### THE POET OF THE DAY

Estimate of Richard Hovey Warranted by Launcelot and Guenevere.

A WORK OF RARE BEAUTY.

In Which One of the Arthurian Legends Forms the Nucleus.

EXCERPTS FROM ADVANCE SHEETS.

The Author, Although of the West, Is a Product of Washington.

A VERY INTERESTING PERSONALITY

IFROM A STAFF CORRESPONDENT. WASHINGTON, Oct. 31 .- This gay little political capital, somewhat too much devoted to brummagem politics and social concombery, has not been lavish, per se, in its production and dispensation of genius. It has bestowed name and fame on men and women of the "provinces," who have blazed the comets of a petty season, and then retired to feast their minds on faded bonors in the obscurity of their own homes; but the Washington creation, pure and

simple, of that sort, is a rare article. It is therefore a peculiar pleasure to note the advent in the field of literary art of a young man who can be truly claimed as a production of the capital, though by birth and childhood he is of the West-not of the West, Western, however, but happily embodying the grand imaginations, the gorgeous coloring and sensuous atmosphere of the blessed Orient, from which all things worths have sprung. Cosmopolite, admirably Bohemian, a true son of the World, in touch with the Universe of Things to be fancied but not explained, Richard Hovey is yet a child of Washington, his first impulses—so far as outward influence goes— being received from that society peculiar to the capital, and which, granting its lack of many poble tendencies, is yet the closest approach to ideal association to be found in this conglomerate Western land.

Hovey's First Production. Hovey is not yet his entire self in "Launcelot and Guenevere." It is the first book of the young author. Not only that, but it is the early effort, which, ambitious as it is, and successful, as the severest critics must admit it to be, is yet but the beautiful result of the genius and toil of the young years of one conscious of power, and surely destined to leave his im-

press on the literature of his country and of Hovey is a wonderfully magnetic young man, who impresses himself on his acquaint-Hovey, wrote merely to write, and all un-conscious of the immensity of his audience. But analysis of the personality of the man must come with mature judgment of his work, and for the present suggestion must be confined to the volume which will appear within a few days, and from the advance sheets of which this notice is hastily trans-

Did Not Choose a New Field.

On first impression it might be regretted at the author should have chosen the mos widely known and most exploited theme of the Arthurian legends to introduce himself to the literary world and the public. But pon even a cursory examination of his Launcelot and Guenevere" it will be found that it bears no resemblance to any of the works of the great Victorian poets save in name, the treatment of the subject being entirely original and revealing a high order of poetic inspiration and dramatic power. He has drawn forth with rare eleverness the leading personalities of these early mediaval legends of Britain from the mystic haze in which time had masked them, and without detracting from their poetic character or being guilty of psychic anachronism, places them in touch and sympathy with modern

thought and feeling.

The play, which is a tragedy, is preceded by an introduction or prelude bearing the title of "The Quest of Merlin," a finelywrought poetic fentasia, replete with mysterious effects, allegory and metaphysical reasoning, which are finally resolved into a nure and high deistic philosophy. The tragedy itself, which is foreshadowed in the prelude, appears to be the first of a trilogy of plays intended to cover the legendary histories of King Arthur and Launcelot du Lac, bears throughout the impress of a superior mind stored with rich lore and

Technical Knowledge of the Stage.

It is in five acts and its construction shows a technical knowledge of the stage and strong dramatic instinct. Gifted with power of analysis to a marked degree, be has undertaken to delineate, as the paramount object of the work, three types of love which, in whatever age we may seek and find them, have been all-potent factors of human action. In Percent, the poet and brother of Guenceere, he has portrayed the ideal form of love, which in its ruthless de-struction must end tragically. In Morganse, the Queen of Orkney, the sister of King Arihar, he has created with fine artistry but departing from tradition—a character of perfidy and passion beneath a fair exterior. Between these two extremes, yet immeasurably removed from the one by strength, and purity from the other, is the love of Launcelot and Guenevers, characters so fine and yet so buman that their very divergence from a moral standard seems to claim an

thical indulgence.

