

## \* Commentary On Plowing

## The Poet

The new-turned furrows sprawl beneath the sun;

Dusky and silent, earth awaits her time

Of blossoming. Now hardly will be won

The white dawn-flicker, when the will to climb  
Shall stir the seed: this darkly ribboned field,

Drowsy with dreams, will wake to sudden zest,

In sinuous undulations the green yield

Of beauty will become a dream confessed.

Yet not the pregnant promises of wealth

In grain, or vintage, woo me --- I am bound  
To this sweet idle moment. The slow stealth

Of one small field mouse, and the brittle sound  
Of black clods crunching, I shall wake to find  
How often, down the furrows of the mind!

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## Commentary On Plowing (Continued)

## An Old Woman

The plow cuts deep, the new-turned earth lies black

As grief turned over in the heart. The land

Has heard a question and has given back

The answer: in a dark but certain hand

The slow script runs. Each furrow in the sun

Lies cool and isolate. The plow cuts deep,

Strikes at the roots; and slowly, one by one,

The earth gives up the secrets she would keep.

How often, in the brown fields of the heart,

The plow cuts deep; for furrows of despair

Yield annual increase. But all ripe grains start

From deep-turned earth --- and with the bright-eyed stare

Of yonder field mouse, in my heart's field one

Small covert dream blinks all day at the sun..

\* Wings

## \* Comes The Dawn

All night the stormy vanguards of the sky

Besieged the battered earth. The twisted trees  
One moment tossed their wind-swept branches high;

The next, bowed low upon their suppliant knees.

Now morning breaks: the dreary landscape swims

In sunlit glory; and the gaunt trees stand

At ease, to rest their worn and weary limbs.

Now gentleness comes back to all the land.

So hush, my heart, and trust: for surely He,

Who stills the storms in nature, knows the way  
To touch the tumult in each life, and be

Himself the sunrise and the perfect day.

He dries all tears. Beyond this haggard night

There will be peace again --- and warmth and light.

## \* War Cry

## \* Compassion Is Thy Name

When I behold the thirsty stalks of grain  
Uncurl long fingers to the cooling rain  
And write in green the promise of the wheat,  
Because Thy grace provides that man may eat,  
Then I recall the hungry multitude ----  
The curious, the eager, faint for food ----  
The loaves and fishes shared with all who came.  
O Son of God ---- Compassion is Thy name!

\* War Cry

## \* Coins

Two coins, two polished coins, are mine to hold,

Are mine to spend or cherish as I will,

And one I hoard as misers hoard their gold,

And one, alas, too carelessly I spill.

O Life, my second coin, how recklessly

Your shining days slip through these finger-tips!

But Love, my first, I guard you jealously,

Against the touch --- the wild sweet touch ---- of lips.

But if there come (and oh I know there must!)

One in whose eyes new glories wake for me,

I'll take my Love and spend it for a crust

To feed his soul through all eternity.

Then Life, grown strangely precious at his touch,

Shall be the coin I cherish overmuch.

\* Herald

## \* Confidences

Heart, never talk with trees in green ---

They are not trusty, quite,

For what they hear in confidence

They whisper of at night.

Go laugh and play and sing with them,

Their own bright wisdoms glean,

But still the urge that coaxes lips

To talk with trees in green.

And if a secret longing stirs

That will not settle down,

Heart take your little wistful dreams

And talk with trees in brown.

Bare branches on your cheek will be

As soft as finger tips;

Heart, they will know and never speak ---

Old sorrows seal their lips.

\* Herald

## Consecration

That I may have the confidence

Life's great attempts to try,

Night after night I keep my faith

With white stars, still and high.

That I may have the patient grace

To meet dull circumstance,

Day after day I keep my eyes

On countless plodding ants.

And which renews my spirit most,

Or why, I cannot tell;

Only, between the two lies God,

Somewhere --- I know it well.

## \* Consecration

Men build their temples unto God,  
Magnificent and high,  
Their domes and spires are lifted up;  
But God may pass them by.

To dwell in temples made by hands  
Is not His chosen plan:  
He seeks the humble, human heart.

God's temple is the man;

Man's hope of glory, Christ within.

How strange and marvelous

That God should choose this house of clay  
Inhabited by us!

Most gladly let us then give place  
And dedicate afresh

To Him, whose right it is to reign,  
This temple of the flesh.

## Conversation

First tuck your tulip bulbs beneath the sod,

Then make a place for pansies. Did you know,

Dear little boy, that now you work with God?

He made a garden in the long ago;

He makes all gardens yet. No seed can sprout

Without His care, He sends the rain, the sun:

No flower wakes and pokes its bright face out

Unless He guards and cherishes each one.

And did you know that, when His loved ones chose

A place for Jesus, after He had died,

They found a garden --- and from there He rose,

That first glad Easter morning, glorified?

So make your garden, little boy, each spring:

God gives us gardens --- for remembering.

## \* Consider This

Consider this, when from the chafing bond

Of life's activity you steal away

To quiet dreams, consider this: a pond

Fringed with blue iris has somewhat to say:

Keen sparkling wit of ripples, reveries,

Cool-browed and still beneath the lotus-pad,

These, and the grave assurances of trees

Bending above, are largess to be had.

Consider this: no bright pool of the mind,

Where thought has emptied and where wisdom lies

Captive, can give you more than you will find

In one small pond --- face lifted to the skies,

Back on the earth, and slim arms stretched about

Blue iris flung to heaven like a shout!

\* Kaleidograph

## Consolation

All life begins in wonder,  
And ends in wondering.  
But in between are beauty,  
And toil and suffering;  
  
And in between are children,  
With little, trusting, eyes;  
And light and love and laughter;  
And books to make one wise;  
  
Great moments of endeavor;  
Brief moments of content;  
And all the song and sunshine  
For which the world was meant.  
  
The old may faint and falter,  
But still the heart can lean ---  
When evening shadows lengthen ---  
Upon the in-between.

## \* Contentment

There is a point beyond which longing ends,

Where no more yearning is, nor any hope

Above the present need; where thought descends

To common earth, and wishes cease to grope.

Contentment men have called it; and they make

Of it a thing most diligently sought.

Not so with me: I would forever break

The fragile thread of which content is wrought.

Give me the will to seek; the thought that lifts

The humble heart on pinions of desire.

It is the weak, the stagnant, soul that drifts

In calm content --- too feeble to aspire.

Who finds most Life must most for living strive;

For only by our longings do we live.

\* Survey

\* Could Ye Not Watch?

"What, could ye not watch with me one hour?"

Mathew 26:40

He is tireless in His care for all

Of us! He slumbers not, the blessed Christ,

So diligent to serve. When I recall

The joy of heaven that He sacrificed

To walk awhile with men, His healing touch,

So swift to comfort all who suffered loss,

His busy hands that served so well, so much ---

Those loving hands, nail-pierced upon the Cross ---

Then I remember dark Gethsemane;

And out of silence I can hear Him say,

"Could ye not watch with me one hour?" He

Was ever watchful of their needs; but they

Had slept through His. How could, how could they do

This thing? But what of me? And what of you?

\* Sunday School Times

Counselor's Lament  
(Antidote for Ego Inflation)

We counseled and cajoled them,

We read their little minds,

And in our daily records,

We catalogued our "finds";

But when we met their teachers

(In spite of smile and smirk)

Their inevitable greeting

Was, "Well, it doesn't work."

We equipped ourselves with "gadgets"

And "gimcracks" to delight;

We consulted with the "experts"

Far, far into the night;

But, the more we read about them,

(to classify each quirk)

The more their teachers told us,

"My dear, it doesn't work."

## Counselor's Lament (Continued)

We dealt with "temper tantrums,"

The "timid" and "withdrawn";

We slept, and dreamed about them,

From midnight unto dawn;

We searched for "all the answers",

(our task we did not skirk)...

Their teachers had one answer,

"Too bad --- it doesn't work!"

We know we have been faithful

And tried to understand;

And really - if you ask us --

We think we're pretty grand;

But let's be very humble,

Let's neither rave nor rant, ...

We're sure we understand them,

But still their teachers can't!!

\* Country Christmas

Now one star shines above the hill,  
Pinned to a pine so dark and still.

Upon the hillslope huddled sheep  
Are little woolly mounds of sleep.

The cattle, housed and warmed and fed,  
Stand dozing by the manger bed.

With star and sheep and fragrant hay,  
How can the Child be far away?

Though angel throngs have given place  
To satellites that whirl in space,

This country Christmas it would seem  
That peace on earth is not a dream.

\* Time of Singing

\* Country Schoolhouse

The little, lonely schoolhouse by the road,

With vacant windows empty-eyed and still,  
Seems listening for scampering of feet,

For laughter tossed from hill to sunny hill.

The big bus comes to take the children, now.

In modern, well-equipped and oversized  
New buildings education will go on,

Completely up-to-date and organized.

But do not tear the little schoolhouse down:

It is not roof and walls and floor, alone,  
But something lost and loved and intimate ---

A way of living that is almost gone.

A shelter for the feathered and the furred,

There let it stand and weather to decay:

Man needs one little guidepost pointing back,

Amidst the frenzied furor of today.

## Couplets By The Way

Nothing is quite so full of pleasure  
As the thing you'd do if you had the leisure.

Nothing is quite so full of merit  
As the gown you like but you cannot wear it.

Nothing is quite so full of beauty  
As a hope that thrives on the fare of duty.

Nothing is quite so full of wonder  
As a dream that floats when the rest go under.

## \* Courage

You asked me, "What is courage?" And I took

The dictionary down and spelled it out.

For such a little boy, the heavy book

Was ponderous. You twisted it about;

You said, "It's being brave --- and what is that?"

You said, "It's not to fear --- am I afraid?

Does courage arch its back up like our cat,

And spit at everything it meets?" you said.

Perplexed, we closed the book and took a walk,

And came where fire had worked untimely death;

The woods were gone. But on a slender stalk

A flower inched for life. I caught my breath.

"Courage," I said, and took you by the hand,

"Is one white flower in a fire-swept land."

\* Saturday Evening Post

\* Courage

Life, at your feet I lay the choicest gifts

That I can give,

Nor question aught, if only in me throb

The will to live,

The will to face tomorrow, though its way

Be steep or rough.

I give you, Life, for courage all I own ---

Is this enough?

My hopes, my dreams, my stubborn youthful pride

That will not fail;

If these be not sufficient value, Life,

What can avail?

May, must I borrow? Then I'll ask of Love,

"A boon, I pray."

And Love shall buy me courage and the faith

To face each day.

\* Lyric

## Courage

What is so still as a road in the moonlight?

What is so pale as a star at the dawn?

What is so brave as a heart that keeps singing,

After the reason for singing is gone?

Morning will shatter earth's moon-stricken silence,

Night will bring back the glow to a star ---

Nothing, oh nothing, shall challenge the courage

Of hearts that keep singing when song is so far!

## Country Doctor

He dealt with broken bodies. He would scoff

At careless pleasure lazy leisure yields.

But every Thursday, on his one day off,

He took the boy and walked the open fields.

There, tall against the skyline, he would stand,

Then turn and stoop to earth and cup a clod

And place it gently in the small boy's hand.

You knew he spoke to him of growth, and God.

You knew he looked along the far frontiers

Of all tomorrows, when the boy would be

The man, in need of wisdom for the years,

In need of strength and of tenacity.

Against the troubled times of death and birth,

He gave his son this contact with the earth.

## Courage, Resourcefulness, Character

From many walks of life they come,

Who can no longer walk;

And, far from home, they make a home

Of laughter and of talk.

They bring their courage in their hands,

Whose hands can hardly hold

Another thing. Each understands

Before he has been told.

They find resourceful ways to share

The burdens not their own,

And carry all, who would not dare

To carry one alone.

Upon another's need they wait,

Less fortunate than they;

I see them standing, tall and straight,

Who must sit down all day;

## Courage, Resourcefulness, Character (Continued)

I see them standing so because,

With scarce a dream fulfilled,  
They toil and toil, without a pause ----

What character they build!

Though muscle or though sinew shrink,

They still pursue their goal.

These are less handicapped I think

Than many who are whole.

## Creed

I believe in the beauty

Of wings against the night:

A gull cleaving the darkness

With slow stains of light.

I believe in the wisdom

Of words along the shore:

A wave bursting with clamor,

Hushed, saying no more.

I believe in the wonder

Of love within the heart:

Poised like a gull drifting,

A wave, ready to start.

## \* Cross-Roads

Hither and yon they call to me,  
And whither shall I go?  
The broad highway walks straight ahead ----  
'Tis smooth and white I know;  
And yet the gray road beckons,  
With every curve a lure:  
It just goes stumbling on its way ----  
I'd like to take it, sure.  
  
There are crowds upon the highway,  
And signs to make it plain;  
But somewhere down the gray road  
I smell the breath of rain ----  
The wind comes out to coax me,  
With soft beguiling tone,  
The leaves reach out their little hands ...  
The highway walks ---- alone.

\* Southerner

## \* Crushed Petals

The rose, that like a crimson taper burned

At dawn within the garden's hallowed shrine,  
Already fades, each brilliant petal turned

To rust along the edges. So decline  
Beauty and youth. But when the rose shall lie

A scattered ruin in the grass, I know  
Light winds will steep and stir and lift on high  
The wondrous fragrance that it lived to show.

Love is a rose that for a moment flamed,

Though life has crushed the petals one by one.  
Beloved, lift your face, be not ashamed,

Nor strive our altered circumstance to shun ----  
Life leaves us still this truth to think about:  
Each bloom is crushed to bring the sweetness out.

\* Montclair, New Jersey Times

## Cry Out Of Darkness

Silence is drifting like sorrow

    Into the streets of the town;

Day is a lost tomorrow,

    Seeking a vanished crown.

Day is a drab, insistant,

    Threadbare, familiar tune;

Life is a non-resistant.

    Only a scant white moon.

Out of the brave past lingers,

    Only gray ghost-words start

Plucking with nervous fingers

    The broken strings of the heart.

## Cycle

A small boy thinks that in his Dad  
Rests all the wisdom to be had.

Youth puts the Old Man on the shelf  
And seeks for wisdom in itself.

The father knows that, to be wise,  
One looks into a small boy's eyes.

## Dartmoor Dusk

Give me your hand --- and let the twilight gather

Home to the moor

Wish-hound and pixy and a gaunt gray shadow

To stalk our door.

Blow on no embers of unlit tomorrows,

Slip off no husk

From withered yesterdays; but clasp this moment

And Dartmoor dusk.

This is the hour of our hearts' detachment,

The time to stand

Unthinking and unthought of --- but forget not

To hold my hand.

\* Dawn

Dawn --- and a flush of crimson  
Heralds the coming sun;  
Somewhere a lark is chanting  
His morning requiem.

