



LOUISE MARNY MULLER

Collected Poems

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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Collected Poems

Louise Marny Muller

A Critical Reading Edition

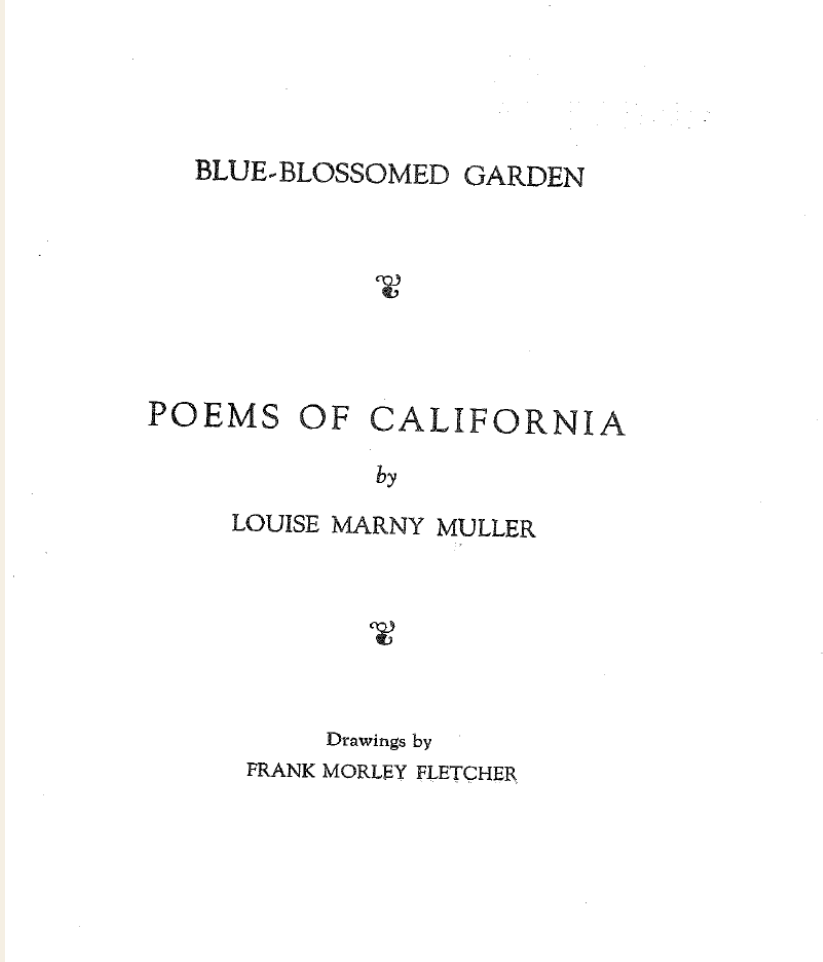
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The Text-Tech Papers

Extremes and Moderations: Early Southern California Poetry

Archival Images

A short selection from the source record



Title page of Blue-Blossomed Garden: Poems of California (1927).

Editorial Note

This is a reset reading edition, not a facsimile. The text was transcribed from the source page images in the local archive and collated against available embedded text. Source-page wraps were rejoined only when the page image showed that they were typographic continuations; stanza breaks, meaningful indentation, epigraphs, subtitles, and section headings were retained. Obvious scanning debris was removed without silently modernizing diction, spelling, or punctuation. Each poem ends with a source note in the established Green-volume form.

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Introduction

Louise Marny Muller wrote out of Santa Barbara with an ear for song, weather, gardens, mountains, and the Pacific edge. *Vox Humana* moves from private love and friendship toward war, democracy, home, and prayer; seven years later, *Blue-Blossomed Garden* turns more sharply toward California, carrying its speaker from sweet peas and April rain to Point Lobos, Yosemite, sequoias, and a long final address to the state itself. The facts of Muller's life remain frustratingly scarce, but the books are not. This edition brings both collections together, resets them from the surviving scans, restores words lost in their faulty text layers, and keeps the original five-part design of *Vox Humana* and the extended sequences of the later book.

Biography

Louise Marny Muller was born in Switzerland about 1882–84. The year remains approximate because the 1910 census reports 1882 while the 1920 census reports about 1884. By 1904 she was teaching in Santa Barbara. The 1910 census places the single, Swiss-born Louise Muller on Upper San Ysidro Road; the 1917 directory identifies Louise M. Muller as a language teacher on Humphrey Road; and the 1920 census independently places the single, Swiss-born language teacher on that same road in Montecito. The exact address and occupation securely connect these civil records to the author who later registered *Epithalamia* from 15 Humphrey Road.

The literary trail begins with *Vox Humana*, which appeared in Santa Barbara in 1920 under the name Louise Marny, while its copyright notice gives the fuller name Louise Marny Muller. The Schauer Printing Studio produced it locally. No dependable exact birth date, death record, marriage record, or obituary has yet been tied securely to the author.

The first collection is carefully organized into five numbered movements. Its poems move among love lyrics, addresses to friends and family, wartime and civic poems, and devotional pieces. The local imprint and the internal geography establish Santa Barbara as more than an incidental publication address.

Blue-Blossomed Garden: Poems of California followed in 1927, again from the Schauer shop. Margaret Auchincloss Colgate shared the copyright, and the

author thanked Mrs. Richard M. Colgate for making the volume possible. Frank Morley Fletcher supplied drawings and editorial help; Harwood A. White was also thanked for assistance. A prefatory notice printed Marianne Moore's praise of "California."

