

A glimmer less than any ghostly light,
As women wear their beauty in the night.

Or another:

And one, remembering with them, other
days

When he had come to her and gone again,
Her beauty by him in all desolate ways —

He will be silent, having learned by then,
There is no word that men may give to
fame,

For what the heart knows better than a
name.

Helen Hoyt's revelatory poems of feminine passion, of love and regret, tell their own story swiftly and with some degree of beauty. They are quite different from any love lyrics we have had recently in America. They are more frankly physical than those of Edna St. Vincent Millay, yet in spite of that they are sprung from a more conventional viewpoint. Miss Millay writes of light and passing loves with cynicism or quiet remembrance; Miss Hoyt's is one deep and all effacing love. Her book contains excellent lyrics and excellent lines.

Dorothy Dow's "Black Babylon" is less mature than Miss Hoyt's book; but it has a nice eagerness, an ability to note the unusual object or emotion and to catch it in a phrase. Those of her poems that are best as writing are apt to be those that are most conventional in thought and rhythm. Her book is cleverer than it is profound; but there are lovely, youthful things, of much promise.

In "The Crimson Cloak" Lois Montross, she of the "Town and Gown" collaboration, turns poet. Here is verse filled with ideas and with spirit; but it is, much of it, very conventional both in form and in thought. Mrs. Montross has found no real poetic expression. Her work varies from sentimental lyrics to attempts at dramatic realism. There are single lines worth quoting, stanzas

POETIC HARVESTS

By John Donelson

HERE are four books of poems by women — and one by a man. In this case, the man leads. David Morton's "Harvest" shows him again to be one of our finest sonneteers. Forty five in all, these sonnets are of an even excellence and a sure beauty more mature than that found in Mr. Morton's earlier volume, "Ships in Harbour". His rhythms are soft, his colors are soft, and his thought is quiet; but individual lines stand out and build to fine, effective poems. Take this sestet, for example; it is memorable:

The moon comes like a lover from the hill,
Leaning across the twilight and the trees,
And finds them grave and beautiful and
still,

And wearing always, on such nights as
these,

—but the poems do not gain their own effect either singly or as a book. Their author undoubtedly has a poetic gift; but it seems to be scattered and uncontrolled in this first volume.

Elizabeth J. Coatsworth is more difficult of discussion. She has much equipment that no one of the other poets discussed possesses; but she lacks the one thing, curiously, that they all possess in spite of their faults — a singing line. Miss Coatsworth has ideas and a gift for piquant description. I should think that she would write splendid prose. I quote one poem from "Atlas and Beyond" which I like very much indeed, but which seems to me to be filled with the rhythms of prose. It has no patterned rhythms. It is not really free verse. It can be scanned; yet it is rough. Miss Coatsworth seems to me to be a writer of distinction, not yet a poet.

THE KNIGHT ERRANT

I see him passing slowly down the pages
In crazy armor on a scarecrow horse
More gaunt, more mad, with every passing
day

Peopling the wastes with giants and
magicians,
And in the peasants of the bare white towns
Finding the stuff for queens and knights
and ruffians.

I see him buffeted by unknown fates
And quite material hands, standing amazed,
Unflinching in the universal laughter.
And envying him his wild serenity
I close the book, believing he was wise
To slough his hum-drum life, put on his
armor,

And let old Rosinante pick his path
Into some new chimerical adventure.

Harvest. By David Morton. G. P.
Putnam's Sons.

Apples Here in My Basket. By Helen
Hoyt. Harcourt, Brace and Co.

Black Babylon. By Dorothy Dow. Boni
and Liveright.

The Crimson Cloak. By Lois Montross.
Boni and Liveright.

Atlas and Beyond. By Elizabeth J.
Coatsworth. Harper and Bros.