Dawn --- and a mist of silver  
Wraps every blade and leaf;  
My lone heart keeps repeating  
The burden of its grief.

\* Overland

## \* Dawn

Now to its daily round of care returns

The world, that for a season sought relief  
In slumber from the manifold concerns,

The arduous tasks of living. For a brief  
Ecstatic instant, wonder born of light

Clothes with romance sights common, figures dull;  
Creeps from the east a tremor of the night

That mounts in wind and passes to a lull.

Somewhere I know, like this, another dawn

With rosy fingers reaches for the day;

Somewhere, I know, its glory falls upon

Another landscape, other winds at play,

And one who dreams, and slumbering forgets ----

Freed for a moment from the old regrets.

## \* Herald

\* Day Before Spring

Now is a green mist present on the trees

On tiptoe standing, hushed and hesitant.

What shy and intimate expectancies

Disturb their branches, where the pale gold slant

Of sunlight finds them? These are quickened now:

The secret pulse of life beats soft within,

Prys at the surface, creeps along each bough.

The ancient miracle will soon begin.

Tomorrow will bring pattern out of mist:

The thin cool leaves, uncurled and delicate,

Will waken to a world sun-drenched, wind-kissed.

But for that glory, now the heart can wait:

The heart can dream awhile, content to cling

Just to this slender promise of the Spring.

\* Arizona Highways

\* Day Before Winter

The earth has gone back to her sleeping:

As one who returns

Too tired to extinguish the embers,

Forgotten there burns

The goldenrod. Here for a moment

May one, grown alarmed

By something too sinister, chilly,

Reach out and be warmed.

\* Hollands

\* Days

The days go by me as I trudge

Along Life's winding way,

And some are dull, some dreamy-eyed;

But some all blithe and gay

Strew smiles and flowers at my feet,

Then shyly squeeze my hand

And run ahead to point the way ----

Dear days that understand.

\* Herald

\* Days

Some days one touches lightly

As sea-gulls touch the foam,

Finding no joy, for dreaming

Of joy that is to come.

Or luring ghosts of laughter

Down dim forgotten ways

Where light winds stir the ashes

Of buried yesterdays.

To-day I have lived deeply,

On currents strong and free

As those that sweep the ocean

This day has carried me

Where Yesterday is only

A faint receding shore,

And somewhere lurks Tomorrow

An island to explore.

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## \* Days (Continued)

But I am kin to neither,

For me does naught exist

Save wide gray seas of water

And freedom and a mist.

No day has been save this one,

No day shall ever be,

All else I will touch lightly

To keep this memory.

\* Herald

## Death Comes To All

"...lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."---Matthew 28:20

Death comes to all. But death is never all,

For those who look into the Savior's face.

Within the shadowed valley these recall

His blessed promise: that the God of grace

Goes with them. When the forms of loved ones fade,

His form grows clearer. These are not bereft

And unbefriended: they are glad to trade,

For heaven's joy, the earthly joys they left.

Death comes to all. But oh, how different

For those whose empty hearts have never known

That, for their soul's salvation, Christ was sent.

All such must walk the last, dark road ---- alone.

Death comes to all. But not to all the same:

Some go to meet it in the Savior's name.

## Dead Men Speak The Truth

"Brother, slept you very well

    This and yesternight?"

"Nay, I dreamed again of earth."

"Such dreams were delight."

"Nay, I heard a Cause upheld,

    Saw the young eyes glow;

And I fear men seek again,

    Brother, what we know."

"Have you then no pride of death,

    You who gave your Youth?"

"Nay, the grave has humbled me:

    Dead men speak the truth."

By some fancy now it seems

    I remember you ---

Brother, were you not of those

    That my own hand slew?"

## Dead Men Speak The Truth (Continued)

"So I was. But do you now

Any part recall

Of all the glory that was yours,

Or why we fought at all?"

"Nay, I only know the wind

Pierced me with his breath;

And the night was very still....

And you smiled in death."

"But the Cause, the noble Cause,

That for which you bled?"

"Brother, I forgot the Cause ---

For thinking of you dead."

"What things shall a man lay down

Then, if not his life,

To prove the glory of a Cause

And justify the strife?"

## Dead Men Speak The Truth (Continued)

"Brother, there is but one way,

Honor's only test:

The first to lay his weapons down ---

He conquers all the rest."

"By our error we have found

Wisdom for their need;

But woe, that for the truth we guard

The nations still must bleed!"

## DEAR TEACHER

All summer long the windows of his mind

Were flung wide-open to the wind and sun.

Return to routine is so slow! Be kind,

Be gentle, try to understand that one

Who walked in wayward wonder through a maze

Of golden hours, one who listened long

To bird and brook, may find a well-turned phrase

An antidote that is a bit too strong.

He will return to learning; but not yet:

The corridors of thought are crowded still

With morning meadows where the grass was wet,

With branches blowing on a windy hill.

He will return. Be patient with him, please:

One comes back slowly from such things as these.

## \* Decision

He quaffed, and hung the dipper by the well.

"Black gold," he said, "black gold ten miles away!  
Hey Ma! come here. You think we ought to sell?

They struck oil on the Greensburg road today."

In quietness she moved to feed the pup,

In quietness she turned and touched his hand.

"Now Pa," she said, "don't get you fussed up:

The land's the thing, the clean, the lovely land."

He walked the worn path to the pasture bars,

And leaned against the night; beyond the hill

He traced the slender pattern of the stars.

Then came and cupped a dipperful, to spill

It out upon the ground. "Let's go to bed

A well was made for water, Ma," he said.

\* Saturday Evening Post

## Dedication

"Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." -- Exodus 40:34

Now unto Thee, O Lord, we dedicate

This work of heart and hand, this house to be  
Thy dwelling place. The humble and the great,

The rich, the poor, are all alike to Thee;

And each has need of Thee. However far

The wandered may fare, when he shall come  
To this, Thy house, oh let it be a star

To guide his soul to heaven and to home.

Be pleased to take, Most Holy and Most High,

This house and make it Thine, For, Lord, unless  
Thy presence shall remain to sanctify,

This structure is but toil and emptiness.

For all of those who need Thy tender touch,

Thy cleansing power, Thy redeeming grace,

We bring our little, Lord, now make it much.

Oh let Thy glory come and fill this place.

## Delightful Bondage

She had been young once, but she was too tired

Most of the time now: Children make a lot  
Of work for mothers. Twice a year he hired

Someone to help, and took her to a spot  
Where there were shaded lights and muted strings

And food she had not fixed. He loved to see

Her face light up: She said, "It gives me wings ----

Alone, like this, just like we used to be."

Over the salad plates her talk began:

"Isn't the small one smart? And Becky dear?  
I love her hair. When David is a man

He'll show them all!" "Where shall we go from here?"

He asked. She said ---- in either eye a star ----

"Let's go right home, and see just how they are!"

## \* Departure

I have not known so still a day as this:

The drowsy moments, fraught with memory,  
Steal to the borders of departed bliss ---

And come no more. As vessels put to sea,  
With sails half-furled, reluctant to forego  
The well-loved curve of friendly reef and hill,  
Lazy with dreams, my quiet thoughts move --- slow  
As wings that lift, and flutter, and are still.

All day I have not spoken --- but my lips

Are tremulous with something more than sighs,  
Guarding a last word that forever slips

Farther into the silence; and my eyes,  
Hungry with hope, turn often to the door ---  
Seeking a shadow that will fall no more.

## \* Contemporary Verse

## Departure

He whistled to his dog, and all was still;  
I watched him disappear beyond the hill.  
"What be ye thinkin'?" all the neighbors said  
"Why be ye standin' there? The old man's dead.  
Son, death and taxes comes to everyone."

I knew that they were right: his race was run.  
And yet I stood where he had stood before,  
Watching the sunlight through his sycamore,  
And knew he was not in that lonely grave....  
He whistled to his dog. I saw him wave.

## \* Detachment

If on some perfect planet we could stand

And with disinterest view the lives we lead,

See, through our clearer eyes, the life indeed,

Stripped of its daily dole --- the small demand ---

A clean-cut, naked fact; could we command

The strength that we assume, the pride --- our creed ---

Whereby in confidence we dare exceed,

Or say we do, all else Creation planned?

Could we in that brief interval compare

With tree, with rock, that neither stir nor fret;

With humble soil, that doth no pride beget;

With all wild things that roam, and birds in air?

We could not. Yet we light our centuries

With, 'Man shall have dominion over these.'

\* Herald

## Discovery

It is not dead, --- the beauty that we knew:

Long time it slept, Beloved, but today,

Beneath an old log where one violet grew,

I found our hearts' young treasure laid away;

I found the tender words that had grown cold

For lack of being said; I found the songs

That lit our every twilight hour of old,

And all the wonder that to love belongs.

It had not died, Beloved: when God found

That life would rob us of earth's little best,

He hid our golden secret underground,

And let a violet hold it to its breast ---

Well knowing I would pass along that way.

I found all beauty we have known today.

## Displaced Person

Old woman, old woman,

Why do you sit

With the folded hands

That refuse to knit?

Old woman, old woman,

What have they done

With your spinning wheel

And the wool you spun?

Old woman, old woman,

Where are they now:

The hens you fed

And the brindled cow?

Old woman, old woman,

Why do you sigh

When the sirens blow

And the cars whiz by?

Old woman, old woman,

Life is strange:

Time is the wheel

And the spokes are change.

## Doctors

Some men build bridges, arched against the sky,

Bright spans of splendor with the strength of steel;

Some build skyscrapers, gaunt and gray and high,

Groping among the stars, as those who feel

For some remembered beauty lost in time.

These have their little hour of acclaim:

One moment lifted to the heights sublime ---

The next, forgotten in the hall of fame.

Some men build broken bodies: stoop and take

The scattered puzzle of disrupted life

And, fitting piece to piece together, make

Order from chaos, harmony from strife.

These build with God; and time cannot erase

What they accomplish, nor obscure their place.

## Doggerel For Jenny

Bear God, bless Dad and Mommie too,  
And Mike and Debbie, all life through;  
And bless all poodles, clipped and neat,  
With ruffs around their necks and feet,  
With slender legs and round-eyes stare ---  
God don't forget to bless Pierre.

God bless all aunts and cousins small,  
And uncles short and uncles tall;  
And bless all bird dogs brave and wise  
With tails that point, and friendly eyes  
And ears to hide them when they nod ---  
Remember "Mr. Gomery," God.

God bless all teachers, bad and good,  
They try to do the things they should;  
And bless all Dachsumds long drawn out,  
With ends that wiggle in and out  
Of all tight places where they squeeze ---  
Dear God, bless Schizo if you please.

## Do Streets Remember?

Do streets remember, when the long dark makes

A little sillence in between two days

Of traffic, how, somewhere, the sunrise breaks

Across gold hill-tops and the sudden rays

Finger green branches? Do they then recall

Intimacies of earth that now they miss,

Rustle of windy branches and the small

Bird-talk at dawn? Do streets remember this?

Do streets remember, or have they too long

Been burdened with the weight of life, the press

Of countless footsteps, to call back the song

Of lark or robin? Does the weariness

From crowded moments crush their dreaming --- or

Do streets remember beauty known before?

## Double Trouble

For grappling with safety pins,

    In such peculiar poses,

For wiping jelly from their chins

    And butter from their noses,

I pray for grace when day begins

    And wisdom when it closes

Say, was it I who thought that twins

    Would be a bed of roses!

## Do You Remember?

Do you remember how, one night, we took

The lantern down and lit it, pulled our coats

About our necks, and went to take a look

At the new spotted heifer? We had oats

To pacify the mother. I can hear,

As though it were but yesterday, your laugh,

As you discreetly stroked it: You said, "Dear,

It's such a very wobbly little calf!"

Do you remember?

Tonight there will be dinner plates for six

And candle-light on silver: You will move ---

The perfect hostess --- here and there to fix

Last minute touches; and I shall approve,

But only faintly: For I hear the wind

Banging our shutters, and, by lantern-light,

I seem to see you rush, undisciplined,

Out to a small calf bawling in the night.

Do you remember?

## Dream House

The little house was lank and lean,

With weather-beaten seams,

And often from its slim confines

I planned the house of dreams.

Set high upon the hills of hope,

Above the winds of chance,

The house of dreams should be a place

Of beauty and romance.

And now its turrets cut the sky,

Its lawns stretch far and wide,

The house of dreams is mine --- but oh,

There's not a dream inside.

With wistful eyes the years I scan ---

And in my heart I know

My dreams are in the little house

I lived in long ago.

## Dreams And Visions

Out of the past the old dreams came, and stood  
Thronging the dark; and every dream was good ---  
Secret and lovely. Clothed in borrowed Light,  
They moved in beauty on the fringe of night.  
Each was a dream of glory that had been.  
I reached forth eager hands to take them in,  
But all escaped --- no least one could I keep:  
For dreams, though lovely, are for men asleep.

Out of the future, then, a vision came:  
It touched my sleeping soul, and broke in flame  
Along the dark. As far as eye could see,  
I glimpsed the wonder that is yet to be.  
The dreams were fair, but oh, the vision rose,  
Single and high --- more glorious than those,  
More real, more near. I clasped it, with the cry,  
"Without a vision, Lord, thy people die!"

## \* DROUGHT

## I

The gaunt trees closer pressed each hungry mouth

Unto the earth's dry breast, and day by day,  
Wasted and worn by weary weeks of drought,

The lean hills lifted faces, ashen-gray,  
Up to the unrepentant sky. The streams

Long unreplenished from on high, had grown  
Frailer and feebler than forgotten dreams,

Dry gulches yielding only stick and stone.

Beyond the cabin door she saw it all,

As one who sees, not seeing, for her heart  
Beat with a strange new ecstasy: A small

Pink bundle stirred beneath the covers --- part  
Of her and him; and in her flowing breast  
There was no drought --- only deep joy, sweet rest.

\* Drought (Continued)

II

From out the long-unanswering skies there swept

Remorse at last in one bright silver flood.

Up from the startled earth the young green crept,

Hill, tree and stream drank wonder where each stood;

Three weeks and transformation had its way:

Slim silver pencils scribbled leaf and flower

Upon an empty page, long waste and gray,

Leaving the drought a half-remembered hour.

Within the cabin door she sat and stared.

Her eyes, deep-circled, bore the sombre stain

Of agony; her hungry breast was bared

Night-long unto the keen cool edge of pain.

Even the new mound in the pasture south

Was turning green. But all her days were drought.

\* Westward

## Dual

Two women dwell within my heart,

    Together---and alone;

And one is mistress of herself,

    And one of field and stone.

My first self rises with the clock

    And preens before the glass;

My second, long before the sun,

    Makes footprints in the grass.