Copyright records add a dramatic work to Muller's bibliography. *Aeola: A Song of Songs* was registered in 1928, and a four-part revision, *Epithalamia; or, Aeola*, was registered as an unpublished drama in 1929 from 15 Humphrey Road, Santa Barbara. These entries show that Muller continued writing after the second poetry book and that lyric, drama, and spiritual allegory overlapped in her practice.

The life chronology remains incomplete. Muller appears in Santa Barbara directories from at least 1904 through the mid-1930s. A 1936 property notice names "Louise Marny Muller," single, in a Montecito deed-of-trust transaction, extending the full literary name into the civil record. The name Marny may be a chosen literary name or a middle name; the present evidence cannot decide. Future work should search the papers of Margaret Auchincloss Colgate, Schauer Printing Studio records, and later Santa Barbara and Ventura County records for an exact birth date, final residence, and death.

Vox Humana

Stage 1 | 1920

The complete recoverable poetry text of the 1920 collection, reset from the source page images.

I

Love Is Not but a Summer's Day

Of calm and sunny pleasure;
Not like a rose does it fade away,
When it has breathed its treasure.
But rather like a steadfast star,
Fixed in eternal spaces,
It sheds its radiance near and far
And draws us through all earth's mazes.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 11.

We Yearn for Joy

Yet joy is here.
We yearn for love,
Yet love, so dear,
Is you and I.
Lowly we stand,
Beggars drear,
Outside the promised land;
So far, so near.
You and I.
Till hands we clasp
And love unite;
And dare at last
Tn joy abide.
You and I.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 12.

Song

Deep in my innermost heart and soul
Stirs a breath of sheer delight,
Like a winged thing with heavenly goal,
It soars—and I'm the tail of the kite.
Oh, it is surely within me, this song,
And, oh, mine own it is quite;
Born in the rush of a warbling throng,
It soars—and I'm the tail of the kite.
Go, then, and play in the spaces blue
With other dear children of light!
For, in all of life you alone are true
And I'm but the tail of the kite.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 13.

On the Wing of My Desire

I have flown afar,
Over mountain top and spire,
Drawn by a distant star.
Soaring breathlessly
To dizzy height;
Counting neither strength nor distance,
For the flight seemed right.
And now, midway between earth and heaven
I hang trembling in the blue
Silence reigns below where men are,
Silent is my star.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 14.

The Gold Stars Are Fading

The day is at dawn,
And joy is invading
My heart, to you drawn.
Like bright stars beguiling
The bleak midnight sky,
Your phantom lips smiling
Sing woe's lullaby.
And vainly they're making
Your absence so long
In love ever waking,
My heart hears your song.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 15.

Sunny Squares

Sunny squares lie on the floor,
Mirrored by the window pane,
Or entering through the door.
Daily they stay there by me,
Seeking neither praise nor gain,
Like a familiar melody.
Or, like an unobtrusive friend,
Who long a habit became,
Accepted, proved and content.
Ah, me! what of the rainy day,
The day when the heart is in pain
Will love then also gainsay?

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 16.

On the Wing

No, I'll not fail you, lone one.

For a love so tender, sweet,
Is the only prize I want,

Is the daily thing I need.
How could I fail you, lone one?

You who have learned to meet
My soaring heart on the wing,

You are my lover, indeed.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 17.

The Silent Stars

The silent stars are roaming
The vast sweeps of the sky;
Myriads of distant strangers, they pass
Like you and I.
Perhaps there are lovers among the stars!
True lovers are shy
And because they love so, stay remote,
Like you and I.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 18.

Lullaby

My heart is but a nest of song,
For love is brooding there;
And the nestlings' voices all day long
Warble away my care.
Oh, little voices, who breathe of bliss,
How radiant you make the air!
You've taught me now what heaven is,
Oh, teach me also my joy to bear!
But soon you will flutter on tender wing
Into the world, wide and fair,
And then my heart itself must sing:
The nest must live and dare.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 19.

Oh, for a Sweet Little Song!

Oh, for a sweet little song each day!
When the world seems tired and stale,
When the people grow old in sheer dismay
And the thread of their hope grows frail.
Do sing in our hearts, you God of Love,
Come, deliver us from our woe!
Answer! we have had sorrows enough,
And your silence does hurt us so!
Oh, for a sweet little song in the night!
When the heart in anguish wakes;
For a love-call to answer in deep delight,
For a day star—ere the morning breaks!

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 20.

II

To a Child

Like a flower flown from its stem,
You flutter by with a smile;
Now floating airily,
Now tripping warily:
“You may chase me for a while,
But pray, don’t pick me again!”
Like starlight twinkle your merry eyes,
So loving and yet so cool;
And thoughts play hide and seek in them,
Like goldfish in a pool.
Your innocence deep wisdom is,
Sweet faith your power divine.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 21.

To Mother

My lover has left me, mother dear;
Left me, again and again.

But he kissed me, ere he left, dear,
So he'll come again and again.

As the bird coos with his mate, dear,
So speaks my lover with me,

And then he leaves as the bird takes his flight
To come again and again.

Some day he'll bid me come, dear,
To fly with him over the main,

But first he must come back, dear,
Come back again and again.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 22.

Friendship

Thank me not, sweet friend!

How could I do less but love you
And cherish you to the end?

You, who are life's dear bloom!
Could I do aught but render

What love has given me?
And to you, immortal spender,

Give your own, joyfully!

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 23.

