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The LYRIC WEST

A Magazine of American Verse



IN THIS ISSUE

Agnes Kendrick Gray | J. Corson Miller

Mabel Ruggles Cobb | Henri Faust

A. G. and others

THE ARTISTRY OF THE STANZA

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The Lyric West

Vol. VI, No. 10

A Magazine Of American Verse

September, 1927

Edited by Allison Gaw and Ethelean Tyson Gaw

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The Lyric West

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Among Our Contributors

Agnes Kendrick Gray has contributed to *Harper's*, the *Boston Transcript*, and numerous poetry journals. She is the author of a volume, *River Dusk and Other Poems*, and the translator from the French of *Proofs of the Spirit World* and *A Simple Story*. She was recently awarded the one hundred dollar Ponce de Leon prize of the Poetry Society of Florida.

Catherine Parmenter is a contributor to the *Century*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Delineator*, *Success*, *St. Nicholas*, and many poetry journals.

Virgilio Luciani, formerly of San Francisco, where he was engaged in newspaper work, has now returned to Rome, Italy. He is the author of a volume of prose poems in Italian, *Aspirazioni*.

Henri Faust, in addition to his poetry, numbers farming, moving picture acting, and politics among his list of activities. He is a member of the Arkansas Legislature.

Mary Carolyn Davies is the author of *Drums in our Street* (poems), *Youth Riding* (lyrics), *The Slave with Two Faces* (play), *A Little Freckled Person* (child verse), *The Husband Test* (novel), and *The Skyline Trail*. A native of Oregon, she has been made a member of the Blackfeet Indian tribe and given the name "Pawtuxie," Pinewoman.

Of the fourteen contributors to this issue one comes from Rome, Italy, one from Vermont, five from New York, one from Wisconsin, one from Colorado, one from Arkansas, one from California, one from Arizona, and two from Oregon.

Agnes Kendrick Gray

The Temple David Brooded On

Of cedar and of sandalwood,
Of granite stone and gold,
Of olive-tree and onyx, carved
And cunningly enscrolled,
Of forest firs from Lebanon,
The Temple David brooded on
Was built at last by Solomon,
As prophecy foretold.

Of cypress wood and silver built,
Of bronze and burnished brass,
Of treasures out of Tyre, borne
By laden ox and ass
And caravan from Lebanon —
All these had David pondered on,
But in the reign of Solomon
The Temple came to pass.

“Thou shalt not build an House for Me,”
To David spake the Lord,
“For thou hast stained the land with blood
By chariot and sword.

“But Solomon, the King of Peace,
Thy son, shall build for Me
An House of joined and fretted beams

And marble masonry. . . .”

How often, when he ground his foes
With his victorious heel,
The vision of the Temple rose
At David’s chariot wheel;

How often in his palace room
He brooded late, alone,
And saw the spectral Temple rise
In sandalwood and stone.

He saw its splendor shape and grow,
Its golden walls expand
Within his dream — and knew it lay
Forbidden to his hand!

But Solomon, a sleeping lad,
Beheld no visions rise
A haunting weight upon his heart,
A sorrow to his eyes;

Yet when the time foretold had come,
His will was strong and sure
To build the House, that David’s dream
In granite might endure.

He laid his hand on broken hopes
That David gave to him,
And wrought of them in seven years
The wingéd Cherubim;

The carven columns overlaid
 With foil of Ophir's gold,
And gilded walls of cedarwood
 With pomegranates ensrolled.

The shadow of King Solomon
 Was peace upon the land;
Jerusalem and Israel
 Waxed strong beneath his hand,

And in the chariot cities slept
 The war-horse and the sword,
While on its rocky height arose
 The Temple of the Lord. . . .

Arose on Mount Moriah, built
 Of bronze and burnished brass,
Of treasures out of Tyre, borne
 By laden ox and ass
And caravan from Lebanon —
All these had David brooded on,
But in the reign of Solomon
 The Temple came to pass.

Lilian Lewis

Time

Time keeps a crystal palace.
In it all beauty dwells,
With truth her stalwart yeoman,
While joy from deep springs wells;
There loveliness is ancient,
Yet young as a white bride;
There sorrow creeps too, weeping,
With trouble by his side;
Time has her fragrant gardens,
She has her silver rooms,
Has too her ancient workshop
With shuttles and with looms;
Youth has she there and old age,
All human hearts has she,
And close beside her palace gates
There flows eternity.

Monroe Heath

Quaking Aspen

September noon, near timber-line;
A chilling breeze and warm sunshine;
The perfumed trail — enchanting shrine.

