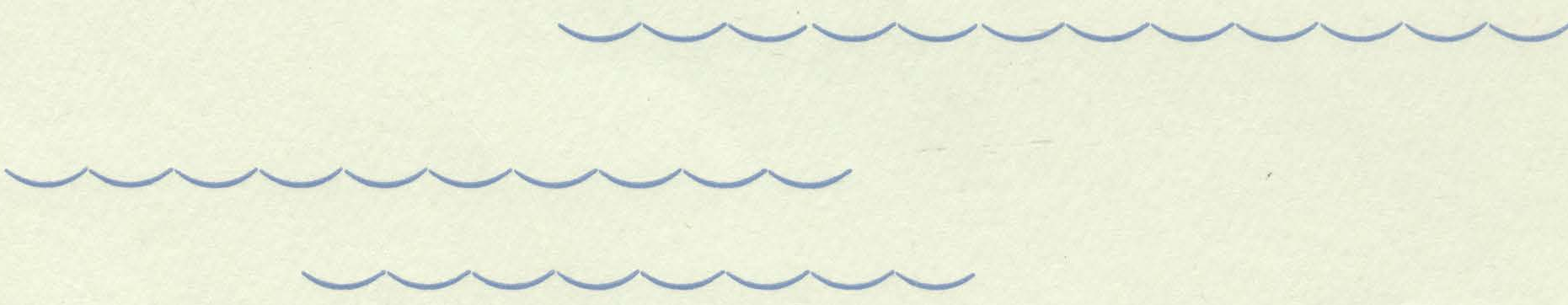




SEA-GULLS

For one carved instant as they flew,  
The language had no simile-  
Silver, crystal, ivory  
Were tarnished. Etched upon the horizon blue,  
The frieze must go unchallenged, for the lift  
And carriage of the wings would stain the drift  
Of stars against a tropic indigo  
Or dull the parable of snow.

Now settling one by one  
Within green hollows or where curled  
Crests caught the spectrum from the sun,  
A thousand wings are furled.  
No clay-born lilies of the world  
Could blow as free  
As those wild orchids of the sea.



*E. J. Pratt*