To the Birdman

In the rushing flight of the bird
You have joined unafraid;
Jubilantly flown from the herd,
In heaven your eyes have strayed.
Oh, winged man, how you do
Lift heart and courage skyward.
With the wing of the bird you flew
And with your vision we push onward.
But birdman, have you no lute?
What of the joy you have known?
Will now your lips stay mute,
Since through the spaces you've flown?
Come, sing us the songs of the blue,
From the lilting rippling merry lay
Rise, oh winged man, anew,
To the mighty love song of our day.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 24.

The Beggar

I saw him begging for a little love,
Even as we all beg at some heart's door,
For love, or pity?
Nay, its love he wanted,
And she flung him from her over and over.
She ran abreast with merriment,
Straight into life's depth
And perished there, still scorning him
For he was but a beggar
And knew not how to win.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 25.

The Woman

I am only a woman and my deeds are few,
Yet, my heart is so vast—if you but knew
In it are stored all the ages past
And the germs of the worlds, which did not last;
The kings' highway, where the proud went by
And the desert, where men's bones do dry,
And felines, prowling for their prey,
And dark forebodings, which tongue can't say.
I am only a woman and my deeds are few,
Yet, my heart is so vast—if you but knew
In it are stored all the ages past
And the dark deeds of men, which cannot last.
I know them all and I know them well,
And through them I've grown past heaven and
hell.

But I veil my knowledge—as I veil my face
And smile upon you with fateful grace.
I am the hunter, you are the game;
But I am the wild thing and you are tame.
I am the fire, that burns in your breast;

Of your feverish dream I am the guest.

I am your hope in the race to come;

Give me my way and I'll leave you some!
I am a scourge, that lives on blood,

And seek those first, whose heart is good.
Life's portal am I to the young,

I am your funeral dirge unsung.

I am only a woman and my deeds are few;
Yet, my heart is so vast—if you but knew!

In it are stored all the ages past,

And the ties of the world, which did not last.
But let love touch me with its secret spring's
And goodness unfolds me with angels' wings.
Forgotten the past and the scores to pay;

I am conscious only of love's sweet way.

The desert's abloom and gay with springs,
The air mysterious with flying things;

The birds are setting the dawn athrill,

My heart is a garden, sunny and still.

I am only a woman and my deeds are few,

Yet, my heart is so vast—if you but knew!

I love you because you are big and strong;

I love you whether you're right or wrong.

You are my joy and you are my pride!

Not for a kingdom would I leave your side.

But when you're ill and poor, I love you best;

In deepest devotion, most deeply blessed.

I love you so, because love I must,

Through and beyond this earthly dust.

I am only a woman and my deeds are few,

Yet, my heart is so vast—if you but knew!

In it are stored all the loves of the past,

But my love for you showed me God at last.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 26.

Echo

Yes, I am calling you, Holy One,
Over rocky roads, through the world aflame,
I will come, I will come, I will come!
But no, it is you who are calling to me
My voice but your echo faint;
My longing is your divine decree,
My sorrow your love's complaint.
Oh, weary road through the wilderness,
How vain your roughness, your merciless sun.
Love is our way—and in tenderness
God has come, He has come, He has come!

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 29.

Just for Fun

Never mind the daily bothers,
Life has but begun;

Let them daunt and worry others,
Win out just for fun!

Never mind the fast-closed portals,
Work has but begun;

It's the sesame of mortals,
Win out just for fun!

Never mind the failing pleasures,
Love has but begun;

Give it out in heaping measures,
Win out just for fun!

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 30.

Determination

Try not to taunt me, fear,

I will have none of thee.

Life is ever dear

And sweet to me.

T will cling to my dream

Of love and sympathy,

Until fond things that seem

Are made to be.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 31.

Volplaning

Come, let's you and I be happy,
Fellow man;

While the days are full and snappy,
Work and plan

To ascend on our best knowing,
Span for span.

Reap in full our ample sowing,
For we can

Seek our level 'mongst the stars,
Fellow man,

Forge ahead, leap o'er the bars
In the van.

Walk the waves of men's dissension,
Watch and scan,

And expand to full dimension,
Fellow man.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 32.

The Useless Warning

Merrily the drops are falling
In the regions of the sky;
And the little bugs are crawling
To their shelter, far and nigh.
I alone am out to weather
Rain and sleet and dreary storm,
And I'm wishing all together
For a life in different form.
No, I see two lovers drifting
Ignorantly toward the lake!
Do they think the clouds are lifting?
And the sun's about to break?
Though most things occur in season,
Lovers happen unawares;
Come and go, devoid of reason,
Blithely stumbling into snares.
Their indifference is appalling

To one as timely as a clock;
The barometer is falling
And I am the weather-cock.

II.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 33.

III

The Island

Lonely one, lovely one,
How dare you dwell so serene,
Midst rushing, roaring waters,
Above chasms where strength slaughters
The weaker one and the little one?
Who holds you fast between
The shifting sky and the moving sea?
Lonely one, lovely one,
How dare you dwell so serene?
Never refuse your flower-wreathed breast
To the hungry waters' furtive quest?
Whence is your wealth unseen?
Will you evermore spend your loveliness,
Lonely one in the sea?
Lonely one, lovely one,
How dare you dwell so serene,
While gently waving your welcome
With garlands green to me
When my heart's a-thrill with your mystery
And my hungry eyes are roving and keen?
Do you know love, alone in the sea?

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 34.

Nocturne

The evening fell,
The sea looked cold,
With furious spell
The winds made bold.
The fowls screeched,
The sea appalled,
Lashed the grey beach,
By fear enthralled.
And lo! a bird,
Dragging his wing,
Before me stirred,
Mute in the din.
The evening fell,
The sea looked cold,
With furious spell
The winds made bold.
My hand outstretched,
I beckoned him,
Poor little wretch
With broken wing.
In dread of me
He reeled around,
His aching body
Dragged the ground.
How could he know
That I meant well?
The gale swept low,
The evening fell.
Away he strained,
Till I, in pity,
Had refrained
From helping him.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 35.