 The aspens knew,
 For here they grew.
And as I climbed or raced along,
Silent — awed — or wild with song,
 They flashed upon my eyes.

 They flashed upon my eyes!
 O ravishing surprise!
 Ecstasy of vision!
Quaking aspens everywhere —
Dancing rainbows in the air;
Clouds of color; beauty rare
Against the rich green darkness of the pines;
Against the purple spruces' sweeping lines.
 Sparkling petals, autumn-blown,
 Vortices of gayest tone;
Like dewes reflecting back the sun,
Like clustered veils from spectra spun,
Like meadows mingled into one;
 Flowers' essence,
 Iridescence,
Phantom snow-mist, flakes all hues,
Reds and yellows, greens and blues,

Whirling,
Swirling,
Twirling,
On their tiny silver stems.
On their tiny silver stems
Pendent jewels, glowing gems;
Showers tremulous of restless dazzling jewels,
Prism-gleams of glory, scintillating gules
From the fire within.
Hear the wind that fans this flame!
Makes the slender leaflets shake,
Makes them tremble, ne'er the same,
Opalescent, then opaque.
Peculiar multitude of shades:
Dull grays and black and brown and jades.
See! The breeze again is playing —
The aspens' silver arms are swaying —
Each quivering joyous leaf displaying,
Exquisite in radiance,
Its last, its dying dance,
A lustrous shimmer,
Lovely glimmer.

In splendor now their time arrives;
The quick frost's magic sets them free,
Creates their brilliant harmony,
The consummation of their lives.

And robed for Paradise they fall —
If this is death, acclaim its call!

Alice Stetson

Oh, Silver Moon

Down Sunset Valley when the golden day is over.
Brushing through the clover when the long day is done,
Watching from the shadows, I and my lover
Count the stars that glimmer out,
One by one.
Every waking star means a kiss from my lover. . . .
Oh, silver moon, with your sickle, in the west —
Reap not our love, but in some late gleaning
Gather with one gracious gesture
Both our hearts to rest!

J. Corson Miller

The Singing Forest

I will go to the moon-showered river,
In the heart of the hidden lands;
Walled by the snow-plumed hills of music,
Where the Singing Forest stands.

And deep in that song-stirred forest,
Where the river of years drifts by,
I will feast my soul on its emerald spires,
That pierce to a pearl-blown sky.

I will walk the paths that are dreams of the dead,
Patterned of gold and of jade;
And gather the songs the yew-trees weave,
As a sunset-serenade.

The stars I shall pluck for my garden,
The moon I shall wear for a ring,
The visions the world has cast away,
These I will homeward bring.

And one for a song that is summer
I shall take to a mother grown old;
And one for a nosegay of springtime
I shall twine in a love-tale told.

For life in that far, singing forest

Is guileless of grief and of wrong;
Each tree is an earth-child that suffered
But now is a child of song.

Virgilio Luciani

Morning

Her words like dripping water
Wakened my heart from slumber
Lulled by the dreams of wings.

“Come! Come!” she said,
“The dawn, the dawn is calling!”

Nude, agile, hand-clasped we ran
To breathe the benediction of the sky
That like a dome of trembling saffron
Seemed to whisper.
It spoke of brighter hues behind the clouds;
It spoke of songs supernal midst blue veils;
It spoke of rarest fulgency beyond.

“My love,” she said, “who knows of greater bliss
Than ours upon this sobbing land?
Men forget to love these beauteous tints.”

Her hair caressed my breast like moving leaves.
I kissed her mouth of rose with glee, with glee.
A victory of light arose above
With marching heralds robed in silver.

“O, the sun! our sun!” we said.

Hellene Seaman

Feu Sacré

Beauty, suddenly come, heard a cry of pain —
A prayer that nothing
So exquisite might come again
To ease the sweetness of its sting.

Mabel Ruggles Cobb

Liberated

Grim winter clamped its hold upon the hill;
The farmhouse creaked and groaned as icy blasts
Rushed down the long white fields and pasture waste
And clutched the little dwelling in its grip.
And when the February snows heaped high,
There came the shrieking winds that piled great
drifts —
Huge mounds of snow that grew to fence and roof,
And left their prison-print on mind and soul.

The woman watched the winters come and go
With an increasing sadness in her eyes,
Life narrowed, focused on a weary round
Of aimless tasks for which she had no heart.
Sometimes a rage, a wild revolt, seized her;
Doors' slam and stovelids' crash marked inward storm;
And then came tears, wild fears, desire for death —
Each day discordance, though the sun blazed down
And razed the drifts both sides the hallway door.

