

Thoughts on IAU 258

Sitting in a lecture dreary, pondering convective theory
From some vast and vacuous volume of astrophysics lore,
As I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a rapping
As if the audience were clapping, begging of the speaker "More!"
Then I made a quick decision: all I had to do was listen,
Listen up and nothing more.

Lost amidst the storm and fury, delivered to that eager jury
Was the answer to this story, story that the stars foreswore.
Somewhere in that stellar history lay the answer to the mystery,
Mystery of the stellar ages, ages we'd not known before.
Could it be companion planet, orbiting in a field magnetic?
Or if not this, then how much more?

Elegantly he spun a theory connecting cluster's metallicity
Through the oscillating iron's penetrating to the core.
Utilizing new fiducials (calibration's ever crucial),
CMD are most unusual: take a look at Messier four
Sir, said I, unto the speaker, "Is it this or something deeper?"
Quoth the speaker, "'Of such data - we need more."

Lithium in circulation's symptom of the star's rotation,
Rotation seen as modulation of the stellar spots before.
Does convective overshooting coupled with magnetic heating
Cause horizontal branch's splitting, splitting into three or four?
When we find a clear dependence relating ages to abundance
Then all is done in Baltimore.

F.M. Walter, Baltimore, October 2008 (with apologies to E.A. Poe)