Messengers?

Pinioned wanderers of the blue,
Whither are you wending?
Soaring blithely through
Spaces deep, unending?
Twittering all the merry way,
While frail wings are plying.
And we bear our wistful day,
Struggling, longing, sighing:
For a bird's own winged heart,
For a bird-throat—singing
Strength to leave the human mart,
Upward, upward winging.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 37.

Northern Autumn

Red and golden glory
Shines across the lake.
Flaunting autumn story,
Winter's in your wake.
Anxious premonition,
Beloved, somber sight,
Lurid admonition,
Death-tale, are you right?
Do we flaunt life's banners,
Act our roundelay
Like foolish caravaners
Are we time's prey?
Or, are we life's promise,
A love song, not yet sung?
With wells of joy within us,
Hearts ever young?

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 38.

They Murmur and Breathe of Love

Night has kissed the lone island;
With darkness she clasps it about:
“Mute shall you be and silent!”
And she spreads her dusky shroud.
But vaguely the winds are stirring,
Gently the wavelets lap;
And fearless wings are whirring,
In tall trees whispers the sap.
They feel not the night’s dull creeping,
Their faces gaze ever above;
While we in oblivion are sleeping,
They murmur and breathe of love.
Pai

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 39.

Butterflies

Dainty whisp of fancy,
Blue-winged butterfly;
Like a heavenly pansy,
Fluttering from the sky.
Blue-frosted, sweet-lipped Naney
Heaven-born butterfly
Is it hard to faney
Life just you and I?

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 40.

Sweet Peas

Merrily your tendrils spin
Spring-tales 'round my bowl;
And with tender hands do cling
To the artist's scroll.
And your faces gaze about,
Childlike in their wonder;
Cheek to cheek a rosy cloud,
On my table yonder.
Round about you all did fade
In oblivion, when you came,
Casts and bronze and paint and jade,
With the artist's fame.
And your sweet and fragrant soul
Jivermore is rising,
Gladsome, sacrificial toll,
Men to joy enticing.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 41.

IV

America

As a goddess,
Young and joyous;
Rich and careless,
Strong and glorious.
As a mother,
Sweet and tender,
In love's splendor,
Giving, spending,
Nursing, tending.
As a priestess,
Burning,
Yearning:
Help, O God, this world to bless!

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 42.

France Renascent

Only my eyes are weeping,
For my soul does sing.
And in this dying body leaping,
T's joy, vibrant like spring.
Radiant in glorious effulgence
TImmanence of a great dawn
She speaks in loving indulgence,
And I to the World-Heart am drawn;
And in hungry rapture thrill
To the call repeated gently:
'Answer, child, it is His will,
For in joy God speaks to thee!"

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 43.

Height and Depth

Pinioned with joy we soar,
The earth above;
Glorified evermore,
Centered in love.
But by men's woe we're torn
From heaven above,
To weep with them who mourn,
Centered in love.
a2

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 44.

Evolution

Men, like mobile wisps of straw,
Are moved by the breezes' will;
Fearful they are and held in awe,
By phantoms, boding ill.
Weakened by cares and sorrow,
The edge of their thought is dull;
Uncertain of the morrow,
Their daily doom they cull.
Strange, that we, heirs to the promise
Of dominion and kingdom and love,
Should take such burdens upon us,
Should not have vision enough.
To free ourselves from evil,
Which lurks in the depth of the soul,
And know that beneath the upheaval,
Is the truth that leavens the whole.
The only great revolution,
Applies to ill-will the rod;
And in bond with divine evolution,
Makes man in the image of God.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 45.

The Fitful Music

The fitful music of the crowd
Rises, sharp and loud.
Who knows the end of the song
How far, how long?
An orchestra of passion aflame,
Of delusion, anger and pain.
Who knows the end of the song
How far, how long?
So does the sea arise,
Roaring fierce mutinies.
Who knows the end of the song
How far, how long?
Is there a leader whose might,
Tunes maddening chaos aright,
Who knows the end of the song
How far, how long?

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 46.

Instinct

You are urging me again:
“Arouse and take your share
Of life’s fulness!”
And I, half tempted, rise,
And look about me:
Everywhere they are,
Who harvest from the earth
Gold, fame, success in love
Their horn of plenty is ever full
And their lips are satiated
With the draft of life;
Their eyes strained
With discontent and hunger.
And humbly I thank the great Father,
For He does replenish my heart.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 47.

Silence Answers Prayer and Quest

The days are throbbing with rumors of strife.
Hither and thither men run
On errands of death and on errands of life;
Whose command do they heed; whose command do they shun?
The troubled face of the earth is in pain.
Does she fathom her children's plight?
She cradles the weary, she cradles the slain,
But she knows not wrong nor right.
And the stars multitude serenely gaze
On the joy and the torture of wicked and brave.
If they knew life's tortuous maze,
Would they draw close and save?
Silence answers prayer and quest.
The seasons ebb and flow.
Comes spring with its joys and winter's rest,
The flowers bloom and the breezes blow.
The only clamour is in our heart,
Where the eternal judge does preside:
We have betrayed—since love is our part
The Just One we have defied.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 48.