December's deadening cold pressed hard.
The fields were white, with stubble peeping through;
The roads hard frozen, rutted, gashed and hacked.
She stood and watched the dreary scene that day,
Emotions dulled and mind half-locked in dread.
A sound of hoofs aroused her slumbering sense,

And then — she saw the stranger at the gate.
A boy stood there who courteously inquired,
With laughter on his lips and cap in hand,
The way to town. “I’m lost,” he frankly said.

Unmindful of the biting wind that blew
The fluttering flakes of snow about her head,
Her stern lips curved, her eyes gave back response:
“You can’t go on tonight. You better stop —
You’re miles from town. Your ma’d feel bad if you
Got froze.”

Half lie, half joke, whole prayer,
Her heart forced out the words, though awful tales
Of deeds done by strange men to lonely folk
On farms tugged at her mind. She did not care,
For here — here lay relief for a brief time.

He scanned the sky and shook his head. “Don’t
know — ”

“Of course,” she soothed. “You stay; *he’s* at the barn.
He’ll feed your horse — we’ve got an extra stall.”

She had the biscuits in the tins, the stove
Red hot, and blankets warming by the fire
When they came in, her husband with the lad;
And all through supper time her eager eyes,
Alight, begged and implored.

And talk he did,
He told his work — installing radios.

"I've got," he said, "the finest set that's made.
Say, tell you what —" he leaped up all agog —
"I'll set it up — it's sold, but what's the dif?"
He grinned. "No harm — no cost to you. You say
You never listened in? You bet your life
You'll hear — Chicago, Texas, Montreal — "

"You know we ain't — we can't afford to buy."
Her trembling lips and twisting hands appealed.
Her world was bound by penury, bitter hard.
For years she'd put aside the thought of self,
For barns need paint, and stock must have its feed,
And what was whim of hers beside their need?
And what was need of hers to him who took her
For part and parcel of his farm, nor gave
To her the thought bestowed on cows and fields?

"Pshaw!" scoffed the boy, yet doubtful eyed the man
Who, silent, rough, uncouth, still said no word.
"Old pill! If," thought the boy, "he dares say no — !"
She also held her breath — he might forbid —

She broke a cup the next half hour and laughed!
Who wouldn't laugh who had hardly heard the sound
Of boyish slang and harmless expletives?
Then came tense moments when she stood in fear
Lest things go wrong — that she would miss this
chance
To hear the voices of the outside world,
The thought of which would liven future nights.

Down cellar after yeast she was when first
She heard the squeal, a roar, a rush of words.
The chimney rocked upon the kerosene lamp,
The flame shot upward, flickered, died a-smoke
Upon the pantry shelf as the burst of sound
Rushed in. Yet still he worked, this boy. Sound died —
Was born again. “Schenectady,” he laughed.

* * *

They had finished breakfast. By the clock 'twas six.
She'd dallied, tempting him with hot mince pie
If he would stay till noon. She could not bear
To see him packing up this thing that meant
Release to her, a vibrant singing joy.
She had ached for contacts, prayed for sound to snap
The dread monotony that drugged her brain.
Hot rage against her husband burned in her —
If pig-like life contented him, why should
He think her of his ilk? He'd killed her soul,
Content with feet and hands left for his work.
She hated her life-sentence doom!

He spoke:
“You leave that set, young man. I'm buyin' it.”
She looked at him and knew that she had dreamed,
For he stood by the door in the careless pose
Of one who orders feed down at the store.

The boy looked up. “But this set's sold,” he said,

“I’m due to put it in today. I’ll bring — ”

“But I want this,” the farmer said. “It’s here;
It suits. It stays, or nothin’ stays. Sell me,
And you have sold two sets. You won’t be fired.”

“You fool!” She killed the words with thought, but they
Would out. “Why, we — we can’t afford — You say — ”

“Now, ma, see here, *I’m* doin’ this. I guess
I got a right to fun, hard as I’ve worked.
What if it costs? We’ll be a long time dead.”

That night she could not sleep — nor did she care.
Rising, she stood by the window to the north
And saw the great woods blotched against the sky.
The moon (dimmed by deep snows, tradition said)
Threw weird and frightening shapes on the white
waste;
Wind stirred the pines and wept about the house;
The old stove roared, a sign that storm was near.
Last night, or any other night but this,
A ghastly loneliness had stricken her
And stirred unstable visions in her brain;
But now — but now — life surged against her door,
The voices of the outside world were hers.
The woods, the wailing winds, the swirling snows
Could sadden her no more, for she could catch
The beat of cities’ hearts, the tramp of feet,
And sound would echo through the lonely house.
She said her prayers again and crept to bed.