The hand of her who molds my charm

    Works well and tirelessly;

My dearer self wastes golden hours

    In making mirth for me.

But spite of all my first can do

    The lines of age make way,

While she who courts the sun and rain

    Is still as young as they.

## Dual (Continued)

Two women dwell within my heart,

And one belongs to Time,

And one belongs to wind and star

And broken threads of rhyme.

And when they come to burn her,

My first --- whose life is through ---

A laugh will blow from some far hill,

"My dear, that wasn't you."

## Dust

Oh Dust, when I survey thy poor abode,  
 Behold thee outcast by some wayside road,  
 Blown on by winds and scattered down the years,  
 Something in thee my highest self reveres:  
 I think what part in the infinite plan  
 Is thine to hold. Thou art to every man  
 The Alpha and Omega, last and first:  
 From thee he first drew form, and when the worst  
 That death is guilty of has come to be,  
 Through thee he passes to Eternity.

Oh Dust, eternal Dust, that hath withstood  
 The blight of Time, how oft in careless mood  
 The hand of man hath lightly dealt with thee  
 As some lay creature; how relentlessly  
 Hath fingers, busy with some desk or shelf,  
 Laid waste the precious atoms of thyself;  
 Or feet, disdainful of a hidden worth,  
 Brushed thee aside as simple clods of earth!  
 Thus 'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.'  
 Who knows what sacred ashes of the dead  
 In thee have sought repose; what buried kings,  
 What fallen statesmen speak; what poet sings;  
 Or what forgotten heroes, laid to rest,  
 Feel life resurgent in the quiet breast,  
 When in the hall of Time some vagrant breeze  
 Disturbs the sleeping dust of centuries  
 And scatters it abroad? Along the way  
 We travel so indifferently, the clay  
 Of Shakespeare or of Milton may be blown  
 To intimately mingle with our own.  
 Perhaps some portion of proud Bonaparte  
 Lives on in thee, oh Dust; or that great heart  
 That slept in Lincoln's breast, finds life again  
 In just such contact with the common men  
 As thou art fellow to. Oh what a tomb  
 For buried greatness thou hast been! with room  
 To spare for crumbling leaves and withered flowers,  
 Trees that have harbored oft the sun and showers  
 Of passing springs: and bits of splintered stone ---

## Dust (Continued)

All broken things in Nature hast thou known:  
And all earth-creatures, pale and hollow-eyed,  
Who pass in dust and know not they have died.  
And we, who all too-thoughtless tread above,  
Know not what sins we may be guilty of,  
What blasphemy is ours, when we deface  
This hallowed Dust ---- their final resting place.

## Dust Storm

The earth, a yellow witch gone mad

With long incessant drouth,

Moves in a dizzy dance, and from

Her gaping, thirsty mouth

She belches words, as hot as flame:

She flings them to the air.

Dry laughter crackles in her throat

And leaves but ashes there.

Her reeling form, her scorching words,

Make madness in the sky;

She twists, and turns, and stabs, and stings,

And scratches out the eye.

Where are the friendly fields of grass ---

The same earth we have known?

Lie down, lie down, you thirsty witch,

And leave the sky alone!

She does not hear. She will not stop,

Though all the lanes of sky

Be clouded with her dusty screams,

Though every brave thing die.

She cannot cease: she has gone mad

With hunger and with heat,

She does not know the place of earth

Is underneath the feet.

## \* Duty

Alone, into the beauty

Of the calm and holy night,

I fled before stern Duty ----

Sought refuge in delight.

But the gold and silver glory

Of the moon-beams all around

Turned to monsters grim and hoary

Skirting wildly o'er the ground;

And the cold and silent spaces,

Stretching far on either side,

Mocked me with an hundred faces

Of the Duty I denied ----

For the promised dream of beauty

Brought no swift and sure release.....

I went back and faced my Duty

And, returning, found my Peace.

## Easter

The withered plant that sleeps through dreary days,

    Beneath the frozen sod,

Dreams of white blossoms that shall one day rise

    And burst the clod.

The silent bird that shivers in the rain,

    Upon a barren tree,

Keeps in his heart the echo of glad notes

    That are to be.

God plants within each smallest slumbering seed,

    And every captive stream,

The resurrection hope, and winter long,

    Of this they dream.

Then wherefore, heart, be troubled, though the years

    In ceaseless flight, grow dim?

Bright is the Easter promise --- ye shall rise

    Complete in Him.

## Easter ----- 1938

Because war stalks the earth and man still bleeds,

Unmindful of the green way of the spring,

Lo, I will make a ritual of seeds,

Here in a garden plot ---- remembering

Not so much fragrance, nor the long array

Of color bursting in bright buds uncurled,

But beauty nineteen hundred years away,

When One came back who briefly left the world.

I will remember how one garden slept,

And woke to Ressurrection and to Life;

And I will plant a garden, who have kept

A slender faith to dig with. Out of strife

And turmoil, I will turn and break the sod ----

Not just for bloom, but for the Son of God.

## \* Easter Conversation

First tuck your tulip bulbs beneath the sod,

Then make a place for pansies. Did you know,  
Dear little boy, that now you work with God?

He made a garden in the long ago;

He makes all gardens yet. No seed can sprout

Without His care. He sends the rain, the sun:

No flower wakes and pokes its bright face out

Unless He guards and cherishes each one.

And did you know that, when His loved ones chose

A place for Jesus, after He had died,

They found a garden --- and from there He rose,

That first glad Easter morning, glorified?

So make your garden, little boy, each spring:

God gives us gardens --- for remembering.

\* War Cry

## Easter Dawn

"And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary, the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him." --- Mark 16:1

Softly, softly, step so softly.

We are bent upon  
Holy business. Bring the spices,  
Sisters --- it is dawn.

Softly, softly, step so softly.

Are we quite alone?  
I remember now --- they sealed Him.  
Who will roll the stone?

Softly, softly, step so softly.

See, the door is wide!  
Someone has been here before us.  
Let us go inside.

Softly, softly, step so softly.

What a cruel shame ---  
He is gone! Where had they laid Him?  
Someone spoke my name!

Softly, softly, step so softly.

I am ready now.  
Sisters, did you leave without me?  
Master! Is it Thou?

## Easter Lilies

How deftly Beauty's fingers work

To burst the frozen clod

And lift a lily's face, is known

To no one else but God.

Yet somehow from the crumbling mold

Of yesterday's decay

Is born the vesture that transcends

E'en Solomon's array.

How Holiness stoops down to burst

The iron grip of Hell

And lift a sinner's face to God,

None but the Christ can tell.

Yet somehow from the black despair

That turns all glory dim,

The "new man" awakens to become

God's "righteousness in Him".

## Emmanuel

Jack Andrews thinks as you and I:

That prices must go down,  
That streets and shops and millionaires  
Are things that make a town.

Emmanuel wears a strange sad smile:

Let prices rise or fall,  
Of these he thinks not --- if indeed  
Emmanuel thinks at all.

He has some very strange new books

And reads them all the time:  
He smiles to see men fight for peace,  
And shakes his head at crime.

Jack Andrews' thoughts advance the world;

But when they cross the brink,  
God may forgive Emmanuel  
For things he does not think.

## Encore

At trickery of bow and finger-tips

We sat aghast, the while he deftly played

The Mendelssohn Concerto; and our lips

Grew hushed with dreams at Schubert's Serenade;

Bach Air was like a call to holiness;

The Chopin Nocturne healing for our pain.

And then he played --- of infinite caress ---

The Old Refrain.

All that we knew of beauty came to sit .

Like peace upon our shoulders; the slow tides

Of longing brimmed our vision. Bit by bit

Came back old songs, old faces, old firesides,

Came back our mothers' lips, and, undismayed,

We lifted ours, for we were home again

After a long, long journey --- when he played

The Old Refrain.

## Episode

You held our love between your hands,

As a child holds a toy balloon.

Breath by breath you blew upon it,

And with each breath I watched it expand,

Full, round, perfect.

Then from the depths of your thought,

As a child from the depths of his pockets,

You gathered a handful of words,

Sharp, cruel, relentless.

Each word was a little, bright pin

That you drove in a moment of mischief

Into the heart of love ---

And all that you had created

Vanished into the air,

Leaving it flat and ugly.

Run along, child,

Into the sunshine of life.

There are other balloons

But I --- I shall not play again.

## Eternal

That night on lone Golgatha's hill,  
When shadows settled, dark and still,  
Well might the crowd have chattered on:  
"The Cross remains ---- The Christ is gone."

But we, who know the God of grace,  
Can look upon that hallowed place  
And know the comfort that sustains:  
The Cross is gone ---- the Christ remains.

## Even-Song

Now all the landscape dreaming lies

And rest to Man is given,

But never sleep the winking stars ---

Those tireless eyes of Heaven;

All night across the vaulted sky

A countless host they wander,

Or silent glide amongst the clouds

And quietly dream up yonder.

Here in the dusk, while all things sleep,

I watch yon pale stars glowing,

And though the shadows fold me close,

I rest content in knowing

That God above the careless world

An endless watch is keeping

Through little stars that blink and gleam

While other eyes are sleeping.

## Evening Song

Love is a book that we have read together....  
Oh, do not close it yet, though well we know  
Each dear familiar page. In stormy weather  
We read it by the friendly firelight's glow;  
When April walked the world, we read it, drifted  
Inch-deep with petal snow; and when we heard  
The lovely lark, our eager faces lifted  
But briefly to the sky---nor lost one word.

Love is a book we shared....Oh, let us linger  
A little longer with it while we trace  
Remembered beauty with each toil-worn finger,  
Touching again this thought, this time, this place:  
Till sleep shall find us and we let it fall ---  
Rather than close it, saying, "This is all."

## Evening Song

All things that I have loved in life full well

Return you to me when the twilight falls.

Like homing pigeons they come back to tell

How beauty walks the world beyond these walls

And, with it, you --- a part of it and more

Than all of it: for beauty cannot go

The last long mile love travels --- nor explore

The secret wonder we have come to know.

Nor time, nor distance, nor the need for touch,

Can now divide us: we have gone beyond

These limitations, who have loved so much.

Without a word, a handclasp to respond,

You come with twilight, and the fading sun.

This is to love you --- this is to be one.

"Except Ye Become As Little Children"

"It's just a little way", he said,

"To Jesus' house, you know,

And not so very long to wait" ---

Dear child, who told him so?

"She's only just gone on ahead,

And we are going, too;

We'll see her up at Jesus' house."

I wonder how he knew!

Oh, Lord, forgive our feeble faith

That always asks to see;

And thank Thee for a little child

To lead us up to Thee.

## Expectant

Does Mother Earth, I wonder, know

What sleeps beneath her heart

Throughout the Ancient Miracle

Of which she is a part?

Or does she also speculate

And sometimes wish she knew:

A Blackeyed Susan? Or two eyes

Of bright cornflower blue?

A tall and sturdy hollyhock?

Or dainty Queen Ann's lace?

The gold of dandelion hair?

A pansy's baby face?

Does Mother Earth, I wonder know

Just what the seed will be ----

Or must she wait her time, as I

With hushed expectancy?

\* Expendable For God

Let me but be expendable for God,

Not longing for the tumult and the strife.

Strong winds obey His will --- so does the clod

That lies inert and holds the germ of life.

This simple clod, mere dust beneath the feet,

Another Spring will quicken into flower.

With like obedience my heart would meet

The quiet challenge of this lonely hour.

Let me but rest within my Father's will ---

No doubt, no questioning, no vain desire.

He understands it all, come good or ill.

This life has been invested: I aspire

To nought beyond the present's narrow rim ---

Only to be expendable for Him.

\* Sunday School Times

## Experience

Small, white lamb in the field,  
Child in the garden,  
Humming-bird passing  
In swift fantastic flutter  
Of frenzied wings,  
Be careful how you scatter it,  
The life that is in you,  
Capering  
Running  
Beating the air with it.  
I too was young once,  
A long time ago.

\* Faithful And Fruitful

Faithful and fruitful I would be ---

But oh, how weak is the flesh!

Holy Spirit, I come to Thee:

Touch me, fill me afresh.

Faithful and fruitful? Who can hope,

Alone, to reach such a goal?

Holy Spirit, I falter, grope ---

Cleanse me, strengthen, control.

Faithful and fruitful only when

Bereft of self I shall be.

Holy Spirit, anoint me --- then

The faith, the fruit, are of Thee.

\* Kings Business

## Fallen Aviator

He cried for the moon when a baby,

    Lifting his small hands high;

They mocked his young presumption

    And countered, "Let him cry."

He cried for the moon, and he found it

    Once in a far, still place:

Alone he lay and held it

    All night upon his face.

He cried for the moon, and they mocked him:

    Does he who was born to try

Wings for the great adventure

    Now counter, "Let them cry?"

Fallen Star

Out of heaven something fell;  
We have caught it in our well.

There you are ---

Right beneath that silver splash.  
Why, it didn't even crash!

It's a star!

## Fantasy

The day is a giant.  
I have seen him riding upon the hill-tops,  
Booted and spurred,  
Proud in the armor of morning.  
I have watched the sunlight  
Glint on his bridle and helmet  
Making him gorgeous and splendid;  
I have heard the hoofs of his charger  
And the long, long stride of their coming,  
Terrible, swift, relentless.  
The day is a giant  
Riding upon the edge of the world.  
  
The night is a little black slave,  
I have seen him, stricken with terror,  
Running before the day,  
Helpless, bewildered:  
Soft is the sound of his going,  
Footsteps that sink in the star-dust,  
Timid, uncertain.  
The night is a little black slave  
Fleeing before the giant.

## Fantasy (Continued)

And yet ---  
If morning found me alone  
Upon a high hill-top  
Where I could hear the Day  
Gallop, galloping,  
I should not turn to the giant  
Eyes that were frightened and pleading,  
Straight in the path of his coming  
I should stand as a grim wall stands ----  
And laugh in his face.  
But if, in the hush of the twilight,  
A little black slave should whisper  
Softly, persistent,  
Brushing my cheek with dreams  
Kinder than hands are,  
If I heard through the stretches of silence  
The patter of footsteps that vanish,  
And felt the breath of the night  
Trembling upon me  
Out of the covert of darkness,  
I should run, I should run!

## Farewell To Sixty-Sixth

We've had a lot of happiness within this dear old school;  
We tried to master many things, and make of each a tool.  
How often, in the years ahead, we will turn back and sigh---  
Remembering the day we stood, to say our last goodbye.

Chorus: Farewell to Sixty-Sixth,

We will be true,  
Wherever we may go,  
We'll think of you;  
Whatever life may bring,  
One thing we know---  
This is the garden where  
We learned to grow.