Democracy

One in heart and one in purpose,
Sons of the vast I Am;
Eager to break through the surface,
Able to stand as a man.
Free are we, knowing the truth
Stronger than lusts of flesh;
Washed in the blood of our youth,
Clothed in divine love afresh.
The easiest way has vanished
Beneath the dead of the past;
And with soul and spirit famished
We tread straight roads at last.
Hand in hand, as brothers well might,
Singing and jubilant.
One body now, one light
The vision of the vast I Am.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 49.

Freely Give

Freely give, for freely ye receive.
Do not treat your fellow
As though he were a thief.
Who sends to the sun his wages,
Or thanks the birds for song?
Yet, they shine and sing through the ages.
Freely give, for freely ye receive.
Give the song of your heart
Or your heart it will leave
Give the gold from the mart,
Give the work of your hand:
We may trust—till we can understand!
Freely give, for freely ye receive
Love's fulness, which few men dare conceive,
Though ever the ebb and flow of life,
Eternal, rising in harmony
Because there is no strife
In love's own, vast reality.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 50.

The Useless Things

It is useless to shun the day,
For the night will go and the sun will stay.
It is useless to grudge and groan,
For we must give before we own.
It is useless to flatter and steal,
For our own eyes the lie reveal.
It is useless to wait and tarry,
For with us always our burden we carry.
It is useless to hate and resent,
For we must love, or else repent.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 51.

Reconstruction

Deep down in our hearts
Works the eternal cause,
And silently it welds together
Our destinies.
We pick and choose
Like foolish children,
We tread the easiest way,
Thinking to beat a flowery path in life.
We deck ourselves with tinsel
And wreath our brow
With lanrels of achievement
And the eternal cause works on
In our heart
And with our heartbeats
Sings the swan song
Of all we have held dear.
As a death clock ticks
In the frustrated wood,
That was born a living tree
And made into a foolish thng
Day and night we listen, frightened,
To the dirge
Listen and try not to hear

And magnify the sound with our fear
And our bulwarks fall

As if by magic;

And our earthly strongholds crumble
As if some giant hand
Had sport with them.

And we begin to pray
To the Unknown Power

The secret Cause in our heart
And in despair surrender utterly to our God
And ery, enlightened:

“‘T can of myself do nothing,
Thy will be done, use me, oh Lord!”
And suddenly our faith
Changes that funeral dirge
Into a hymn of love,
And in our heartbeats
We hear now the calling of the Father
To His wayward child,
And our thoughts rise up to Him
And with Him are at peace.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 52.

What Is the Meaning?

What is the meaning of this little life,
Whence did I come, whither to go?
Must I grow strong through battle and strife,
Learn to be happy through suffering woe?
Was it by a stupid call of the blood,
Through a night's keen, fateful revel?
Did I descend from pure heights and good,
Or rise from life's lower level?
Why am I here for a little while,
Born in anguish and living in pain?
Why is my heart torn between love and guile
And my soul's fond longing vain?
Who did rear these fleshly walls
For me to struggle within?
With a pagan love for the joy that calls
And a flame in my breast to purge me of sin?
Till the heart it scorches and the flesh it sears
And melts the marrow of my very bones
And makes my bosom a caldron of tears
And turns my joys into stones.
All about me it heaps ashes and dust;
But it burns and points above,
Until I know by it's light, that I must
Learn to feed that flame with love.
So then, I fathom that flame to be life,
Since it burns through the death of the rest!
I will to obey, and thus end the strife:
Love's flames enfolding me answer the quest.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 54.

V

Home

A bird,
A flower
And laughter;
Maybe a roof on the rafter,
Love's candle bright and stout
And kindly thoughts about.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 56.

Marriage

The enchantment of two lives:
Beauty and strength,
Joy and pain
Surrender in conquest,
Freedom in surrender.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 57.

Love

Wonderful bounty,
Mine from your hand;
Ever does haunt me,
Fill and enchant.
Well of deep sympathy,
Mountain of light,
Armor and strength to me,
Joy and delight.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 58.

Joy

Dancing,
Prancing,
All entrancing,
Life enhancing,
Ever advancing;
Ringing,
Singing,
Upward winging,
Fragrant,
Vibrant,
Toward the light.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 59.

Laughter

Lilting,
Rippling,
Reveling round,
Only the happy moments count.
Sparkling,
Bubbling,
Merry glee:
Come now and be happy with me.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 60.

Spring

Branch a-twitter,
Rustling titter,
Fairy glitter;
Spring is here.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 61.

Prayer

Lisping, stammering
Words of love;
Weeping, clamoring,
Hear us above!

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 62.

God

Beauty and life to me,
Depth of love's sympathy,
Joy your divine decree,
Ever adorable
Tender and kind.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 63.

Mankind

Daring to serve and help,
Trusting in truth and love,
Conquering in joy and pain,
Glorying throughout.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 64.

Our Daily Bread

Give us a little beauty,
Some joy mixed with our duty;
Dry humor without gall
And love, dear God, for all.

Publication. First published in *Vox Humana*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920, p. 65.

Blue-Blossomed Garden

Stage 2 | 1927

The complete recoverable poetry text of the 1927 collection, reset from the source page images.

Stillness

The morning is still and sunny,
The sky is an even blue;
No clouds break the violet spaces,
No voices, familiar or new.
Though earth is bathed in stillness,
Life breathes in it's very hush
A Presence broods over the spaces,
Song wakes in the throat of the thrush.
And near to me comes the distance,
Star-filled is this sunny blue
In our sentient humvan existence;
The unfathomed also is true.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 10.