He turned upon his back, yawned, and then spoke:
“You be all right now, do you think, Maria?”

She drew a little closer to his side
And wondered just how much of him she knew —
If, crude, uncouth, he'd sensed her need, had known
Her fears, had yearned to help her, maybe — loved.

“Of course,” she said. “Say, John, you're good to me!”

Arthur Jonson

Poems for a Chinese Anthology

THE THREE PRINCESSES

In the land of Sim
Three princesses,
Young and beautiful,
Are seated on the white strand,
Their eyes roving the sea
Searching for a ship to carry them far away
To that joyous land —
That should exist —
Where maidens are happy.
 The sea is blue.

In the land of Sim
Three princesses,
No longer young, no longer beautiful,
Are weeping
As they stand on the white shore.
 The sea is blue.

In the land of Sim
Three princesses,
Grown old,
Grown voiceless with age,
Squat on the white beach.
They play with the sand,

They shower it in their hair,
Thinking it is flower petals.
The sea is blue. . . .

LAKE NANHOU

Lake Nanhou ripples the autumnal moon
Reflected in its jade waters.
My oars' splashing
Interrupts the song which the love-imbued waterlilies
Sing to the moon.

PLEA

Balmy night, moonlight,
Perfume of the plum tree:

Give my love a dream so entrancing
That, impatient to see me,
She will come at dawn
And tap at my door.

Perfume of the plum tree,
Balmy night, moonlight:

I shall wake to her caresses
If you have attended my pleadings.

NARCISSUS

Narcissus petals floating on the river,
Should you see at Tien Ouan
A pensive young girl seated beneath a cinnamon tree
That has known two blossomings
Since first we kissed,
Tell her that I inhale a carnation
And so keep ever with me her perfume.

Sylvia Lewis

Optimism

Five lonely palms,
Meeting with the wind
And bending, but not breaking, under it —
Using all its fury,
Not for broken cries,
But music.

Henri Faust

Autumn Threshold

No leaf stirs in the torpid air, no bird
Lonely and far out of the gathering night
Tells me the summer's dead — never a word
But silence marks the passing of delight.
The last of golden songs and scented winds
Vanish like phantoms from the fields and streams
That lulled our vagrant hearts. The mellow rinds
Of days we tasted to bring lotus-dreams
Are withered to a husk. Tonight we wake,
Our ardors spent and blinded with dull pain —
Not spirited for barren trails we take
Companioned by the fog-drift and the rain.
No requiem of bird and autumn night,
But silence, marks the passing of delight.

Beloved, at this late hour dare we to turn
Through grey bleak silence like a wintry sea
And fashion for our cherished hours an urn,
Enshrining there a season's ecstasy,
That when green fields waken no more our hearts
And we forget an opal-hallowed dusk,
We may come back and play our lover's parts,
Crushing all time between us like a husk?
Or were it better for the even years
To fashion here a vault and place therein
The broken sighs — last vestiges of tears —

Such things as later wear an armor thin?
Beloved, at this late hour dare we to turn
And fashion for our cherished hours an urn?

An urn! Chaste word for golden afternoons
And rose-stained dawns! What vestals there attend
To sway in passioned rhythm, cry the moons
Of glamour down, enamoured thus to bend
Like thin quick scimitars unsheathed and bright
And flash white gleaming bodies in a dance,
Tempting impetuous deities of the night! . . .
Remembrance breathes upon me like a trance
And I am numb, beholding through its fumes
The sheer white splendors of my pastured dreams,
While fragrances of hours like tropic blooms
Pour over me in color-changing streams. . . .
An urn! Chaste word for golden afternoons
And rose-stained dawns and amber-dripping moons!

Did one bird sing, did one leaf stir the air,
The dream would then be broken and we two
Would rise from this bleak silence and repair
Each to a lonely destiny nor sue
For a respite to seek a kinder way.
This be our parting, love, this silent hour. . . .
We shall not stir though moments fall away
Like arid petals of a drooping flower.
The moon droops too, low on the western mere,
Sultry and strange: perhaps this strangeness shows
An occult fading of the green to sere

Ash-grey and moonlight flaked with drifting snows.
This be our parting, love, this silent hour,
While moments break like petals from a flower.