The sun comes up, the sun goes down; but, speeding on its way,  
The sun is always hastening to bring another day;  
So, whether here, or whether there, beyond the farther hill,  
Remember---when you think of us---we shall be shining still.

Chorus: Farewell to Sixty-Sixth,

Farewell To Sixty-Sixth (Continued)

We will be true,

Wherever we may go,

We'll shine for you;

Whatever life may bring,

One thing we know---

This is the garden where

We learned to grow.

## Farewell

(Dedicated to our Pastor and read by the author at the meeting of Presbytery held in Pasadena, Tuesday, March 10, 1942, at which time the request of the Rev. L. David Cowie for dissolution of the pastorate between himself and the Vermont Avenue Presbyterian Church was concurred).

He asked us to dissolve the pastorate:

Now didn't he know better than to ask

A thing like that of simple folk? 'Twould rate

More than a miracle for such a task.

You can't dissolve the ties of love that bind

A pastor to his people. We will let

Him go --- because he asks it --- but he'll find,

Day after day that he is with us yet.

He touched our lives and made them beautiful

With Christ. His every sermon came to be

A pebble dropped into a silent pool,

Whose ripples spread to fringe eternity.

These are the facts, and what is there to say?

What is expected of us anyhow?

With words you can't explain the truth away ---

You can't say, "This HAS been, but isn't now."

## Farewell (Continued)

Now, as for God, HIS way is perfect: So

When God is calling, we must all obey;

Yet even God, who says that he must go,

Knows, in a larger sense, that he must stay.

He will be here in youthful eyes that learned,

Through his clear sight, more perfectly to see;

In aged forms, whose captive spirits yearned

To know the Truth --- and found it made them free!

O, you can take away the well-loved face,

The brilliant mind, in which we placed great stock;

But you cannot dissolve the work of grace

That binds THIS man forever to THIS flock.

He will be ours, wherever he may roam,

As seasons change, and wheels of time revolve;

He built himself an everlasting home

Within our hearts....and that you can't dissolve.

## Farm Album

## Girl At The Pasture Bars

She dropped her hand upon the pasture bars;  
Briefly it lay, a slender gleam of white.  
I saw her lift her eyes unto the stars,  
As though she asked a question of the night.  
Slowly she gathered stillness to herself  
And wrapped it gracefully about her form....  
Oh I shall keep this picture on a shelf  
Of memory forever: it shall warm.  
Dull days of drab endeavor. Who would guess  
The simple act of driving cattle could  
Be fraught with such exquisite loveliness,  
Or that so many grander pictures would  
Be tossed from Time, replaced by this small one ---  
A young girl dreaming when the day is done?

Continued page -2-

## Farm Album (Continued)

## Boy At The Woodpile

His dogged footsteps grew a little lax

The while he climbed the hill and crossed the yard;

But when he grasped the handle of the ax

There came into his being something hard

And fierce. The light of conquest in his eye,

He howed a straight course to the very core

Of every log. I watched the bright chips fly

And knew he conquered worlds beyond his door.

So dull the ax blade and so brief his strength,

It seemed but folly to rely on such.....

And yet, how often I shall glimpse the length

Of his gaunt shadow with me, and shall touch

Again this farm-boy, cutting clean and true,

Straight at the heart of what he had to do.

## Farm Album (Continued)

## Old Man AT The Well

The old man let the battered bucket down

And leaned his elbows on the well's cool brink.  
And some there were who thought he came to frown;

But some there were who knew he came to drink,  
Not of this water but of other things:

The lazy length of summers he had known.  
Stark winters, burnished autumns, other springs,  
And all the sons and daughters that were grown.

Though well he knew that anything so small

As his tin bucket could not hold the half  
Of those lost dreams, he would not move till all

Remembrance was accomplished..... I shall quaff,  
With all bright waters in each future place,  
The long, long story written on his face.

## Father of Science

Galileo, how could you know  
So many things, so long ago?

A swaying lamp could "go and come":  
And make you see a pendulum.

For distant stars your mind would grope  
Until you dreamed a telescope.

While other people had their fun  
You found the sunspots on the sun.

And while they rattled dish and spoon,  
You saw the mountains on the moon.

And all the moons that travel 'round  
The planet Jupiter, you found,

So many things, remote and strange:  
How Venus' shape would seem to change;

How many million stars unite  
To give the Milky Way its light.

Father of Science, I think I know  
What made you wise so long ago:

You never could sit down and wait ---  
You simply must investigate!

Father of Science (Continued)

Right now, beyond our sight and sound,  
Are wonders waiting to be found.

How very much we need today  
Inquiring minds to lead the way.

Father of Science, help us see  
The many marvels yet to be!

## Fellowship

When I remember how He toiled to bring

His healing ministry to all who came,

When I recall His lonely suffering

In dark Gethsemane, the cruel shame

Of death by crucifixion --- then I turn

From something in myself that always sighs

For easy comforts; then indeed I spurn

The pleasant pastures and the cloudless skies.

How do I dare to speak of gain or loss,

Of flimsy favors I might hope to win,

When He has borne the anguish of the Cross?

Dear Son of God, so smitten for my sin!

I choose the path His bleeding feet have known.

How could I walk another road --- alone?

\* First Christmas

Choose a very tiny tree,

With a single star:

There was one that other night,

Shining bright and far.

Choose a little, woolly lamb,

With a music box:

There were shepherds on that night,

Watching over flocks.

Let it play a lullaby,

Soft and sweet and mild,

Such as Mary might have sung

To the sleeping child.

Many Christmases will be

Full of fuss and fret.

Let them wait --- he is so small:

Please --- not yet, not yet!

\* Good Housekeeping

## First Day of School

At last they have departed.

What is wrong?

This is the day I prayed for,

Summer long.

This is the boon by mothers

Coveted,

A time to shout. Why do I

Mope instead?

Why do I dream and dawdle,

Sit and stare,

And listen for the noise that

Isn't there?

## First Love

Out of Bear Hollow a lone cry steals,  
A cry that is moving along on wheels,  
And gathering volume, to lift and flout  
Itself on space, with a mighty shout.

He knows how the little fawn will lie  
Close in the covert while it goes by;  
He knows how the frightened birds will wheel  
Over that mass of swaying steel.

He knows it all: how his own shy heart  
Will go stark wild, and his eyes will smart,  
His head grow hot, and his hands grow numb ----  
But still he must watch the dark thing come.

In years to be he will make a choice  
Of girl he knows, and her patient voice  
Will almost suit him --- but never quite.  
When time is a huddle of day and night,

And out of the hollow it comes, he'll stand,  
A foaming bucket in either hand,  
Searching dusk with a wishful glance  
For his first --- and maybe --- his last romance.

## \* Finding

The house oppressed with heavy weight of gloom;

More still than thought the stealthy silence crept

In circles 'round, until my troubled room

Became a sea of emptiness. I wept ---

I wept for you, --- the words you might have said,

Your fresh young laughter floating on the air;

And then for very loneliness I fled,

Running into the night with my despair.

Lightly you came across the dreaming down:

You were the wind that trembled at my face,

You were a white star brooding on the town,

And you were sea-mist drifting into space....

Long moments then I stood, nor even stirred ---

Holding a dream more sweet than any word.

## First Love

A girl's heart is a very private place:

Her first love seldom is the boy next door,  
The lanky one with freckles on his face,

Though he may often think he is. Before  
She knows of his existence, there is one

To whom her heart is given, who will be  
Her measure of a man. She knows that none  
Can every be so brave, or wise, as he.

She loves an older man, and all her life

She keeps a corner of her heart for him;  
And even when she is a loving wife,

If she should hear his name her eyes may brim  
With sudden tears. But, try to understand ---  
Her father was the first to hold her hand!

## \* First Pussy Willow

Step up lightly,

Still and quick! ---

Spring has fastened

On a stick.

Wearing still

Her winter hood,

Spring has crept

Into the wood.

In her little

Furry blouse,

Crept us softly

As a mouse.

Now beside

The frozen stream

Soft gray garments

Sway and gleam.

Nature magic,

What a trick! ---

Spring has fastened

On a stick.

\* Sun

## Flight

I have come home to stay with you again,

Who have been gone a long, long journeying:

Walking with weeping alders in the rain,

Chasing a butterfly on gusty wing;

I have climbed mountain-peaks, where shining crags

Beckoned with sunlight, I have dipped the face

Deeply into the heart of purple flags

Lining a rock-pool in some secret place;

There were green country lanes that I went down,

Where wild grape tangled with the snowy plum.

I have been gone a long while from this town,

Oh, long enough for you to wake and thumb

Five pages through, and doze again --- for me

To spread the cloth, light candles for our tea.

\* For All.....Christmas.....Forever

Of old a white star led the way  
To where the little Christ Child lay.  
The green tree is the symbol now  
Of all the star meant: Every bough  
To which the bright adornments cling  
Is weighted with remembering.

The children of the world all stand,  
Each holding up an empty hand....  
Feeling the need of something far,  
Secret, and shining, as a star:  
Something to reach for and to press  
Against this hour of loneliness.

O, God of Christmas, God of love,  
Who stooped to earth from heaven above,  
Be pleased to bend above our tree  
And light, anew, for all to see,  
The star of Faith that shall recall  
Christmas forever.....and for all.

\* War Cry

## For A Young Christian

There is magic in the moonlight,

There is wonder in the why

That the morning gilds the hilltops

With the promise of the day;

There is glory in a garden

When the dawn has just begun

And the sunbeams all are sifted

Like rose petals, one by one.

But there is no earthly splendor

That can ever quite compare

With a yielded young life showing

That the hand of God is there.

## \* Forest Silence

Beneath the peace of forest sanctity

The hills lie silent as forgotten tombs,  
Asleep in calm and grave solemnity.

No learned lips pronouncing ancient dooms  
May here intrude, nor any echo find

Its way along these halls where late hath fled  
The shy soft footsteps of the forest wind.

Here broods the quiet of the buried dead.

And here is holiness, remote and rare

As hidden wings that pass and then are still,  
It touches trees and hovers in the air

Till Beauty walks upon each sleeping hill.

And silence in so frail a mold is cast,

I fear --- I fear the wonder cannot last!

\* Herald

## Forest Twilight

Do not speak to me now,

Do not move:

Something stirs in the bough

Above,

Something creeps through the brush;

Do not start:

Let us stand in the hush,

Apart;

Let us wait for the sound

To increase,

Moving close to the ground,

And cease.

Let us hear, through the dark,

Little feet

Scratching claws on the bark,

Retreat.

Do not speak to me lest

We should miss

Something. Day was a quest

For this.

## Four-Year Old

When she walks she does not walk

As the grown-ups do:

Music twitches at her toes,

Laughter lifts her shoe.

Lifts it up and puts it down

Twinkle-swift as rain,

Lifts it up and runs with it

And puts it down again.

She is like a butterfly

Dancing in the sun,

When she walks she cannot walk ----

Her feet must skip and run.

## Frames

That loveliness may be encompassed, man,

With artistry of thought, devised the frame  
To hold a picture. But a better plan

My window gives me: here the very same

Enclosure frames two pictures, for I see

Outside today a sidewalk splashed with rain,

A wild wet world; but who looks in at me

Sees warmth and comfort through the window-pane.

Love is a frame, reversible like this,

Through it you look at me and I at you.

If for you falls discouragement, dismiss

The thought, Beloved, raise your eyes, look through

The window-frame of love --- and find a place

Of peace and shelter in my lifted face.

## \* Freedom

Today we took our hunger to the hills,

Our lean heart-hunger that, for Beauty's sake,  
Had borne through crowded days an hundred ills,

But durst no longer. "Lest our spirits break"

I said, "Beloved, let us leave it all,

Laugh in the sun and for one hour be

Tall as the top-most hill we climb is tall,

Free for a moment as the wind is free."

A wonder met us where the trees began ---

And I was Pippa playing with a song,

The shepherd David you --- or was it Pan?

— What matter? In that hour, all we long

To know we captured, all our hunger craves.

We shall go back to toil --- but not as slaves.

\* Acc Herald

## Friendship Garden

She lingers alone in the twilight

And fingers the roses with pride,

For this is her Garden of Friendship ----

She calls it her "beauty outside."

But we, who have known her and loved her,

Are sure that no rose could begin,

For sweetness and grace of demeanor,

To compare with her beauty within.

The beauty of patience and courage,

Triumphant, whatever the test;

The beauty of humble submission,

Acknowledging God's way is best.

I too have a Garden of Friendship

Where flourish, so straight and so tall,

The bravest I've known among women ----

But she overtowers them all.

## Fruition

Like worn old women with their bearing over

The fallow fields dream all day in the sun;

No more they stir to whispers in the clover,

No more they sway where ripened ripples run

Along the wheat. Though hills come down to meet them

Beyond the fence, with talk of trees, they seem

To lift no single grass blade up to greet them,

But lie in lazy lengths, content to dream.

So rests the heart that has known love's fruition:

Untouched by change, unmoved by circumstance,

Beyond desire. Secure in the position

That, after all life's fever and romance,

There yet are dreams, contentment clean and sweet:

The harvest gathered and the task complete.

\* Fugitive

My thoughts are lone gulls flying far

Across a winter sea;

A safe shore-line where snug nests are

Is not for me.

My thoughts are lone gulls borne along

Out through a troubled night,

The cadence of their wings a song;

A blur of light.

I cannot call my lone thoughts back

To snug security;

The common days, the beaten track,

Are not for me.

\* The Vermonter

\* Garment Of Praise

Like to a worn-out garment, cast aside,

From oft my heart the heavy spirit fell,

As, moving through the darkness, far and wide,

A rising tide of song began to swell.

Song after song came crowding to be heard,

Till heaviness was lost in ecstasy-----

And all earth's faces vanished and were blurred

In one Face, strangely beautiful to see.

For all the songs are one song, and the face

Is one Face only, when the heart has known

The matchless Christ and His redeeming grace.

There cannot be another: He alone

Moves on the fringe of all our nights and days-----

And clothes us with the garment of His praise.

\* King's Business

## Gates

I have gone through a lifetime of gates open wide

And gates that were hard to undo,

But I only remember, when night settled down,

The gate that I never went through.

The gates that walked into green fields I forget

And those that unveiled oceans blue,

But I always keep wondering what lay beyond

The gate that I never went through.

Perhaps little dreams that have died would have lived

And maybe the false would be true,

And age might be youth----if my hand had unlocked

The gate that I never went through.

## Gift For Christmas

What can I give to men whose empty eyes

Trouble my thinking at this Christmastide?

Lord make me humble, loving, strong and wise,

That I may give them Christ, the crucified.

Let me not choose the lesser gifts of earth,

That pass in dust and are futility:

Lord, at this sacred season of Thy birth,

Lead me from giving things to giving Thee.