Fecundity

The pattering raindrops linger in my ear
And wake hushed echoes of the fleetest things;
Each falling drop faintly its swan song sings
Each longed-for joy too brings its own end near.
But as the drops their certain purpose find
In after-life—the seed-filled earth to please
So must swift waning joy bring fond release
To bloom and fruit, withholden in the mind.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. II.

Hunger

I am hungry for the monotone and murmur
of the bees.
For the humbly cadenced calling of the dove,
For the open-hearted, lazy hospitality of trees
And that silent out-door music, that I love:
Soft minstrelsy of blue-veiled summer seas.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio,
1927, p. 12.

Rippling Laughter

Silver streams, singing all the way,
i Mirrored dreams, whipped into white spray,
Rippling laughter, faintly mocking mirth,
Wavelet after wavelet finds rebirth.

Life and death their secret murmurs mingle
In one breath—The Purpose, ever single,
Runs its course eternally below
With sure force. On the surface breezes blow.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 13.

Northern April

Beneath a grey-cloaked tree sweet spring is
hiding,
In brown-black earth stir sleeping daffodils,
Red-spotted blackbirds every where are
chiding,
A harsh farewell. To winter? Or to spring?—
Beneath a grey-cloaked tree sweet spring is
hiding.
From her warm, waxen cell the bee is straying,
A meadow lark soars gaily on her song.
All nature wakes, prepares to go a'maying,
Come heart! Seclusion may no longer be
From her warm, waxen cell the bee is straying.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 14.

Lingering Dreams

The clouds upon the mountains,
Are fondly lingering dreams,
Through which, from heaven's fountains
Their bounty streams.
All day they wreathed the summit,
Girding its verdant flanks;
And cast their veil upon it,
Like silent thanks.
Perhaps they love our mountains,
Perhaps they come to dream
Of earthly silver fountains,
Caught by their gleam.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 15.

Pines

Away and away! where the pine trees sway,
As they tune their souls to the wind.
Till entranced with the zest of their rustling
guest
They're to music thrilled, and the air is filled
With the witching tune of the pine trees'
croon,
As they sway, as they sway to the wind.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 16.

The Lark

The lark at eventide does trill his hopes
Into the deepening dusk of night's foreboding.
oO His warbling vesper rises in a song
Of ecstasy, the laughter of the gods
To meet—and meet it squarely pitch for pitch
And call in haste the stars, lest earth and sky,
The hills, the sea, the man-made citadels
Alike be sunk into oblivion!
The wayside flowers fold themselves in sleep,
While their meek souls a fragrant watch must
keep
And forth shines Venus, woman, goddess, star,
In answer to the roll-call from afar.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 17.

Murmurs

I am the wind, that sighs at night,
The moaning in the trees.
I am the spirit of delight,
The nectar and the lees.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 18.

Mood

Pe Days I spend
a Carelessly, in the breeze, with the bees,
Days that will cling to me,
Days that will sing to me,
When the hopes of the past lie aghast
By my side.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 19.

Trees in Bloom

The vibrant dance of spring
For one brief hour alights
Upon your moss-grown limbs
In rose-like witchery.
Out of your rugged strength
This dainty fairy thing:
A rosy bloom does spring,
As light as fairy wing.
And now you wear your joy
As a strong man who bears
Upon his countenance
The glow of a caress.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 20.

Variations

be VARIATIONS
Fragrance of flowers,
Flutter of wings,
ne Whispering fancies
And rollicking springs;
Foliage aquiver
With the hum of bees,
Life's golden river:
Varied as these.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 21.

The Mountain

Torn clouds trace over the indifferent sky
A trail of grey.

They wreath the mountain with a sigh;
“Oh, let us stay!

Do we offer you our arms in vain,
Unyielding one?”

“I’ve risen high, through toil and pain
To reach the sun!”

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 22.

Conceit

Festive garlands in the tree.
Air is liquid light.
The ground, in constellations free,
Blooms into stars
That I can see.
Friendly hands take pains for me,
Every where it seems.
So hard at work, so secretly,
Wafting me kisses
That I can see!

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 23.

After Winter

The constant hills lie dimpling in the sun;
The mountains, dream-lost, bask in golden
days;
And blue, the azure curve around us stays,
Like mantling love, that shelters and delights.
In open mirth the waters skip and run,
Above their murmuring talk brisk bird-
notes rise
They play at work, where mortals agonize.
Must progress always forfeit natural rights?
Whence comes the burdened sense, that we
admit,
Where joy should all our woes remit?

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio,
1927, p. 24.

Sweet Peas

vt Merrily your tendrils fling
Spring-tales round my bowl;
) And with tender hands do cling
To the artist's scroll.
And your faces gaze about,
Childlike in their wonder;
Cheek to cheek a rosy cloud,
On my table yonder.
Round about you all did fade
Forgotten when you came:
Casts and bronze and paint
and jade,.
With the artist's fame.
Sweet Peas
And your sweet and fragrant soul
Evermore is rising:

Gladsome, sacrificial toll,
Men to joy enticing.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 25.

Blue-blossomed Garden

Sweeter than May-time is love's atmosphere.
4 More constellated than a southern sky,
Blue-blossomed garden where the southwinds
sigh,
While in the trees life nests and chirps and
sings.
Thought knows no burdens in love's atmosphere,
Soaring unhindered where it will, sun-
wrought,
Returns in glee with fond companion thought
To build a nest in which joy rings and sings.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 27.

Ripples

Song and laughter,

Song and laughter

Rippling, rippling through our dream.

What is now shall be hereafter:

Song and laughter,

Song and laughter

Rippling waters of love's stream.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 28.

