The ABC of Composing Poetry

Some people may frown at the thought of writing English poems. It is, in fact, not so hard as one thinks.

First of all, we must know how to scan a verse, that is, to divide every line of a poem into several "feet" and say the number and kind of those feet. The combination of ONE accented and one or more than one unaccented syllables of a foot cannot be less than two or more than three. Nevertheless, there are a few exceptions. For instance, the accentless syllable at the beginning of a line has sometimes to do the duty of an entire iambic foot:

Stay the king and hasten his wars, der dove.

Lines of two feet are hexameter; of three, trimeter; of four, tetrameter; of five, pentameter, and so on.

Most commonly, the lines of a poem have the same number of metres. But in order to express ourselves more freely, we may use unequal metres in every line. Take Wordsworth's "The Rainbow" as example:

My heart leaps up when I behold (tetrameter)
A rainbow in the sky (trimeter).
So was it when my life began (tetrameter).
So is it now I am a man (tetrameter).
So be it when I shall grow old (tetrameter).
Or let me die.

(bi-metar)

T.S. WONG

PROVERBS

Art is long, life is short.

There is no friend so faithful as a good book.

Knowledge without morality is simply rashness.

Wisdom is the right use of knowledge.

TRANSLATION CORNER

The Remarkable GIANT!

The Remarkable GIANT!

It is such a tall building that sometimes large flocks of migrating birds fly over its roof and alight. Sometimes, by being blown by the wind, it will be swung from side to side. The top of the building is often covered with snow, which makes it look more magnificent.

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