The play opens with a scene depicting the approach of Arthur and his knights to Cameliard, where he is to wed Guenzere, who, yet untouched by love, has been induced by her parents for reasons of state to accept the King's suit. Merlin says of her: The very waywardness That rumor speaks of her shows a great

That feels too prisoned even upon a throne. A Powerful Monologue.

Gueneser's character, however, is best mirrored in her monologue just prior to the wedding ceremony and her marriage with Arthur. She has been receiving the advice of her parents and the congratulations of her friends, and when left alone gives utterance to her thoughts as follows:

why, what a thing is woman! She is brought into the world unwelcome. A mother weeps That she has born a daughter to endure a woman's rate. The inther knits his brows and matters, "Pish, "its but a girl." A boy The very hou ds had bayed for with delight. Her c. Halnood is a petty tyrauny. Her brothers cross her; she mu-tnot resist, Her father laughs to see the little men So masterful siready. Even the mother Looks on her truculent sous with pride and bids

Her yield, not thwart them-"You are but a A girl! and must give way! She must be quiet, Demure-not have her freedom with the

boys.
While they are running on the battlements, While they are running on the battlements, Playing at war or at the chase, she sits Eating her heart out at embrudery frames Among old dames that chutter of a world Where women are put up as merchandise. Oh, I have slipped away a thousand times late the garden close and scaled the wall And fled from them to freedom and the hills. And I have passed the women in the fields, With stupid faces dulled by long constraint, Bowling their backs beneath the double burden.

Of labor and unkindness—all alike, Princess and peasant, bond slaves, by their

Ah, the gray crags up whose sheer precipices I have so often tolled, to throw myself Panting upon their crests at last and lie For long whole afternoons upon the hard, Helicinus rock in that sweet weariness That follows effort, with a silent joy In obstacles that I could overcome.

wolves
That make the wintry forests terrible
Reneath the Norland moon! "Shriek on," cried,
"Rave howl, roar, bellow, till you split your throats!
You cannot mar the pinnacled repose Of these huge mountain tops. They are not

women!"
Why, what an idle rage is this: Am I
The Guenevere those still grand mountain
know?
This is a bridal garment that I wear. I am another Guenevere, a thing—
I know not what. I go to a new life.
I know not what. I go to a new life.
I have ordered a new pair of manacles.
Arthur? As well Arthur as another—
I care not. If I must, I must. To live
The old life is no longer tolerable.
The new may at least be joylessly endured

Loved Another, Though a Bride. After the wedding Arthur is hurriedly

After the wedding Arthur is nurriedly called away to suppress an uprising in Cornwall, and Guenaver first meets Launcelot during the King's absence. The first meeting proves fatal for them, and marks the date of the birth of their passionate love. A fine passage, full of sweet imagery, is in this scene where Launcelot answers Guenaver to her question concerning his past: Nay, little that I can remember. I am Strangely unable to distinguish one Good or ill hap out of the blur of things, Battles and tourneys, one much like the

other,
And lost already in the murmurous past. I feel as if I were just born to-day
With life before me like this summer air,
Hushed, as in waiting for a bird to sing,
Who yet delays, and all is fresh and fair,
And hope stands flushing like a rosy boy
Upon a threshold which be fears to cross.

The rapid development of their love is partly due to the fact that some few years back Launcolot had been saved from death by Guenerer, who, wandering through the hills and seeing a strange knight in distress, had sent Dagonet, the jester, and her attendant to minister him help. To his reference to having seen her before without knowing who she was absent. knowing who she was, she says:

Have you seen me, then, beforet
And you remember it and I forgett
Launcelot—I should have died of faintness
in the fills if you had not stood by.
Guenevere—What, were you be
Whom Dagonet the Fool savedt
Launcelot—I am he.
Guenevere—How strangely are the threads
of life in woven!

Their love is soon discovered by Morgaus, the intriguir g Queen of Orkney, who, jeal-ous of Arthur and wishing to revenge berself upon him for his indifference to her, is con spiring with the Roman Ambassador to de-stroy the autonomy of the kingdom.