Dawn

Stealthily the dawn does creep
On hands and knees out of the sea.
To set the world aflame he came,
To set the world aflame.
Rays of light he shoots along
And over rock-made mountain walls,
In the valleys wakes the sleepers,
Gently wakes the sleepers.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 29.

Rebellion

I belong to the woods, to the wind, to the sea—.
The cities shall have none of me!
The molten crowds on pleasure bent
For me now scarcely hold a friend:
The cities shall have none of me
I belong to the woods, to the winds, to the sea.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 30.

Awakening

The bird enchants his nest with song,
Sings, sings! Until the eggs awake,
Till with his echoed joy they break.
Thus waits all life on love's own song!
For only song may break the drear
And orbéd silence of each creature's
sphere.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 31.

Gypsy Mood

The gamut of earthly living
Will ever run in glee.
Daily taking or giving
What think you, are they to me?
The clamour of spirit's chiding
I blend into melody,
Fearless the north wind riding
Till night and day agree,
Through the earth's playground fleeting
Where mind and body, free,
For good or ill are meeting
In naked symmetry.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 32.

Gypsy Lament

I sing as the wind in the willows;
I weep as the heart that must break.
I wander, an outcast of reason
Like the earth, I encircle the sun.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 33.

The Coast Highway

The winding road unrolls its band of time
To undulate between the haughty hills
And the encroaching, grasping, tossing sea.
A fickle thing it runs its fevered course:
Run! Run! You too, oh man, from town to
town!

If you dare, stop, another takes your place
Forgotten is the man, who lags behind
Untravelled lies the road, that dares to stop!
To highest hillside cling some human nests,
Tree-fringed and overlaid with sunny sky;
Safely each one upon earth's bosom rests
A challenge to the road, the passer-by.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 34.

Santa Barbara

Locked am I, midst the mountains and the sea,
Like Barbara the Saint, within her tower.
But, though their prisoner, men worship me
Year in, year out, within my leafy bower.
I wander lazily across the hills,
Which lean against the darkly purpling range;
To the shore's wild witchery I send my rills
And watch the ocean taste their sweetness strange.
My soul is made of mountain sage and sea,
Of roses' fragrance and the sun's warm gold,
Of children's laughter and of strong men's glee,
Who fearlessly to me their days unfold.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 36.

Beauty

Crystal-gated, ivory-towered dream
Or the ardent sinew of our soul?
Fire that burns more hotly than the sun
Unseen substance in our mind

Loadstar to our senses, all men's goal
Beauty, ardent sinew of our soul,
Or crystal-gated, ivory-towered dream?

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 37.

Point Lobos

Torn coast, mysterious with weird voices
Your roaring sea, booming among grim
caverns,
Wakes raucous echoes in the entrails of the
earth;
Shivering the rocks which Titans once did
ur
At the blunt mortals who had dared to land
Upon your jealous shore, blown by some wind,
Perhaps, or lured by siren thoughts—who
knows?
But then, they stayed, claiming you for their
own:
They let the Titans hurl their mammoth loads
And plant quaint islands in the sea, and laughing
Hid among your canyon folds. At last
In frustrate rage the Titan band withdrew
To a far inland vale, and there forever
Took their stand: forever—and in vain.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 38.

Yosemite Country

All parts of you are wracked with mountain
chains,
Where every view is harsh with ups and
downs,
Like strong men's lives: where hidden caves
of rock
Hold bleakest secrets, and open sunny slopes
Give out their gentle blessings all unasked;
Where summits hard to scale loom stark, and
some,
Unconquered, taunt to struggle on and up:
Through meadows first, where pigmy hands
Furrow the soil to free last winter's thralls
And see! A myriad blossoms star the ground!
Thus men are careful as of women's charms
Lest they should step on some soft-slippered
tendrill!

Yosemite Country

Thence higher still through somber forest
aisles,
Where snow-flowers light their blood-red
flames,
And timid song-birds charm, entrenched in
green
And last of all through lofty rock defiles,
Where the mist-maidens dwell who wreath
the heights
In silver scarves and veils of phantom blue.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 39.

Sequoias

Lone sentinels of some high-purposed past,
Forgotten were you by the race of time.
Beneath your shade the early men-gods
played,
Before the earth reduced her scale to suit
Our pigmy tribe. Our reverent gaze must
pierce
You with this question: What diminished use
You sheltered mammoth beasts like Dinosaurs,
Whose bones lie carefully preserved in shale
For us? How strange this ardour of the past
To keep these samples all—dead or alive
For us to see! But what diminished us?
You knew the pre-flood people, still half gods
Who early did prefer our earth to heaven
Sequotas
(The earth held wine and women even then)
Tis said they caused a flood through mad
desire
If so—tell us: What could diminish us?
What kept you here, great trees? Alive
alone
Of all the varied creatures of your time
You only stayed among us little people.
Have you remained to bless us with your
strength
Or, could our short-lived ways be relaxation
To your five thousand years of memory?
You stand on rugged soil which strong men
love:
Where they may dwell in simple out-door
lair
Sequotas
Enwreathed with clouds as with a benedic-
tion;
Where they may sit unarmed, while some
great bear
Prowls harmlessly about their star-lit hut

Where they may dream of queens in distant
cities
And play with chipmunks just as well content;
Or pray beneath your pillared strength
For your eternal ways teach men to pray
Oh, Giants! Tell what has diminished us?
The pine, your neighbor gossips with the winds.
But you, in hoary wisdom have curtailed
The spread of branches—where the winds
might lull
You and beguile you till you tell them epics,
Dark epics of the grim, high-purposed past.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 41.