What can I give to Thee, oh God, above?

(There is so little that our God could need)

And yet, in all my dreams, Thy heart of Love

Is wounded still: I see it break and bleed

With naught to staunch the flow --- except I bring

Some ransomed soul, called home from wandering.

## Give Me Some Mountains

Give me some mountains, for my heart is weary

Of field and fence, of houses in a row,

Of gray rain falling desolate and dreary,

Of naked trees etched dark against the snow.

Give me some mountains, far and high and splendid,

Some little hills to smuggle at their feet:

When dawn is breaking and the long night ended

Give me a place where earth and heaven meet.

Give me some mountains, this is all too little:

The level land, the neat concentric lives,

With pies to bake, with sticks to carve and whittle.

Day after day the lonely spirit strives

To fit the pattern---but these tears belie it.

Give me some reaching-up, some strength to try it.

\* God's Afterward --- And Now

'Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous....  
nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of  
righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."  
Hebrews 12:11.

God's afterward---how sweet it is

To know He holds my hand,

And some day, in His afterward,

This heart will understand!

This heart will know why tears must fall,

As raindrops drench the earth,

Why winter always must precede

The springtime's gladsome birth.

God's afterward will be replete

With joy for every pain,

Like morning coming after night,

Or sunshine after rain.

God's Afterward----And Now (Continued)

I thank Him for His afterward,

In gratitude I bow;

But I can wait----I am content

To know He holds me now.

\*Sunday School Times

\* God Comfort You

II Cor. 1:4

God comfort you, that you may comfort those

Who know like sorrow when your tears are dried.

There is no heartbreak but the Savior knows:

He understands and cares. No faith is tried

Beyond its measure. As the falling rain

Reclothes the barren bough, so may your grief

Reach out beyond the sharp, thin edge of pain

To find the bud, the blossom and the leaf.

God comfort you, that all your years may bring

Rich harvest to a sorrow-laden world.

Within your heart, where now the bright tears cling;

The seed of something wonderful lies curled:

Compassion's flower for the ones who may

Walk, in the future, where you walk today.

\* Sunday School Times

\* God Gave His Son

God gave His Son --- and we must give Him too.

Though carols sound from every crowded store,

Though chimes ring out along the avenue

And every heart seems lighter, there is more:

This is not Christmas that we hear and feel,

This sudden glow that comes to everyone:

The season can be only vital, real,

Because God loved --- and gave His only Son.

God loved, and we must love the troubled throng:

Look deep within their hearts and see their need

Of something more than atmosphere, than song;

Of something larger, even, than a creed.

This is the task that Christians have to do.

God gave His Son --- and we must give Him too.

\* Moody Monthly

## \* God's Gifts

God gave us ears, because there would be music:

Great symphonies of wind and sea, and small  
Bright bird notes falling, instruments and voices;

He gave us ears that we might hear them all.

God gave us eyes, because there would be beauty:

Brown summer fields, all green and tender springs,  
Fall's pageantry and winter's long white silence;

He gave us eyes to look upon these things.

God gave us hands, because there would be labor:

Small simple tasks, and great ambitious schemes  
Wrought out in steel, or marble, or on canvas;

He gave us hands with which to shape our dreams.

God gave us hearts, because there would be longing

To share with those around and Him above,  
The beauty and the music and the labor.

He gave us hearts--because there would be love.

## \* War Cry

\* God Keeps A Pear Tree

All through the long, dark, dreary days, the same

Monotonous drab landscape met my view

Beyond the window pane, until there came

A pear tree suddenly. And then I knew

How winter-long it was for this, for this,

The window waited, confident and sure,

To frame this glory, to receive this kiss

Of petals drifting, delicate and pure.

God keeps a pear tree for earth's darkest hour,

Somewhere, somewhere beyond the time of loss,  
Its white fulfillment fragilely in flower.

God keeps a pear tree just to lift and toss

Its ghostly branches, just to stand and bless

With peace and comfort all the comfortless.

\* Oregonian

God Is Calling You

From life's conflict and confusion,

God is calling you:

Earthly dreams are but delusion,

God is calling you;

Through the world of His designing,

By the stars forever shining,

In the dark cloud's silver lining,

God is calling you.

Chorus:

God is calling, God is calling,

Through the darkness of the night ----

Hear His gently accents falling;

"Come to Christ, who is the Light."

By His Love, that knows no measure,

To a life completely new,

To an Everlasting Treasure ----

God is calling, calling you.

Continued page -2-

## God Is Calling You (Continued)

From your sinning and your sorrow,

God is calling you;

To a beautiful tomorrow,

God is calling you.

Out of trials that surround you,

From the problems that confound you,

By His wonders all around you,

God is calling you.

To the glory of redemption

God is calling you:

On your life He has preemption,

God is calling you.

Every thing in His creation

Now awaits that consummation ---

To the beauty of Salvation,

God is calling you.

## God's Gate of Love

God comes to those who need Him most,

He fills the heart that trusts His grace:  
For all the lonely, and the lost,

At Calvary God made a place.

Chorus:

At Calvary, where Jesus died,  
God's gate of love stands open wide;  
Now all, who trust, from sin are free ---  
God dries all tears at Calvary.

When shadows fall God waits to bless,

When storms arise He says, "Be still!"  
Weep not for all life's emptiness:

The cluttered heart He cannot fill.

When clouds engulf and skies are gray,

God holds the sunshine in His hands:  
Christ is the Light, the Truth, the Way,  
Oh come to Him --- He understands.

## God Loves You

When you think that all is lost,

God loves you:

He has proved it at such costs,

God loves you.

Jesus left His home on high,

Came to earth that He might die ---

He will never pass you by:

God loves you, God loves you!

For your sake the Savior died,

God loves you;

Heaven's gate is open wide,

God loves you.

By His grace all things are new,

There is nothing left to do ---

Christ has done it all for you:

God loves you, God loves you!

Though your soul be stained with sin,

God loves you;

Jesus died your soul to win,

God loves you,

God Loves You (Continued)

Come to Him, oh do not wait,

Lest tomorrow be too late ---

Sinner, do not hesitate:

God loves you, God loves you.

## God's Love

However dark the night may be,

There is a Light from Calvary.

A Light that shines around, above,

The Light of God's eternal Love.

## Chorus:

The Love of God is like a star,

It shines on you just where you are;

The darkest night cannot erase

The Love of God, nor change His grace.

When earthly loves have ceased to be,

When time becomes eternity,

More fresh and pure than morning dew,

The Love of God will still be new.

Though lost in sin, though clothed with shame,

It was for you the Savior came:

However far your feet may roam,

The Love of God still calls you home.

Can you ignore, can you neglect,

Can you deny, can you reject,

The Light that shines from one dark Hill,

The Light that says, God loves you still?

## God's Treasure

God has a treasure, boundless in measure,

He wants to give it away:

Christ has revealed it, God's Spirit sealed it ---

Won't you accept it today?

Chorus:

Won't you take the Treasure,

Won't you make it yours?

Christ the Lord is waiting,

Gently He implores;

Angels up in heaven

Look with longing too ---

When they start rejoicing,

Let it be for you!

Jesus, by dying, ended our trying,

Now we are saved by His grace:

All who believe it, gladly receive it,

One day may look on His face.

All through the ages one theme engages

Saints in the glory above:

Anthems are swelling, constantly telling

Only of Christ and His love.

\* God With Us

In the carpenter shop of Joseph

There was more than the bright tools made;  
Sometimes a Song in the silence,

Or a Light where the young Lad played.

In the home of Mary and Martha

There was more than the guest who came:  
Sometimes a Voice in the darkness,  
Or out of the shadow, Flame.

In the judgement hall of Pilate

There was more than a man forsooth:  
There was a Peace and a Presence----  
And the Answer to "What is truth?"

\* King's Business

God Understands

God sees the way

My feet must roam,

He knows the day

I shall go home.

When shadows fall

I'll trust His grace:

God knows it all ----

One day I'll see His face.

God understands

What is to be,

Within His hands

He holds the key.

When Life shall end

I'll trust His grace:

God is my friend ----

One day I'll see His face.

God Understands (Continued)

God never fails:

When day grows dark

He'll set the sails,

He'll guide the bark.

When I explore

The whole of grace ----

I'll ask no more

Than just to see His face.

\* Go Ye Into All The World

(John 21:6)

How many millions alien to grace,  
Will pass into a lost eternity,  
The while we fish in the accustomed place!  
Launch out, launch out into the farther sea!  
The oft repeated message scarcely wakes  
The lazy listeners, who doze and nod  
While countless numbers perish --- for whose sakes  
The Saviour died. Give them the Word of God!

"For God so loved the world." Not just the few  
Who by good fortune have the chance to hear  
In quiet church and comfortable pew  
The story, week by week, and year by year.  
Christ's great commission is the simple call,  
"Go Ye." The Gospel is for all, for all.

\* King's Business

\* "Go Youth, Get Wisdom"

Speed, winged hours, and hasten that far day  
When wrinkled Time shall burden us with age:  
We flinch not---youth is sweet, but all its way  
Is but the preface to that greater page  
Where soon, (how soon!) to us shall be revealed  
The mysteries of Life. We may not guess  
What truths, what golden wisdoms lie concealed  
Behind the years that fringe youth's happiness.

Speed, winged hours, and if the future bring  
Too much of pain, too little of the old  
Wild joy that first we knew, remembering  
Is comfort often when the best is told;  
And wisdom shall be ours; and we shall trade  
Reality for dreams that cannot fade.

\* Herald

## Grandmothers, Teach Them The Word

"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother, Lois"----II Timothy 1"5.

Timothy, Timothy, when you were three

Did Grandmother Lois take you on her knee?

Did Grandmother Lois look into your face,

And was she the first one to speak of His grace?

And was she the first one to tell why He came,

The first one to teach you to lisp out His name?

The first one to teach you that those who receive

Must carry the Gospel, that all may believe?

Grandmothers, Grandmothers, teach them the Word,

That today's little Timothys might know the Lord!

## Gratitude

For poplars lifted to the sun

And silver-flanked,

For slow buds bursting one by one,

For joy unleashed and dreams begun,

Now God be thanked.

For moonlight drifting from the place

Of clouds high-banked,

To show a chaste and lovely face;

For morning dew and cobweb lace,

Now God be thanked.

When I am short on gratitude,

And hard to please

With common comforts, daily food,

Lord, send white daybreak through the wood ---

I'm on my knees.

## Gray Lady

(The volunteer Red Cross worker)

She does not sing of beauty now: her days

Have grown too full of countless ministries.

An alien, down dear remembered ways,

She walks as one who neither hears nor sees

The meadow-lark, the clean slant of the sail,

The vagrant petal drifting with the wind;

No longer lured by every winding trail.

She does not sing of beauty: But her touch

Is full of all the beauty she has known,

Light winds, cool raindrops; the fevered clutch

Feebly at her to make her peace their own.

And some there are who miss her songs; but some

Who know she need not sing.....She has become.

## Great Mind In The Crowd

The silent isolation of great peaks

Was suddenly upon us when you came  
Strolling into our common days and weeks.

We could have coped with brilliance, but our shame  
Was naked at your silence. You could say

More words than we had thought of, but you stood  
Remote and let our small minds have their way,

And smiled, no doubt, to see we thought they could.

You were as near as voices and a touch,

As close as firelight; yet you were as far  
As some great ice-berg in the frozen clutch

Of that long night beneath the polar star.  
Flesh of our flesh, of bone and brawn our kind,  
But alien forever in the mind.

## Greatness

There is a greatness that is not achieved.....

A thing apart from any glorious deed.....

It is the greatness of brave hearts that bleed,

Yet wear a smile for human wrongs received;

The greatness of old trees that long long have grieved

O'er too-forgetful leaves their roots must feed,

Yet make no murmur to the gossip weed

But cast their shade that man may be relieved.

The greatness of endeavor comes or goes

By conscious effort. Here is something more:

A quiet greatness that just grows and grows,

Root, stalk and branch, out of the very core

Of life. And he who wears it never knows

He has the thing most men are searching for.

## Great Thoughts You Weary Me

Great thoughts you weary me,

Dignified and stem,

Coming in your robes of state,

Urging me to learn.

Serious and scholarly,

Gray heads in a row;

Great thoughts you weary me,

You weary me so!

I have need of little thoughts,

Intimate and kind:

Footsteps of departing leaves,

Laughter of the wind,

Shy white fingers of the rain

Creeping through my hair,

And the breath of waking buds

And blossoms in the air.

## Great Thoughts You Weary Me (Continued)

I have been so long from these,

A prisoner with books,

Almost I do forget the stars

And how a robin looks!

Great thoughts I cannot stay;

There is that in me

Which thirsts to taste the sea-fog's lips,

Which hungers for a tree!

I am tired of being wise;

Let me rise and go

To those who little knowledge have

And little need to know.

\* Grief Came To Me Smiling

Grief came to be weeping,

I pitied and yet

The moment she passed me

My heart could forget.

Grief came to me smiling,

So careless and wise,

But fathoms deep lingered

The pain in her eyes.

And always it haunts me,

Forever I see

The make of a smile where

A sorrow should be.

\* Sun

\* Grow Old Along With Me

Feeling a little old, dear?

Really you shouldn't mind:

Even though years are tough, dear,

"Uncle" is always kind:

Just stick around a while, dear,

Manage to stay alive ---

There will be double exemption

When you are sixty-five.

Feeling a little older,

Darling, but I don't care:

What though the road is rough, dear?

"Uncle" is always fair:

We have his solemn promise,

(Why should our hearts be blue?)

"You can make all you want, kids,

After you're seventy-two."

Grow Old Along With Me (Continued)

Chorus:

Why should we cry about it?

Surely it could be worse:

Change in the years before us

Means change in our empty purse.

Linger a little longer,

Then it will all come true ----

When you are five and sixty

And I am seventy-two.

\* Recorded - Vanity Records

## Gumdrops

The hopeful-hearted Little Miss

    Withdrew one from the sack,

And though she longed for licorice,

    She did not put it back.

The hated green thing in her hand,

    She turned from north to south,

But after every side was scanned,

    She plopped it in her mouth.

Too young to set the world on fire

    With singing or with sums,

She yet had learned to curb desire ---

    And take life as it comes.

\* Have Faith In God

"Immovable as mountains," men will say ----

And yet our God says, "Faith the size of one  
Small mustard seed" will be enough to sway

A mountain, if we say to it, "Begone."

No one but God could issue such commands:

He, only, holds the key to certainty;

And yet, he places it within our hands

With just these simple words, "Believe in Me."

Blot out the stars, erase the oceans, thrust

The universe aside --- one thing endures:

The Word of God. In that the heart can trust.