A Femsle Mephistopheles, In Morganse the author has shaped a most ineresting character, and one of the best in the play. In his conception of her he has resorted to an unalloyed realism, strong, at times repellant, but always artistic. There is a couch often of the Mephistophelean about her, and we have her in this mood when she ner, and we have her in this mood when she is plotting to subvert the kingdom and framing with Ladinas, her paramour, the charges to be made to Arthur against the Queen and Launcolot. Morgause says:

This work of ours Casts Britain to the pit for the beasts of war To glut their bloodthirst on. What's that to This upstart Queen and that false-hearted Who call himself her husband and my

him!
And, if he be her husband, what proves that
But that he is a perjurer? If she 'scape,
He may be slain; and if they live, the shame
Will danb them till they die. In any case
I have revenge. I could carouse to-night
Till the cives startled in the gleus to hear
The exche of my revely. Come kiss me! The echo of my revelry. Come, kiss met Oh, Ladinas, I am drunk with merriment Again! Again! My blood is flames of fire.

Ladinas—Your lips burn and your cheeks are hot. Morgause! My pantheress! My splendid devil! The Faith of Peredure.

A marked contrast to this characteriza-tion and a specimen of the author's versa-

They never called me girl, those mighty peaks!

They knew no sex, they took me to their hearts
As if I were a boy. Oh, the wild thrill
That tingled in the veins, when the strong Winds came howling like a pack of hungry and baseness and answers Merlin with all the unconsciousness of a noble for Morgans. He remains the steadfast skeptic to Merlin's accusations of the Queen of Orkney's perfidy and baseness and answers Merlin with all the unconsciousness of a noble for Morgans. with the actualities of life:

By heaven, 'tis false! s soon the rosy labor of the dawn light bring forth darkness! Then turning to the casement of Morganze chamber he addresses her:

—Lamp of my soul, behind you lattice lies More mystery, more beauty, more delight Than grizzled Merlin with his lapse years Has ever dreamed of. There's more credit

writ
In thy dear smile than all his subtleties.
Ah, opal-hearted! now she doth unclothe
The solemn sweep of her majestic limbs,
The mystery of her awful loveliness;
And draws the curtains of her couch about

As some earth-goddess of old northern tales Might draw the heavy drapery of the night. A fine scene is also where *Percurs* visits Morgauss, and we have here a masterly blending into a harmonious picture of an an almost sacriligious deception on the other. Peredure's beautiful song in this scene reminds one in its exquisite delicacy of Browning's "She's a Woman Like a Dewdrop," in the "Blot on the 'Scutcheon."

You remind me, sweeting,
Of the glow,
Warm and pure and fleeting,
—Blush of apple-blossoms—
On cloud bosoms,
When the sun is low.

Like a golden apple, 'Mid the far Topmost leaves that dapple
Stretch of summer blue—
There are you,
Sky-set like a star.

Fearful lest I bruise you,
How should I
Dare to reach you, choose you,
Stain you with my souch?
It is much
That you star the sky.

Why should I be climbing.
So to seize
All that sets me rhyming—
In my hand enfold
All that gold
Of Hesperides?

I would not enfold you,
If I might.
I would just behold you,
Sigh and turn away,
While the day
Darkens into night.

The death of Peredure by his own hands when his eyes become opened to the moral obliquity of the Queen of Orkney, is a deeply pathesic scene, and fitly closes the fourth set. He has killed Ladinas and finding the ideal which all the purity of his lofty imagination had created was crumbled into dust, he has not strength to orthine the into dust, he has not strength to outlive the

Guenevere Attempts Deception. The fifth act contains the most powerful scene between Launcelot and Guenevere. The latter has awakened from the intoxication latter has awakened from the intoxication of her love; the golden clouds of passion have rolled away and revealed to her the gloomy and perilous path she and her lover are treading. Her love, like all genuine, is altruistic; she thinks more of Launcelot, more of the dangers she may have called down upon her innocent friends and the welfare of the state, than of herself. The climax of the scene is centered in the passclimax of the scene is centered in the pass age where she resorts to the most subtle dialectic, belief and honor can inspire her with to break the spell she and Launciot are under. Not every argument, however adroitly presented, Launciot's rebuttals are able to overcome. At last she draws talse-

but at the crucial moment when her wish may be reached, at the very instant when her object is in her grasp, the sustaining power fails her. I must make turning back impossible.