California

Part I

You are the land of melodies, and fair.
You stretch your slender limbs upon the sands
Like some keen bather lingering there,
Well knowing that the winds must drive the tide
In roaring breakers and enchanted foam,
To cover her with rhythmic ecstasy,
And then retreat, leaving her all sunflecked,
Laughing with delight, content to lie
Lulled by the murmur of receding waves.
Yes, with a woman's fairness you are fair,
O land of melodies, whom all men love
When young—and old, would span the world
itself
To rest at last upon your sunlit breast.
California
A little band of battered Argonauts
Dare claim you for their own and call you
Mother.
“Sons of the West” they say they are—West?
Are you then old, my land of melodies
You breathless, shining thing, can you be old?
If this be age, would I were old like you,
Old like the dawn, old like your singing stars,
My land of melodies that knows no change!
I too would stretch lithe limbs to sea
In that serene abandonment which comes
Only with boundless knowledge of what is,
And is to be, and must be evermore:
And unconcerned, lie propped by dizzy
mountains
Toward the sky, like you—and like you there,
California
Turn topsy-turvy every mortal law:
Sea-born—yet with my head above the clouds;
Snow-capped—and crowning, so, with hoary white
The one perennial and undying youth

Which changing generations find unchanged,
Which lesser beings taste when young, perhaps,
But timid mortal age may not retain.
While over gentler lands the seasons ebb
And flow, like roses on a fair one's cheek,
Now here, now gone: of joy and of regret
An alternating chain—no season dares

To alter you, my land of melodies!
You pay the sun in his own currency
Flash back his kisses in your flaming poppies
California
And many thousand kindred bloom
Each day you catch him in your kelp-line band
To make him linger, glinting, by your side.
Your ardent captive lover is the sun,
A knight in gold, forever pledged to one
Whom he is loath to leave, though leave he must
Each eve anew he breaks his golden rays
Into the burning octave of the spectrum
To cry through space his passionate adieu,
Ere on her unresponding form he flings
The fragrant mantle of the western night,
A robe more lit with stars than any night,
Broidered with patterns by creation traced,
Where every hour has its own design,
And every constellation means a song.
O land of melodies where cloudless nights
Are bluer sometimes even than the day;
Where the keen stars sing of a greater life;
And where the day, oft careless of the moon,
Permits her stay and spy upon the sun:
Your blinding lover rises stealthily
'Takes care to wake his lady gradually.
He has all day to kiss her every part:
Why should he hurry—mind the morning star?
He knows that ere his fervent day is done
Off come the mantle and the seven veils,
And in her cloudless sky he reigns supreme.
California

Part II

Twas late you bared your bosom to our men
Through untold time surrendered but to sea
And sun—and loosed on them all unprepared.
The gamut of earth's possibility:
Fierce, creeping reptiles, hot with hate,
Watch from their crevices the white man's child
At play beneath your oak, your palm, your
pine,
Blinking their envy from a horny eye
At the young god who bears no care, but plays
Beside a faithful dog—plays on, and smiles.
Pumas and wild-cats crouch in desert wastes:
They are the outlaws and the malcontents,
Your children too, born of some nightmare
hour

When
When earthquakes shook your flanks, and you
did hate
Your everlasting burden of increase
Wherefore you made those ravenous beasts of prey,
And sent them to devour your minor brood.
In you the women fear a siren queen
Whose challenge lures their strongest men away
For no frail burgher virtue do you teach,
My unrelenting land of melodies:
You like the strong and take them for their
strength,
And ask no questions, yours the victor's only,
For upon your breast 'tis strength for strength
And joy for joy, and all for all.
Thus would you teach the daughters of your race
To give and take, and every day renew
Their lives in giving. For in your strong creed
The timidly withholden boon is folly.

Does not the sun renew his ardent suit
Each day, and life burst forth afresh from your
But all about desire teems and passions flame,

Into your bounteous lap the world has spilled
Pioneers, dreamers, heroes and alike its weak.
What will you do with all those throngs who speed
Across your summer day in clattering cars,
Devouring space; who, tense and hungry-eyed,
Would buy you with your own red gold; who bring
You but the broken digits of their day?
Like potsherd washed upon your leeward shore!
But you, unstirred, lie dreaming as of old,
Forever young, and strong, and bountiful.

And still serene, replete with beauty's gifts,
You lure them to your sapphire mountain lakes,
Your emerald river pools, your opal sea:
"Immerge!" you cry. For those who understand,
The plunge is cleansing like baptismal fire;
But many creep unheeding after gain—
And haunt the markets, where your soul is not,
While you commune in singing flame with men.

Publication. First published in *Blue-Blossomed Garden*. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927, p. 44.

Bibliography

Selected primary and secondary sources

Book and periodical titles are italicized throughout.

Works by the Author

Vox Humana. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1920.

Blue-Blossomed Garden: Poems of California. Santa Barbara: Schauer Printing Studio, 1927.

Aeola: A Song of Songs. Unpublished drama registered 1928.

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Works About the Author

Catalog of Copyright Entries, 1928 and 1929 dramatic compositions.

Houle Rare Books. Description of *Blue-Blossomed Garden* with Frank Morley Fletcher material.

Colophon

Publication and production notes

This critical reading edition was edited by Brian Kim Stefans for The Text-Tech Papers, Los Angeles, in 2026, as part of *Extremes and Moderations: Early Southern California Poetry*. The poems were reset from the source pages identified in the publication notes and datasheet. The book was composed in EB Garamond on a cream field at 6 × 9 inches. The cover uses original abstract artwork prepared for this edition.