Have faith in God. His blessed Book assures

The faithful that to ask is to receive;

Not one is turned away who will believe.

\* Time of Singing

## Hay-Cock House

Do you remember the hay-cock house  
We built on the Hannibal Farm,  
When you were eight and I was six?  
You fell and broke your arm  
Jumping off from its 'chimney-top'.  
We lived there for a week,  
With cows for friends, and dust for food,  
And your cheek on my cheek.

Oh, the hay-cock house,  
The hay-cock house,  
Down by the barbed-wire fence!  
We shook straw out of our ears for days....  
We hadn't a bit of sense!

Do you remember the hay-cock house  
We built on the edge of the mart,  
Called life, when you and I were grown?  
I fell and broke my heart.  
Jumping off from its tall desire.  
We lived there years and years,  
With work to do and joy to share,  
And your tears, and my tears.

## Hay-Cock House (Continued)

Oh, the hay-cock house,

The hay-cock house!

Love counts no consequence:

We shake dreams out of our old hearts still.....

We haven't a bit of sense!

## He Holds My Hand

He took my hand, when I was lost in simming,

He took my hand within His nail-pierced own;  
Each day with Christ is now a fresh beginning,

He holds my hand --- I walk no more alone.

## Chorus:

He holds my hand, the Savior holds my hand,

He holds my life and all the dreams I planned;

I walk beside Him to a fairer land,

Since Christ, the blessed Savior, holds my hand.

He holds my hand when I am burdened, weary,

He holds my hand and gives me peace and rest;

No day with Him is desolate or dreary:

He holds my hand; I know His way is best.

He holds my hand when I am deep in sorrow,

He holds my hand and wipes my tears away;

I trust His grace for every dark tomorrow ---

I know that He will lead me all the way.

\* He Just Said

He did not take of this or that  
 To make the earth and sea,  
 The constellations of the stars .....  
 He just said, "Let there be."

He did not summon rod and lash  
 To execute His will:  
 When tempests tossed a tiny ship,  
 He just said, "Peace, be still."

When those who should have known Him best  
 Released a startled cry,  
 He did not turn to miracles,  
 He just said, "It is I."

His "It is I," and "Let there be,"  
 Have never passed away.  
 To know He is, to know He can,  
 Are all we need today.

\* Sunday School Times

\* Highway to God

The highways of the world are straight and broad,

But crowded with confusion and with strife.

Choose wisely, soul: The highway to our God

Leads past the wellspring of eternal life.

The signposts of the world may lead astray,

The profits that they promise prove but loss;

But he who finds the Life, the Truth, the Way,

Need only heed the signpost of the Cross.

The highways of the world are all ablaze

With neon lights. God's highway has but one:

Sufficient light for all earth's nights and days

The heart can find in God's beloved Son.

And by that Light, down little lanes of love,

The heart can move to heal the world's distress;

Until at last, in God's great home above,

We dwell with Him, who is our righteousness.

\* World Outlook

How Nice!

Now Jesus had a mother

When He was very wee ---

A mother who was human ---

So that makes Him Like me!

No matter what she looked like ---

Tall, short, or plump, or slim ---

I know that Jesus loved her,

So that makes me Like Him!

How nice to be like Jesus

Along this pilgrim way;

How nice to love our mothers,

And tell them so today!

## \* Harvest

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few." --- Math. 9:37

The mellow light now lingers on the land:

It is the twilight time. The golden grain  
Lies stacked and ready; and the corn shocks stand

Like sentinels against the coming rain;

On withered vines the pumpkins loose their hold:

A shiver in the corn stalks seems to tell

That winter's hands now reach for summer's gold.

This is the earth's bright yield. Oh, guard it well.

It is the twilight time in other fields,

Now ripe unto the harvest. Send the Word:

For winter comes; and night. The present yields

Eternal increase --- these must know the Lord.

Look to the lost. Let nought obscure your view:

The fields are white --- the laborers are few.

## \* World Outlook

## Harvest Evening

Against the barn he piles the pumpkins high.

So fraught with labor,

He leaves the golden pumpkin in the sky

Unto his neighbor.

Beside the sink she stands, and sifts and stirs,

So busy baking ---

When all the sugar-cooky stars are hers

For just the taking.

The night goes by in glory. Lost in cares,

They miss its beauty.

The harvest of indifference is theirs;

And dust and duty.

## Heart, Build A Fire

Heart, build a fire against the night,

Against the time of chill,

When winter woods stand stark and white,

When earth is cold and still.

Heart, build a fire and feed it well,

Far, sooner than it seems,

Age leaves us with a hollow shell

Of empty, broken, dreams.

Heart, build a fire of love and faith

Against the time of storm:

When all things vanish, just the wraith

Of these will keep us warm.

\* Have Faith in God

"Immovable as mountains," men will say ---

And yet our God says, "Faith the size of one  
Small mustard seed: will be enough: to sway

A mountain, if we say to it, "Begone."

No one but God could issue such commands:

He, only, holds the key to certainty;

And yet, he places it within our hands

With just these simple words, "Believe in Me."

Blot out the stars, erase the oceans, thrust

The universe aside --- one thing endures:

The Word of God. In that the heart can trust.

Have faith in God. His blessed Book assures

The faithful that to ask is to receive;

Not one is turned away who will believe.

\*Time of Singing

## He's Coming Again

The Lord is soon coming, with shout from on high ----

Those who believe will never die!

Accept Him as Saviour and join Him above,

The King of the Kingdom of Love.

## REFRAIN:

He's coming again, in the clouds of the air,

For those who have faith to receive Him:

He told of a day when we'll meet Him up there ----

Oh wonderful day! I believe Him!

And deep in my heart there is planted a song,

That echoes all day, though the way may be long:

"He's coming again, He's coming again,

He's coming again, my Lord Jesus!"

The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall arise ----

They who believed, they who were wise! ----

Then we who remain will be caught up with them,

To meet with Lord of the skies.

He's Coming Again (Continued)

The Great Tribulation today may begin:

Kingdoms will fall, life will be grim;

Oh why will you linger? Repent of your sin

And spend your forever with Him!

Though shadows may lengthen and midnight descend,

Do not lose faith, life will not end:

Make ready to meet Him ---- the Groom will soon come

To take His beloved Bride home!

## He Passes

(In loving memory of Christiaan Timmer,  
Master Musician)

He passes. Let the voice of song be hushed

A little time. Within the saddened heart

Let only dreams of music that he brushed

From strings, now silent, wake again and start;  
Bring to this place no verbal offering

Of melody. The master plays no more:

Lay down the bow, Life is a broken string ----

And silence fitting tribute at Death's door.

He passes. For a time be still..... And then

From hands that learned of him to wield the bow,  
Let there be song, and in the Lives of men

Let there be strength that his life taught to grow;

Let us go forward from the place of tears

To carry beauty down the troubled years.

## He Who Creates

Within his heart there is a lonely place

Where even love dare not intrude: Like some  
Pale star that floats upon the rim of space,

Remote and unapproachable. There come

To this still place no tender word, no touch,

No shared rememberings, no dream discussed.

Though two may love and long, however much,

One enters here alone --- because he must.

Beside the deep and limpid pool of thought

One stoops, alone, and kneels; and takes away

The word, the song, the truth that must be taught:

The burning beauty for the common day.

None other goes with him, nor great, nor small.

But what he brings away he brings for all.

## Hiding Place

The quick tears fell, close pressed the laurel boughs,

Cool was the earth unto a child's hot face:

With small hands clenched I sobbed, "Oh little house

Shut in by leaves, you are my hiding place."

There often, fresh from punishment, I came

And flung myself, face down, upon the fern;

Buried the eyes to hide my weepings' shame,

Learning the first hard truths a child must learn.

Oh Heart, where can we run for hiding now

From prying eyes, where sob the lone grief out?

No little leaf leans low, no laurel bough

Stoops down to screen. These city walls are stout,

But oh, they cannot shut man's secret ills

Away from pity's gaze - that takes the hills.

\* Hills Have No Envy

Hills have no envy, not the shadowed peace  
Of quiet valleys, nor the blue expanse  
Of sunlit waters woos them, no wild geese  
Winging the trackless heavens for romance.  
Hills have been set too long 'twixt earth and sky  
To know desire; their years of garnering  
Have yielded satisfaction: for the tie  
That binds contentment in remembering.

Hills have no envy. Though the brunt of storms  
Age-long they bear, this high thought lifts them up,  
Runs like a fire through all their being, warms  
Their confidence and makes a brimming cup  
Of barren years: since first the dawn of Time  
Hills have been man's encouragement to climb.

\*New York American

\* His Face

(II Cor. 4:6)

When once, upon Life's pathway,

The face of Christ appears,

How little all our laughter,

How transient all our tears!

The things we thought important

Are only fragments blown

To vanish in the distance,

When once the Lord is known.

How tawdry is earth's tinsel!

When Jesus takes His place,

The end of all seeking

Is written in one Face.

\* Sunday School Times

\* How Much More God

Man spends his strength on grante and on steel,

He builds his structures reaching for the sky.

Above their puny pretense, quite alone,

The timeless mountains stand aloof and high.

Man writes his name in symphony and song,

Along the path where weary mortals plod

He seeks articulation. There remains

More music in the silences of God.

Man flings his feeble flutters into space

And prides himself on progress and on change.

The silent stars, eternities away,

Maintain their secret orbs remote and strange.

Man breaks the alabaster of his heart.

But all the precious ointment, sacrificed

To voice his human love, is lost beside

God's love, unspeakable, in Jesus Christ.

\* How Shall I Say It?

How shall I say I love him --- this proud man

Who compasses my moments and my days?

If I could sing as only poets can,

Then might I strike some lofty note of praise

To voice the wonder, Yet, within my heart

Sometimes I hear a whisper, sweet and small,

"He chose you on that day that saw love start,

Because you were a woman first of all".

So I will say it in a woman's way:

Bright jonquils on the table, lemon pie,

His slippers by the fire. These shall say

"I love you, love you, love you." I could die

With joy to show him, but instead I live

To be his woman --- and to give and give.

\* Radio Club

\* Hospital Memories

I have remembered nights of winter rain,

Gray dawns of mist-smoke rising from a hill,  
And through these latter days of weary pain

These that I loved have fortified my will;  
Beauty of hawthorn, dewy-sweet at morn,

Touch of the sea-wind, stinging sharp and kind,  
Glint of the sunrise on a field of corn ---

Because of these I still may keep my mind.

I can look out on days that follow days

Gray-garbed and lonely down that corridor,  
And face the new with neither blame nor praise,

Because within the vast, unmeasured store  
Of memory's wealth my soul can find again  
Mist of the dawn and fragrance of the rain.

\* Radio

## Hungry Hawk

In circled flight he mounts up to the sky  
 And rests, as one who waits upon a stair;  
 Then suddenly, and swifter than the eye,  
 Comes sliding down the banister of air.

No pleasure cruise is his, no idle whim  
 To stretch the wings and lightly float away;  
 This is dark business, sinister and grim:  
 He takes the air that he might take the prey.

\* My heart is like a hungry hawk in flight,  
 My heart is like a lonely searching bird;  
 It scans the dark and listens through the night,  
 Eager to pounce upon your whispered word.

\* Or: My heart is like a lonely hawk in flight,  
 My hearts knows hunger like the searching bird's;  
 It scans the dark and listens through the night,  
 Eager to pounce upon remembered words.

## Hymn of Peace

Spirit of love and light  
Shine through earth's troubled night,  
    Heal our distress.  
Conflict and fears abound,  
Gross darkness all around ---  
Only in Thee is found  
    Power to bless.

Spirit of God forgive  
Our erring ways, and live  
    In every soul;  
That man's extremity,  
Most Holy One, may be  
God's opportunity  
    To take control.

Spirit of light and love,  
Come like a gentle dove,  
    On wings of peace.  
Enter the heart of man:  
Only Thy presence can  
Fulfill God's righteous plan ----  
    That wars may cease.

## Knitting Song For An Old Woman

Over and under,

That's how it goes;

What I am thinking

Nobody knows.

Making a sweater,

That's all they see:

Over and under

One, two and three.

Over and under,

Back through the years,

Voices that I hear

Nobody hears.

"Tends to her knitting",

That's all they say.

Nobody guesses -

How could they, pray?

How could they know that

One, two and three,

Is more than a sweater,

More than they see?

Continued

## Knitting Song For An Old Woman

More than some piece-work,

Out in the sun,

To an old woman

Whose work is done.

Out of her memories

High on a shelf,

Life is the sweater

She knits for herself.

Love is the needle,

And dreams are the wool,

With which an old woman

Makes age beautiful.

Tea Time

I have come to see things

Lovelier than rhyme.

Time to set the tea things -

What a happy time!

## Mixing Bowl

Light are the words that the memory turns

Deep in the bowl of life,

Light as the eggs that my beater whips,

But dear to the heart of a wife.

Sweet is the love that is mixed with them,

Sweet as the sugar crushed

Here in my yellow mixing bowl -

Love that cannot be hushed.

Fine is the faith that will stand the test,

Sunny or stormy weather -

Fine as the flour I sift in now,

Binding it all together.

## Gratitude

For poplars, Lifted to the sun  
And silver-flanked,  
For slow buds bursting one by one,  
For joy unleashed and dreams begun,  
Now God be thanked.

For moonlight, drifting from the place  
Of clouds high-banked,  
To show a chaste and lovely face;  
For morning dew and cobweb lace,  
Now God be thanked.

When I am short on gratitude,  
And hard to please  
With common comforts, daily food,  
Lord send white daybreak through a wood -  
I'm on my knees.

## City Park

Let me look long upon this cool and still

Green epic of the earth, wedged in between

The walls of industry, this quiet scene

Where comes no traffic rumble, nor the shrill

Newsboy announcing. Let me sit and fill

My homesick heart with other gold and green:

The sifted gold of sunlight through the lean,

Dark shapes of pines upon a far-off hill.

Man's most need, though he rush and toil and fret

For food and raiment, is not met in these.

The naked soul has need of canopies

Of silence, and the hungers that beset

The lone heart are appeased by nothing less

Than growing beauty, clothed in quietness.

## In Times Like These

"Soul, take your ease," in praise of idleness

One man exclaimed - and drew his knickers on

"In times of economic storm and stress

One learns a lot of golf twixt dawn and dawn,

Tomorrow may bring back the daily grind -

This is the hour of opportunities.

Soul, take your ease, the road to pleasure find

One has the leisure in such times as these."

Another cried: "Soul, find a book and steep

Yourself in learning - strive against the day

When strong men may be needed; study, keep

One step ahead." These things I heard two say.

'Not from the east', where finished is the test,

"Cometh promotion, neither from the west."