Best know the worst! I jested—
I—God! I do not love you. Go! T'was all

hood to her aid, and with an almost super-human effort denies that she ever loved him;

Guestere—Oh, no; I am not the Queen— am your wife!

Take me away with you! Let me not lie To you, of all—My whole life is a lie, To one, at least, let it be truth. I—I— Oh, Launcelot, do you not understand? I love you—Oh, I cannot let you go.

Trustfulness of the King. The play closes with Arthur's victorious return and Morgause's accusation of Guenavers and Launcolot before the whole court. So strong a faith has Arthur in his wife's purity strong a faith has Arthur in his wife's purity and Launcelot's loyalty that he banishes Morgause and dismisses the charge against them in a superbly dramatic passage, showing the noble character of the man. This is quickly followed by two brief exclamations, made aside by Guenerer and Launcelot, two grief-laden flashes revealing the tortured souls of the lovers. The King's address to them and their final sentences are worthy to be quoted in full:

be quoted in Itili:

Arthur—My Launcelot, sit thou by my quoen.

My lords.

This is my friend—through good or ill report
My friend. Who injures him by word or
deed,
Were it but the thin film of an idle breath
Clouding the clear glass of his stainless soul,
He injures me; and but that I am King
And may not, being the State more than myself,

Just like a simple knight, and but that he, Our stoutest arm as our most knightly heart: Needs not my lance to right him, I would With mine own hand the knave that did nim

And thou, my noble queen! If that I ever By so much as the sullying of a thought Dimmed the bright clarity of thine imaged whiteness Within my soul, may Christ remember is Against me at the judgment! (Advances and bisses her, then turns to the others).

Good my lords
Erase this unnecessary scene
From your remembrance, Launcelot (half aside, partly to Guenevers and partly to himself)—

Be less kingly, Arthur, Or you will spits my heart—not with r nevere (half spart)-

To the souls in hell It is at least permitted to cry out. Prediction the Work Warrants.

Prediction the Work Warrants.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon this work in greater detail. The public must judge for itself of its beauties, its strength, and its tendencies. Though the first fruit of a still young man, his intellect, as seen reflected in this play, has already passed through that cruder part of the storm and stress period and has in fact reached at times that of classic repose and elevation.

Should I be assuming too much to predict an immediate recognition of his genius, or claim for it a co-ordinate rank with the very best that American literature has ever produced? I think not. It may require time for others to join this view, but the fact must not be overlooked that real merit is like the late summer or autumn fruit that has required the ripening process of many days to endure the winter of time.

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KANSAS CITY, Mo., Oct. 30.-J. A. Lock-hart, now a bardware merchant of Welling-Judges of Lafayette county, a man of un-doubted integrity, vouched for by local business firms, was in the city to-day. He tells a most remarkable story: George Han-more, of Independence, Mo., his wife and children, have been guests of Judge Lock-hart for the past week. Monday Mr. Han-more walked down into Judge Lockhart's garden, and when near the center of th truck patch he felt drops of rain upon his hands and face. There was not a cloud in the sky, and the sun was shining brightly. Mr. Hanmore was astounded. He looked up. There was no doubt of it, rain was fall-

Mr. Hanmore was astounded. He looked up. There was no doubt of it, rain was falling lightly, but rapidly. He moved on, and 15 feet farther no rain was falling.

He walked back where he first noticed the rain drops—rain was still falling there. He called to Judge Lockhart's colored servant. The man came out and stood within the little spot where the rain was falling. Frightened, he started to the house on a dead run. Mrs. Hanmore, Mrs. Lockhart and the children went out to the garden. They, too, saw and felt the rain. Yesterday Judge Lockhart was at his store shortly after 1 o'clock, and Mr. Hanmore came running down and told him it was again raining on the same spot. Judge Lockhart had been loath to believe the story told him when he returned home to supper the night before, but he hurried home and was convinced. Again the rain was falling in a little spot probably 15 feet square, while all about the sky was cloudless and the sun shining. Judge Lockhart, being in the city, does not know whether it is raining on his garden to-day or not. Both Monday and Tuesday the rain began falling ing on his garden to day or not. Both Mon-day and Tuesday the rain began falling about 1 o'clock, and ceased about 6 o'clock. No rain-makers have been experimenting in that vicinity.

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