

FIGS FROM CALIFORNIA

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Figs from California by W. W. Lyman

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W. W. LYMAN

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CALIFORNIA**

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from California



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W. W. Lyman
Berkeley, Cal.

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PREFACE



THIS little book has been made up of poems selected from the work of members of a class in verse-writing which I had the pleasure of conducting at the University of California in the Fall of 1921. I have considered that all the poems appearing here have interest and some of them distinction, and I have thought that their publication would serve both to give a characteristic example of the vivid poetic imagination discernible among the young people of California, and also to afford, perhaps, a further stimulus to its expression.

W. W. LYMAN.

Berkeley, California,
May, 1922.

California Autumn

*

The new green shore where we camped in Spring
Is crisp and brown; the dry stalks fling
Their winged seeds; the withered weeds
Around our blackened fire-stones cling.

The stream where we watched the swallows play
Has ceased to laugh—it has run away
And left a pool still clear, still cool;
A lonely blue on the gravel's grey.

The willow where the linnets sing
Is now the only unchanged thing
That dares the death in Autumn's breath,
And waits again another Spring.

Vernon R. King.

Autumn

+

High in the mist-chilled air,
Scudding, the wild ducks fly;
Drawing a wavering line
Faint on the autumn sky.

Gleaming, the far-off lake
Widens before their flight—
Suddenly whirring they drop
Into the dusk of night.

G. Votau Mills.

Summer

+

O Flower-of-the-corn,
Why do you hang
Silken tassels that stir
In the golden sun?

You know,
When the sun turns southward,
Your brown stalks will be piled
Under the harvest moon.

Harriet McLear Hall.

Autumn

+

Autumn is a wanton maid,
With brown shoulders bare,
And flash of scarlet barberries
Tangled in her hair.

Gypsy-eyed and sandal-footed,
Crimson-lipped she came,
Kissed the summer-listless earth
Into mounting flame;

Swept in mocking courtesy low
Her ragged loveliness,
Laughing, fled, and left the earth
To gray-ashed dreariness.

Marion Yeatman.

"Dying Summer"

+

The fallen leaves in shining sheaves
Are caught with ropes of gold;
Upon the hill, the winds grow chill
That once blew warm and bold.

A flower dies 'neath turquoise skies,
Its drifting leaves are red;
And golden bees through listless trees
Hum "Summer soon is dead."

Mary A. Weyse.

Foreboding

+

The white-fanged waves mouthe hungrily
And mutter, each to each,
Weird, garbled tales of mystery
On the shadow-blackened beach.

Passing strange are the tales they tell,
Strange are the sights they've seen,
For one has watched a drifting spar
With sea-weed cordage green,

And one has found dull gold half-hid
In sea-mud's slimy brown,
And one has seen a white dead face
Full forty fathoms down.

Now the strangled wind no longer stirs
Through the stark driftwood gray,
And silently in swift-winged flight
The sea-birds glide away.

The peering face of an ominous moon
Strains pale through a stifling cloud,
While the wave that saw the dead man's face
Is talking over loud.

Marion Yeatman.