## Last Leaves

It falls....Weep, Heart, but know your tears are vain  
 The trees' green spring is but a crimson stain:  
 Long since, the lark his parting song has sung,  
 The last rose faded; but while yet there clung  
 One leaf unto the branch the heart could sing -  
 But now it falls, Weep, Heart, weep for the Spring .

Weep for the promise made,

Weep for the vows unpaid,

Weep for the hopes diminished,

Weep - and when you have finished,

Lean close your tear-stained face to earth and hear,  
 Sweeter than music falling on the ear,

Her answer: 'Not a Spring, forgotten, lies

In fallen leaves; for when the last leaf dies,

God's hands most wisely crush it, bit by bit,

Back into dust - and make new Springs of it."

It falls - Weep, Heart, but not a tear avails

To call the lone dream back - the last dream fails:

Laughter and love have left life's laden bough

Long since. With only dreams for comfort, now

The last dream falls - and withers in the grass.

Weep Heart, that beauty fails, that dreams must pass,

Continued

## Last Leaves

Weep for the stricken ways,

Weep for the empty days,

Weep for the doubts that hover,

Weep - and, when weeping over,

Lean close and hear your own heart give you back

Wisdom enough to fill lifes' little lack:

'No dream is lost: the hope that bade you lift

Your face to dreams is God's unfailing gift.

In other lives and loves the dream endures -

Not less itself because no longer yours."

## Home Thoughts At Sea

All day, across the blue brow of the sea,

Trail lives of creamy foam,

Lifted in sudden light, have been to me

A hawthorn hedge at home -

In such a way, on Spring nights, moves the urge

To beauty in between

Hedgerows - and breaks, at last, a whitening surge

Of blossoms on the green -

In such a way, and yet more intimate,

More dear, the still foam lies,

That is white fragrance by the garden gate,

And glory in the eyes.

The fabric is not lightly torn apart

Of which old dreams are knit,

When, still, a hawthorn hedge can stab my heart

Just to remember it.

## Quarrel

All that can be buried let us bury

Far out of sight:

You can smile again and I'll be merry.

This much is right.

"What we couldn't have we never hoped for",

This be our cry.

You can leave behind the things we groped for,

And so can I.

Yes: And, Heart, before we drop the shovel,

Turning to run,

Life will merge into a dreary hovel,

Lost to the sun.

Life will be a house whose every rafter

Echoes your tread;

You will start, at dusk, to hear my laughter

Back from the dead.

All that can be buried - yes, but, lover,

Here is the foil:

We have erred again: You cannot cover

Love up with soil.

RIVER SONGS

I                    Windy Willow

Windy willow, in the sun

    Lifted high,

You are ripples on a pool

    Made of sky:

You have silver water speech

In your slender arms, that reach

Hither, yonder. They beseech

    Like a cry.

Windy willow, by the light

    Of the moon,

You are echoes of an old

    River tune:

You have choruses of frogs,

Water slopping fallen logs,

And the long cool drip of fogs,

    In your croon.

Windy willow, river-taught

    You would be

If I met you in a park,

    Suddenly:

More the lifting and the lull

Of bright waters deep and full,

More the slow still river-pull,

    Than a tree.

RIVER SONGS

## II Redwinged Blackbirds

Breathless on the rivers brink

One can only stand and drink

Deeply, thirstily, of them:

Blackbirds on a rushe's stem.

Glossy black and shining green,

With the scarlet touch between:

Here is color that defies

All attempt to analyze.

Blackbirds on a rushe's stem!

I have touched the garments hem

Of fulfillment. I can clutch

All of beauty in this much.

RIVER SONGS

## III River Twilight

Day is a covey of sunbeams

    Caught in the older trees;

Night is a hardened hunter

    Crouching upon his knees.

Ever the silence deepens,

    Ever the shadows fall;

The evening star is a bird-dog

    Waiting the hunting call.

Wounded wing, in the water

    Beat it to flecks of foam:

Light goes out on the river -

    Run, little birds, run home.

RIVER SONGS

## IV Blue Interval

This has been an azure moment

Uttered shyly, in three words:

Bright blue sky and deep blue water,

And the blue, blue wings of birds:

Wings of berons lifting lightly,

Slowly at the rivers edge,

In a curve of beauty binding

Sky and water like a pledge.

Life will give me back this moment,

By all waters: I shall start,

Suddenly, to feel the beating

Of blue wings against my heart.

## Supper Song

Oh never I set out the evening meal

Or scatter the food about,

But I think, how life is a table cloth

And love is the feast spread out.

How one is seated at either end,

And love is the meal between,

Where two may nibble a whole life long

And share in the fat and the lean.

And whether they dine on the food of faith

Or drink of the cup of care,

I think how two, to the journey's end,

Rejoice in this simple fare.

For though they may hunger, little or much

They know that the meal suffices,

Where love is the daily butter and bread

And love is the sugar and spices.

So never I set out the evening meal,

But softly to One above

I whisper thanks for the table cloth

Of life - and the feast of love.

## Sweeping Song

In the loaded dustpan,

Just before I spill it,

Let me see, besides trash,

What there is to fill it.

I have swept up courage

With this slender token

Taken from the window -

Fragile moth wings broken.

I have swept up wisdom

Fallen from the fetters

Of a book, in this page

With its yellow letters.

I have swept down patience,

In the silver leaving

Of an old gray spider

Busy with her weaving.

I have swept ambition

Out in little pieces -

Where a child's hands folded:

Paper in white creases.

Sing a song of cleaning:

Sweeping is a pleasure

Little, dirty dustpan

You are full of treasure!

## Tea Time

Time to set the tea things:

Round and round we go;

Will I ever be things

In life's little show?

Will I ever be things

In a gown of silk?

Time to set the tea things:

Butter, sugar, milk.

Time to set the tea things

Not a sonnet done !

Daddy and the wee things,

Though, are lots of fun.

Daddy and the wee things,

What a group to miss!

I have set the tea things,

Often, thinking this.

I have set the tea things

With a heart so full

I have come to see things

Plain, are beautiful.

## The Slow Stars Came

The slow stars came this evening, and their coming

Is not a radiance, but still white words

Heard somehow and remembered, starting, humming,

A love song in the heart, Like homing birds,  
Wings tilted to the sunset, dipping, drifting,

The slow stars come and lean above the hills;

Their coming is white fingers reaching, lifting

The drab days disappointments and it's ill.

The slow stars came this evening. All that battered

The quick self pity and the stern regret,

Seem suddenly more vague than shadows - smothered

By the swift joy that there is beauty yet.

That there is beauty, high above regretting,

Now God be thanked for stars - and for forgetting.

## God's Gate of Love

—Helen Frazee-Bower

1. God comes to those who need Him most,  
He fills the heart that trusts His grace :  
For all the lonely and the lost,  
At Calvary God made a place.

## Chorus:

- At Calvary, where Jesus died,  
God's gate of love stands open wide;  
Now all, who trust, from sin are free—  
God dries all tears at Calvary.
2. When shadows fall God waits to bless,  
When storms arise He says, "Be still!"  
Keep not for all life's emptiness:  
The cluttered heart He cannot fill.
3. When clouds engulf and skies are gray,  
God holds the sunshine in His hands:  
Christ is the Light, the Truth, the Way,  
Oh come to Him—He understands.

## Someone Is Praying

—Helen Frazee-Bower

1. When the days are waning to December,  
When your youth is gone beyond recall,  
It will cheer your spirit to remember  
Someone up in glory shares it all.
- Chorus:  
Someone in glory is praying for you,  
Someone is watching the long hours through;  
Jesus the Savior, from heaven's high throne,  
Thinks of you always and prays for His own.  
Skies may be dreary, or skies may be fair,  
Neither can matter because He is there.  
Never forgotten, whatever you do:  
Jesus in glory is praying for you.
2. When the dreams of life are almost over,  
When the times of joy are all too brief,  
It will ease your heartache to discover  
Someone up in glory shares your grief.
3. When the darkness falls and shadows lengthen,  
Sitting in the dusk with folded hands,  
You can count on Him to bless and strengthen:  
Someone up in glory understands.

The Crow

Helen Frazer-Bower

He cannot sing: he has no song,

This chronic pessimist,

His raucous raspings come out wrong,

But still he can't resist

The urge to try in some off-key,

Daylong without restraint,

To tell the world he ~~thinks~~<sup>knows</sup> that he

Has cause for his complaint.

~~Post - 7-22-'58~~

~~Harvard 8-21-'58~~

~~Massachusetts 9-12-'58~~

7-21-'58

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LIFE IS A WIDE SKY

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MAVIR 20

LIFE IS A WIDE SKY

Whither the lark falls there goes the singing,

Whither the dream dies there goes the hope:

Life is a wide sky, gallant the winging;

Stark are the first days, learning to grope.

Pity the pinion crushed unto crawling,

Pity the lame speech striving to sing:

Life is a wide sky, lone is the falling,

Whether for dream or whether for wing.

POET'S HUNTING SONG

Just now there was a word: a silver fox

That leapt the mind's high hedge and sped away.

Be after him, my thought! (Strange paradox,

That he should come at all if not to stay.)

Now, every crying hound of memory,

Circle the woods, where speech is wont to hide,

And find my sleek and silken word for me---

The sly young fox that lately left my side.

Hurtle him back, the while I make a thong

Of strong emotions, grown articulate,

To tie the tiny trickster to a song;

Where I can sit and muse upon his fate,

Or shut him up within the printed page---

And watch the curious stroke him in his cage.

LIFE

## RETREAT

The hushed battalions of the day retreat,

Responding to the slow horn of the moon

Blowing a silver cadence down this street

To say that the dark rider fares forth soon.

Folded is every blossom that will sleep.

The tree-toad from his covert clears his throat,  
Expectant. If a word should wake and creep

To human lips it would be tossed to float,

An alien, on silence. There is now

Less than we can remember of the day

In that frail half-light fingering the bough;

And in this growing quietness one may

Almost forget, beyond tomorrow's door,

What new troops wait, what battles rage and roar.

LITTLE BOY, CRYING

Weep, child, and gather comfort as you may

While sorrow yet can bring the boon of tears:

There will be grieving in the after years

Too deep for transient sobs to wash away;

There will be poignant wounds that cannot say

Themselves in weeping. All your griefs and fears

Cry for audition; but the day appears

When no tears come, for all you starve and pray.

Weep, child, and let the sunshine after rain

Burst in your smile when sorrow has been spent.

These days of easy grieving have been lent

Your youth against the long, still years of pain

When you shall sit and smile, while you alone

Guess how the heart of flesh has turned to stone.

## COURAGE

You asked me, "What is courage?" And I took

The dictionary down and spelled it out.

For such a little boy, the heavy book

Was ponderous. You twisted it about;

You said, "It's being brave-- and what is that?"

You said, "It's not to fear--am I afraid?

Does courage arch its back up like our cat,

And spit at everything it meets?" you said.

Perplexed, we closed the book and took a walk,

And came where fire had worked untimely death;

The woods were gone. But on a slender stalk

A flower inched for life. I caught my breath.

"Courage," I said, and took you by the hand,

"Is one white flower in a fire-swept land."

SONNETS IN STEEL

For beauty still men grope and feel,  
And find the answer wrought in steel.

I---SKYSCRAPER

Now you, who were a low cry formed within  
The dark recesses of a mind, have grown  
To what inestimable heights! The din  
Of traffic dies--you scale the skies alone.  
Serene, aloof, above the human stream  
Of restless life below, you lift your head,  
And you are less a structure than a dream  
Come true--a daily portion not of bread.  
Less walls and windows than a voice to say  
Man reaches up: still beckons the lone height.  
You only, in this civilized melee,  
Are beauty groping, crying for the light,  
Are aspiration beating at the bars  
Of circumstance--and reaching for the stars.

(Sonnets in Steel)

II----BRIDGE

From out the dense, intolerable smoke  
Of industry your sudden curve of light  
Is like a lifted shout: as though you spoke  
Order to chaos. All the dark of night  
Cannot efface you, nor the mingled cries  
Of commerce hush your eloquence of speech,  
Uttered in steel. To waiting earth and skies,  
This is the solemn sermon that you preach:

No dark abyss so deep nor wide but some  
Far-reaching thought can span it with a curve  
Of beauty; and no hard fact, driven home  
To man, but is a girder meant to serve  
For strength and confidence when he shall feel  
Life's heavy burdens testing out his steel.

ON BROADWAY

A lame man peddles pencils in the rain.

All up and down the slippery streets, a train

Of noisy men and women saunter by--

And gabble each to each. The raucous cry

Of ragged newsboys rasps upon the ear;

A throng of painted women passes here;

And yonder, 'neath the brave electric glare

Of gay shop windows, stands a mob. They stare

At gorgeous gowns and, envious-eyed, they prate

Of styles and sales: this hat, those shoes, the late

Arrival of some fine imported hose.

With cold, unseeing eyes they search for clothes

While Poverty holds out its hands in vain...

A lame man peddles pencils in the rain.

## PURCHASE

"Give me the rust," she said, and in her eyes

There was a look that went beyond the gown:

I knew that she was walking with wide skies

Beyond the narrow confines of the town.

I knew that russet leaves, in fragrant heaps,

Tangled her footsteps; that her eyes were starred

With some bright dream the hungry spirit keeps,

To hold against a life grown dull and scarred.

Her hands caressed the silk: I knew she heard

Lone wild geese honk above the drifting haze

From wood fires burning; that her heart was stirred

Deeply by beauty from remembered days.

The salesgirl wrapped the dress, nor dreamed she tied

Half of a gallant autumn world inside.

## BLIND FIDDLER

A blind man played his fiddle on the street,

His tattered jacket flapping in the wind;

His shoes were broken, but his twitching feet

Tapped out the time, sweetly undisciplined.

He asked no pity for the sightless eyes,

He had forgotten what impelled his bow;

The need of warmth, of food, we could surmise---

The need of song was all he seemed to know.

A thousand blind men passed him by and stared,

Blankly, ahead. Their eyesight still was keen,

And yet there was no vision: all they shared

Was an unending vista of routine.

A blind man fiddled gaily on the hem

Of darkness--and these passed..I pitied them.

## THIS IS DEFEAT

This is defeat: For one unworthy hour

To close the eyes to wing and star and grass;  
With eager hands to clutch the hem of power,

And trample underfoot the struggling mass.

This is defeat: To know no time of singing,

Within the grasping heart no dream to hold,  
Save only the dark dream of ever wringing

From life and limb another ounce of gold.

This is defeat: To let the days go slipping

In crimson flame behind a western hill,

And face to face with beauty, to be gripping,

Tense-handed, gold that sunlight does not spill.

To live, and render living incomplete

For one less fortunate. This is defeat.

NEW SONG FOR MEMORIAL DAY

We are the dead, who are not laid away,

For whom no flowers deck the quiet grave.