Jessica Powers

To a Round Moon

Moon of the sky, little round moon of the sky,
Drain me of warmth, cover me over with cold;
Give me your armour of silver against all wounds;
Make me as wisely old

As the pale dreams you cradle at your breast;
Chill me with peace, little round moon of the sky,
For I have done with laughter and warmth forever. . . .
Tonight in the grey dusk Love passed me by.

Catherine Parmenter

September

I hear again the music of the sea
Whispering, “Mudway-aushka!” And once more
Hiawatha plays upon the tide-swept shore
And tells me tales of olden phantasy —
Tells me of you, September, you who bring
Indian Summer to a grateful land,
When over all the earth with lavish hand
The harvest, rich and bountiful, you fling.
Now are the orchards steeped in saffron light;
And Shawondasee, from his warm domain,
Northward returns to kiss the mellow grain
Before the evening star awakes the night.
September, in the music of the sea
I find the depth of your serenity.

Mary Carolyn Davies

Immortality

Here the Pavilion saxes meet
 The questioning sea, and answer.
If all must die, still life is sweet
 — To a dancer!

Life is more full of joy to me
 Than to those who dully plod;
And after, oh, by a jasper sea
 To dance with God!

The Artistry of the Stanza

XIX

Suspension in the Stanza

In drama and all of the more dramatic forms of narrative the interest generally arises out of a conflict between a central character or characters and a certain force or forces, personal or impersonal, arrayed in opposition. The uncertainty as to the outcome of the conflict creates in the mind of the reader or spectator what we call *suspense*; and, within certain limits, the longer the answer to the question, What will be the outcome? is deferred by the introduction of pertinent incidents, details, or emotional reaction, the keener is the interest thus stimulated. Wherefore the reply said to have been given by a celebrated playwright when asked how to write a successful play: "Make 'em laugh; make 'em cry; make 'em wait."

In lyrical poetry, of which the stanza is more peculiarly characteristic, the principle of suspense is of inferior importance because in general this type aims at expressing a unified mood or emotion in a single individual, and therefore lacks both the objective and the subjective two-sidedness fundamental to narrative forms, in which two-sidedness narrative suspense is thus grounded. Nevertheless, a formal quality analogous in nature to the dramatist's "Make 'em wait" occasionally appears in stanzaic structure and may, under some conditions, mount to a high degree of artistic importance. This quality we may call *Suspension in Stanzaic Structure*. Of this there are two main types.

The first is the artful *deferring of a rhyme* the occurrence of which at a given point the listener has been led to expect. A simple but highly marked case appears in one of the spirit Ariel's songs to the shipwrecked Prince Ferdinand in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes;
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea nymphs hourly ring his knell:
Ding-dong.
Hark! now I hear them — Ding-dong, bell!

Here, at the climactic moment just before the last line, a brief phrase, *Ding-dong*, is interpolated as an extra-metrical line intended to be sung as a burden “dispersedly” by voices behind the stage, as in the case of another of Ariel’s songs immediately preceding. The inserted phrase is left unfinished; and Ariel, the solo voice, then resumes, and in the last line simultaneously completes the eight-line stanza, fills out the burden phrase, and gratifies the ear by at last sounding the expected rhyme to *knell*:

Hark! now I hear them — Ding-dong, bell!

Thus the esthetic sense is given a triple pleasure that has been carefully prepared by the slight delay. This would of course have to be reinforced by parallel effects in the musical setting — a statement the full significance of which the student of musical theory will comprehend.

A somewhat parallel, but less lucidly simple, case occurs in Mr. G. K. Chesterton’s stirring militant semi-ballad, *Lepanto*. Describing the heroic advance of Don John of Austria against the insolently triumphant Sultan of Turkey while the rest of Christendom looked tamely on, the lines ring out with sonorous stress:

Strong gongs groaning as the guns boom far,
Don John of Austria is going to the war,

Stiff flags straining in the night-blasts cold
In the gloom black-purple, in the glint old-gold,
Torchlight crimson on the copper kettle-drums,
Then the tuckets, then the trumpets, then the cannon,
then he comes.

Don John laughing in the brave beard curled,
Spurning of his stirrups like the thrones of all the world,
Holding his head up for a flag of all the free.
Love-light of Spain — hurrah!
Death-light of Africa!
Don John of Austria
Is riding to the sea.

