
The wind is up, it rains,
Deep seas come into sight.

Our Stranger calls out from
Unknown Eternity,
Who knows what is to come
By those who pass His Sea?

—Herman Grossman

LOVE

How came I to this dreary cell,
Couched in this lonely citadel?
What brought me hence and bade me dwell?
What wrought upon my heart the spell?
What force was it could so compel
My brain in reeling, my heart in kneeling
Before a heaven housed in hell,
It is for God, not me, to tell!

—Herbert Rawles

STRAINS FROM MANY LYRES

—0—

After an absence of three years, Edna St. Vincent Millay has raised her voice again. The result is "Wine From These Grapes" brought out by Harper & Bros. We notice the same grasp for the poetical, the same fervor and the same outpouring of a rich emotion. Nor should we be dismayed if the heavy load of the years have made her plod a little harder, or if she is no more the gay, flitting creature that characterized her early works. We find Miss Millay more mature, more grave and settled. If the poetry is quiet, it is quietly beautiful. And if it is sad, the words are clothed in a mournful beauty. If once we found pleasure when she was gay, we shall surely find happiness in her saddest moods.

The Yale University Press brings out its latest contest winner, "Permit Me Voyage" by James Agee. Here is a poet who will bear watching. He has not yet achieved the facility and succinctness of expression that comes with maturity. His preoccupation is with style, with sense and expression. Mr. Agee has a gigantic torso, but it needs filling out. He addresses himself to our mental powers with a high originality and a fertile imagination. His "Epithalamium" is undoubtedly one of the finest marriage songs ever composed this side of the Atlantic.

In "Collected Poems" by Richard Aldington, the author portrays in clear, fresh terms the experiences he has had in life,—mostly in connection with the battlefield or women. He describes a sacred object in the same absorbing sequence as he does a vulgarity, and gets his idea across impressively. He does all that a poet should do; he leaves a clear, well-defined picture in the reader's mind. Candidness seems to be his key-note. He pierces through haziness into the truth, and attains his purpose ingeniously. His "Rhapsody In A Third-Class Carriage" makes one sit up and think! Centuries drift by, life topples into eternity, a wealth of events take place in only three words:

"Seed and Cemeteries."

It is evident that many sorrows and disappointments have come by Mr. Aldington.

"Man With A Bull-Tongue Plow" is the latest opus of E. P. Dutton & Company. The poet, Jesse Stuart, has compounded a Gargantuan collection of sonnets—703 in all—all close to the soil, yet not so close that they may not soar. In this vast composite of verses, Mr. Stuart has given ample scope to his thoughts. And though much could have been omitted, the great majority of the poems attest to the poet's high talent. The achievement is all the more wonderful when it is considered that Mr. Stuart has published only his first book of verse.

The second book of a former contest winner in the Yale Series of Younger Poets makes its appearance with "Westering" by Thomas Hornsby Ferril. Here is a poet of strictly American traditions, racy, human, with all the depth of the soil. His is not universal poetry, nor does it represent on the whole a nation, but for the peculiarities of provincialism it has a high, instinctive flavor.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Hala Jean Hammond, a future member of the POETRY FORUM, has just compiled a book of finely wrought sonnets, "I Pray You, Lapidary," published by the Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, O. This book of verse is intense with the heart's beating of life, bitter with the soul's despair, and defiant with the spirit's knowledge of a world lost and a vision won. With this volume Miss Hammond joins the front ranks of American poets.



THE POETRY FORUM

1. Purpose—to inspire and instruct the beginner in poetry along preferred lines of modern poetry, and to accept for publication in GOLDEN VERSE magazine poems that meet its requirements (see No. 1 below).
2. POETRY FORUM members only shall be privileged to have their poems considered for publication in GOLDEN VERSE.
3. All information regarding members of the POETRY FORUM shall be kept strictly confidential.
4. Only one poem may be sent in for criticism with each communication.
5. Only one poem will be accepted from each member for any single issue of GOLDEN VERSE.
6. Membership in the POETRY FORUM is payable in advance.
7. All communications to the POETRY FORUM should be accompanied with return postage and a self-addressed envelope.

GOLDEN VERSE

1. Purpose—to present before lovers of poetry the best poems obtainable from members of the POETRY FORUM; also book reviews, and topics of educational and inspirational value to them. GOLDEN VERSE seeks poetry of content rather than of form.
2. No free verse is acceptable unless it is of exceptional merit.
3. Payment for poems appearing in GOLDEN VERSE shall be made upon publication.
4. All poems appearing in GOLDEN VERSE are to be submitted only by members of the POETRY FORUM.
5. Only clean, fine poetry will be used in GOLDEN VERSE. Imaginative poetry is preferred, but poems of nature, philosophy, passion, life, inspiration, human nature, nobleness, etc., are acceptable. These poems must be rich in emotion, thought, purpose, or expression.
6. Subscriptions to GOLDEN VERSE are payable in advance.
7. All communications to GOLDEN VERSE should be accompanied with return postage and a self-addressed envelope.

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GRAPHOLOGIST

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POETS

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A prize of \$5.00 in cash will be awarded for the best poem on **Friendship** in the Spring Edition of Golden Verse. Announcement of judges will be made in the next issue of Golden Verse.

Only Poetry Forum

Members Eligible.

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And departing leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.

—Longfellow