

rimes, but primarily rhythm. Just as much, too, he said that an efficient means to the actual process of poetical composition is not imagination and knowledge, but a rhythm actually singing itself persistently in the mind.

Poets and teachers of the history and appreciation of literature are often asked by those who have talent for verse-making to recommend some book that will instruct them in the art of poetical composition. Invariably the same answer is given: 'Consult Lanier's "Science of English Verse," Gummere's "Handbook of Poetics," Corson's "Primer of English Verse," Hood's "Practical Guide to English Versification," etc.; as if technical description of the forms and laws of poetry or verse were a recipe for composing it. Knowledge of these things may secure correctness of form; but it will not give the breath and life of poetry. It were better to recommend these verse-makers—who, as the talented, are poets made, not born—the method of the rhythmical dummy. If it be objected that this will reduce the art of poetry to mechanics, two replies are open to us. The dummy itself is a mechanical form. It had, however, a mental counterpart in an inward rhythm: and this inward rhythm is at the moment of composition actually pulsing through the mind; or if not, can be caught up again by way of the mechanical dummy. In any case the matter is settled by the fact that the rhythmical dummy was thus used by the most tuneful poet and the most lyrical composer