Mark how the seven-stress couplets stride along with clear
regular rhyme-clang down to

Holding his head up for a flag of all the free;

how then, in place of the answering heptameter, two brief rhyming lines of ballad type enter, together equalling an eight-stress line and disappointing the ear of its rhyme-answer to *free*; and how then follow two more short lines, really the expected heptameter cut in half in printing, mid-rhyme-linked by *Austria* to *hurrah* and *Africa* but ending in *sea*, the answer to the *free*-rhyme above that had been left in abeyance. Thus the two interpolated lines and the first half of the final heptameter have, through the unexpected suspension, enriched the rhyme for stanzaic climax, by rhythm and printing have supplied an appropriate effect of ballad lilt, have given opportunity for incisive emotional emphasis on the significance of Don John's mission, and have thus also heightened dramatic suspense in the narrative during the pause enforced by the necessity of waiting for the suspended rhyme.

The second variety of stanzaic suspension is a retardation of the onward flow of the thought by *repetition of phrasing*.

Inasmuch as this involves, not merely sound elements of metre and rhyme, but repetition of idea, it is primarily logical and rhetorical rather than stanzaic; but when in each of a sequence of stanzas it occurs consistently in the same position, it then becomes stanzaically structural and a pertinent part of our present discussion. Such cases of suspension probably have their ultimate origin in the ballad refrain or burden, but they are not at all identical with it in technique. Compare, for instance, Allan Ramsay's *Peggy*.

My Peggy is a young thing,
 Just enter'd in her teens,
Fair as the day, and sweet as May.
Fair as the day, and always gay:
My Peggy is a young thing,
 And I'm not very auld,
Yet well I like to meet her at
 The wauking of the fauld.

My Peggy speaks sae sweetly
 Whene'er we meet alane,
I wish nae mair to lay my care,
I wish nae mair of a' that's rare;
My Peggy speaks sae sweetly,
 To a' the lave I'm cauld,
But she gars a' my spirits glow
 At wauking of the fauld. *Etc.*

In each of these eight-line groups note how the variant repetitions in lines 3-4, with their double enrichment through internal rhyme, completely break up the expected *abcb* stanza form — how the fifth line exactly repeats the first for a new start and the quatrain then continues to the end, this time

giving the reader the originally expected popular ballad rhyme-scheme. A still more complex form of the same kind is John Skinner's old Scotch drinking song of *Tullochgorum*.

Finally, we come to such a masterly combination of both of the above varieties of suspension as is found in Alfred Noyes' *The Highwayman*. This tragic little tale is from every point of view an artistic masterpiece, and in no small degree its success is due to the stanza that has been chosen — or possibly invented — for its medium. It opens with a brilliant bit of ballad atmosphere in which the title character is introduced in typical action, the figure and action being emphasized by three-fold repetition through the introduction of an unrhymed line (printed as two) that defers the rhyme-answer to line 3 and thus gives the stanza suspense and climax. At the same time, through the repetitions the poet has opportunity to dwell on vivid narrative details.

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty
trees,

The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
And the highwayman came riding —

Riding — riding —

The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door.

And so it continues, the emphasis sometimes falling upon a brilliant pictorial effect,

His pistol butts a-twinkle,
His rapier hilt a-twinkle —

but usually on a well-marked step in the advancing tragedy: his meeting with

the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Bess, the landlord's daughter;

their appointment for the following night; the contrasted picture,

A red-coat troop came marching —

Marching — marching — ;

the ambuscade that was set for him in his bound sweetheart's room, where

There was death at every window,

And hell at one dark window;

the story of how, on his approach, reaching the trigger of a musket,

her finger moved in the moonlight,

Her musket shattered the moonlight,

Shattered her breast in the moonlight and warned

him — with her death;

and of how, finally, the lover returning to his slain sweetheart,

they shot him down on the highway,

Down like a dog on the highway,

And he lay in his blood on the highway, with the bunch of lace at his throat.

Thus, in each stanza we have always the establishment of rhyme expectancy in lines 1-2, always variety through the disappointment of this expectancy, always in the stanza thought-suspense accompanying the suspension of stanzaic advance, in the narrative as a whole always suspense by dwelling on pictorial detail and dramatic essentials in the stanzaic rhythm-parentheses thus created, and throughout the poem always steady narrative advance by means of these parenthetically emphasized stages. A magnificent piece of

narrative and poetic technique!

One point more. Mr. Noyes later wrote *The River of Stars* — *A Tale of Niagara** in a stanza of almost identical metre and rhyme scheme. It is well worth while to study this poem and *The Highwayman* side by side. What are their respective artistic merits as to stanza management, and why?

A. G.

*See his *Collected Works*, vol. III, pp. 17-21.

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