You passed us in the crowded street today;

Thinking of those gone back to earth, you gave

No second glance. We are the dead, who died

Not with one kind abandonment of breath,  
Sudden and merciful; but dreams denied

And slow frustration worked a living death.

You will lay blossoms on a sunny slope

For those called dead, who cannot need them now;

And we shall take the subway with you, grope

Ever so slightly for your thought; then bow

The head again, and face the empty years---

Dead without grace of tribute, or of tears.

## A MAN MUST DIG

"A man must dig," he said. "A man must dig--  
Small holes when he is little; when he's big,  
Oil wells and tunnels and the like of that."  
(The sunlight fell aslant his old straw hat.  
He leaned indulgently upon his spade.)  
"Now me, I dig for beauty. I have made  
A sea of color from a spot of dirt."  
(He flecked a spider from his flannel shirt  
And tossed his gloves upon the garden bench.)  
"In nineteen-seventeen I dug a trench.  
I mind the night was cold and thick with stars,  
Millions and millions of them--etched like scars  
Upon the steel-blue sky. And then the roar  
Of cannon broke. Say, mister, what's it for--  
Night on the water, morning on a hill,  
Church bells at sunset-time, and men that kill?  
What is it all about? Though I am wise  
With troubled years, it still gets in my eyes.  
And I must dig, and I must cover up  
With beauty something ugly in the cup  
Of living. Somehow, somewhere, I must find,

(A Man Must Dig--continued)

To clothe the desolation of the mind,  
Purple of pansies and the golden sheen  
Of poppies drifting on a field of green.

And so I dig. My son and daughter scold:

'Dad, take it easy. Don't you know you're old?'

But I just smile and dig and let them rave.

A man must dig---a garden or a grave."

FULFILLMENT

"And her laid out in red---imagine that!

A woman sixty-five!" one neighbor said;

"Some castoff that the daughter got too fat

To wear, no doubt. The poor, defenseless, dead  
Old woman, lying like a scarlet flame,

That should be decent black--or leastwise gray;  
I call it sacrilegious and a shame.

How does this generation get that way?"

Alone--a faded diary on her knees--

The daughter sat and let her slow tears fall  
Upon the ancient script: "I've wanted these

So long--a red dress and some beads, but all  
I ever got was black."...The daughter smiled:

"Dear God, please blame me if she looks too wild."

## REBELLION

"Never could stand a bed too short

To wiggle my toes," said Uncle Jed;

"These new contraptions, they make me snort--

Six feet long from the foot to head.

I must have room, and I'll have it too!"--

He said one day to his faded wife.

And then, in the reckless way men do,

He kicked the slats from his bed of life.

We buried him out where the grasses spring,

And folded the earth about his feet,

(But not too closely--remembering),

And the soft snow fell, like a winding sheet--  
Clothing, with quietness, his strength.

And we went back home and let him be--  
Calm and peaceful, and stretched full-length

In the long, long bed of Eternity.

MOTHER

In life we had not seen her once

So still nor so well-dressed:

The pale eyes closed, the quiet hands

Too white upon her breast.

The tragedy of death we found

Was nothing starkly new,

But just the pathos of worn hands

With nothing more to do.

## BONFIRE

Beyond the garden, at the lane's cool edge,

Our Henry rakes and burns the fallen leaves,

And whistles Old Black Joe. A slender wedge

Of smoke escapes the maple tops and grieves

The sky a moment. Henry does not take

Time out to watch that fragile floating wreath,

But moves in rhythm with his moving rake,

Whistling "I'm coming," through his broken teeth;

But I must watch it: All my being yearns

To hold it there against the vacant sky;

I cannot let it go. While Henry burns

Bright leaves that are too beautiful to die,

I follow it--remembering--and choke

Upon bright dreams that went up, too, in smoke.

DAY BEFORE FORTY

When I am forty, I shall be so glad!

I shall not mind the graying locks at all,  
For "life begins at forty." I have had

Such transient pleasures hitherto! How small  
The flicker of romance, the buoyant tread

Of eager feet, all breathless youth, will seem  
When I have time for books I have not read,

When I am "tabled" and can sit and dream.

The children now are older. I shall find

New ways to do my hair, and I shall meet  
The better people. No, I shall not mind

The growing wrinkles, nor the lagging feet.

(Then why this sudden little twinge of sorrow?

I shall be glad--but not until tomorrow!)

THE OLD REMEMBER

The old remember: hills, and trees and men.

Life does not touch them harshly anymore:

Storms they have weathered in the years before

They garnered peace, have brought them courage. When

Existence palls or grows too frantic, then

The old remember: trees, the leaves they wore;

Hills, how a summer cloud can drift and soar;

And men, the children grown beyond their ken.

Youth lifts quick hands to buffet circumstance---

Eager for action, valiant; but the old

Clasp something better in the hands they fold.

No longer creatures tossed by time and chance,

Through nights too long and days too steep and rough

The old remember--and it is enough.

AGE

Life is a book he holds between his hands,

The bruised and battered volume of the years;

His, and yet no more his. Another stands

Invisible beside him, and he fears

Almost to stir, lest that One, ruthlessly

In some unguarded moment, seize upon

The treasured gift and vanish suddenly;

Almost he dares not look lest it be gone.

No more his trembling fingers turn the page;

His heavy eyes no longer look ahead;

Serene he sits upon the throne of age

And ponders what already has been read.

And musing so, from out the past there slips

The smile of Youth, and plays about his lips.

TRAMP TALK

I--ROADS ARE ADVENTURE

Roads are adventure at the break of dawn:

A white call in the ears all day. And trees  
Stay put. I hate stay-put-ness... I'll be on

The trail again. That blue jay is a tease,  
He becons to wide skies; that little squirrel

Knows something worth remembering I'll say.  
Lucky for me I never had a girl

To house and feed... I must be on my way.

Roads are adventure and I like to tramp;

Until the twilight meets me---then a tree  
Is permanence; that's something. For a camp

One wants deep-rootedness, security,  
Assurance of a shelter spread above...

I wonder how it feels to be in love.

(Tramp Talk)

II--NOON REST

A man's not right to toil and sweat and build,

When he could lie flat on the earth and dream.

A field's a field, and whether it be tilled

Or just a wild rose thicket by a stream,

Is one to me. The feel of earth is good

Beneath the feet and warm along the back:

A man's not right to labor when he could

Be roof-free with his only care a pack.

That bridge across the stream is pretty though;

A lot of thought to build a thing like that.

This corn's just sprouting; helping things to grow

Gets underneath the skin somehow... This hat

Will never crown the weariness of knowing:

These feet grow tired of anything but going.

(Tramp Talk)

III--FIRESIDE

The flicker of the firelight is a word

Golden with meaning; nothing need be said  
Beyond it. When the embers have been stirred

A man is home again, though overhead  
The night-hawk circles and the eery owl

Questions the darkness. At the long day's end,  
When canyons gloom and heavens blink and scowl,

To have a fire is better than a friend.

To tramp along the white rim of the days

And come to this---a man needs nothing more...  
Hey, stranger, drop your pack and share the blaze.

That owl sounds lonesome. Nights I hanker for  
Some folks, it seems like... Well the bacon's hot;  
Just help yourself. This coffee hits the spot.

IV---REFLECTION

To be a child is better than to be

The father of a child; that's plain enough.

A child does what it wants--and you'll agree

That I do that. A child makes dreams of stuff  
That sunlight's made of, strings them on a chain

Of golden days and clasps it 'round the earth.

I can do that--and never know the pain,

Or sacrifice that brings a son to birth.

To be a child is better... But the lad

Who handed out the sandwich at the farm---

He was a youngster for you, now; he had

Eyes deep as pansies, and his hands were warm...

Two weeks its been and still in my heart lingers

The quick soft pressure of his little fingers.

COMMENTARY ON FLOWING

I--THE POET

The new-turned furrows sprawl beneath the sun:

Dusky and silent, earth awaits her time  
Of blossoming. Now hardly will be won

The white dawn-flicker, when the will to climb  
Shall stir the seed: this darkly ribboned field,

Drowsy with dreams, will wake to sudden zest,

In sinuous undulations the green yield

Of beauty will become a dream confessed.

Yet not the pregnant promises of wealth

In grain, or vintage, woo me--I am bound  
To this sweet idle moment. The slow stealth

Of one small field mouse, and the brittle sound  
Of black clods crunching, I shall wake to find  
How often, down the furrows of the mind!

II--AN OLD WOMAN

The plow cuts deep, the new-turned earth lies black

As grief turned over in the heart. The land

Has heard a question and has given back

The answer: in a dark but certain hand

The slow script runs. Each furrow in the sun

Lies cool and isolate. The plow cuts deep,

Strikes at the roots; and slowly, one by one,

The earth gives up the secrets she would keep.

How often, in the brown fields of the heart,

The plow cuts deep; for furrows of despair

Yield annual increase. But all ripe grains start

From deep-turned earth--and with the bright-eyed stare

Of yonder field mouse, in my heart's field one

Small covert dream blinks all day at the sun.

(Commentary on Flowing)

III--THE BLACKBIRD

New furrows! Well, my feathers, what a find!

What lush black dampness for the toes, what bliss  
To dip the wings, shake off the dust, go blind

And dizzy-headed with the earth's cool kiss.  
How many hours down the groundless air

My dusky pinions drifted to this hope--  
Earth and a new turned furrow! I declare,

This is the heaven for which blackbirds grope.

To strut six feet in furrows, and run up

The little hills between, to dip the bill

In prisoned dew-drops, is to drain the cup

Of rapture. How that field mouse can sit still

And only blink the sun, I cannot see.

My feathers, here's a worm! What ecstasy!

IV---THE FARMER

That's sixteen furrows, and a third around.

The grey mare looks a trifle tuckered out.

I'm tired myself--long time to noon. The ground

Is black and rich, there's hardly any doubt

But what the crop will be a bumper. My,

Those horses' flanks are steaming! Better rest.

Whoa babies.... See that field mouse with his eye

Cocked sideways at my furrows--little pest!

Hank Williams says to plant both fields to corn;

But I say oats. Hank thinks he knows it all.

Land, I was planting oats when Hank was born;

But you can't tell him anything. This fall

Will prove me right... Come, babies, mosey on--

That's only sixteen furrows turned since dawn.

## MOUNTAIN GROUP

### I--HILL PLANTING

The naked furrows move in empty lines,

That should be plumed with vintage. Not a trace  
Of corn in tassel, or the weighted vines

This planting promised, crown the lean hill's face;  
Too many winds blew hotly, too much sun

Was filtered through parched hours. In despair  
The slender life-streams withered; one by one

These seeds forgot the call to light and air.

These mountain lives seem furrows on a hill,

Stricken of all save going 'round and 'round,  
With no fruit garnered. Only days, that fill

Themselves with crawling over barren ground,  
That start with breakfast calls at four o'clock  
And end with twilight and the hungry stock.

II--LUCINDA BRINGS THE COWS

Tonight Lucinda brought the cattle in,

Her light dress blowing in the evening breeze.

She stood a moment at the bars to win

Old Brindle with caresses, and to tease

The spotted calf with clover snatched aside.

The mountains looked, behind her, dark and cool,  
Her laughter moved along the night like wide

And shining ripples on a silent pool.

At once her life seems more secure and full,

More glamorous than others and more stark,

Who finds it not uncolorful and dull

To bring the cattle with the coming dark:

The vibrant music of whose throaty laugh

Depends upon a wobbly spotted calf.

(Mountain Group)

III--HANGMAN'S TREE

No tree should be so ominous as this:

Such gruesome business has no tryst with trees.

Nesting of songbirds, snowfall, and the kiss

Of summer winds and winter cloud-banks, these

Are good for trees--but not a stark black thing

To hang so silently above the earth.

If for their crimes men still must lift and swing,

What is the little we have mastered worth?

This tree has been divinely set apart

To hold the living. Never God, but man

Reduced it to such straits and broke a heart

Ordained to joy. Was there no other plan,

That ever such grim recollection grieves

The limb that should know gossip of young leaves?

## DROUGHT

## I

The gaunt trees closer pressed each hungry mouth

Unto the earth's dry breast, and day by day,  
Wasted and worn by weary weeks of drought,

The lean hills lifted faces, ashen-grey,  
Up to the unrepentant sky. The streams,

Long unreplenished from on high, had grown  
Frailer and feebler than forgotten dreams,

Dry gulches yielding only stick and stone.

Beyond the cabin door she saw it all,

As one who sees, not seeing, for her heart  
Beat with a strange new ecstasy: A small,

Pink bundle stirred beneath the covers--part  
Of him and her; and in her flowing breast

There was no drought--only deep joy, sweet rest.

(Drought)

II

From out the long-unanswering skies there swept

Remorse at last in one bright silver flood.

Up from the startled earth the young green crept,

Hill, tree, and stream drank wonder where each stood;

Three weeks and transformation had its way:

Slim silver pencils scribbled leaf and flower

Upon an empty page, long waste and grey,

Leaving the drought a half-remembered hour.

Within the cabin door she sat and stared.

Her eyes, deep-circled, bore the somber stain  
Of agony; her hungry breast was bared

Night-long unto the keen cool edge of pain.

Even the new mound in the pasture south

Was turning green. But all her days were drought.

## SONNETS ON APPROACHING BLINDNESS

## I--WITH EVERY TWILIGHT

There will be darkness coming like this dark:  
Yet not like this, but an eternal night,  
Petaled with no white stars, no slender bark  
Of moonlight drifting home, no wan half-light  
From dead remembered daybreaks lingering  
On distant peaks--but darkness without sight.  
  
How may the heart prepare to meet this thing  
That stalks each day, that threatens from behind  
The curtain of all twilights, crouched to spring?  
  
There is no preparation for the blind  
Who long have loved to look, except to know  
That these brief twilights, coming cool and kind  
To waiting fields, unclaimed by dawn might grow  
More exquisite; and trust and leave it so.

(Sonnets on Approaching Blindness)

II--ENCLOSURE

About us, Heart, that day will be a wall  
Laid up by friendly fingers, stone on stone,  
Fashioned of pity, needed not at all:

For whither we are bound one goes alone:  
None will encroach upon that solitude,  
No need to shut us from the world we've known

When that great darkness falls and we are nude  
Of sight at last. I think that we shall stand  
Unreached by glances, whether kind or rude:

As alien to all men as a land  
Shut up to silence, where no foot has trod,  
No voice been lifted; and the only hand,

Day-long, year-long, that moves upon the sod  
To let the seed through, is the hand of God.

(Sonnets on Approaching Blindness)

III--AFTER-SIGHT

The eye has loved its seeing far too well  
To snuff it like a candle. There will be,  
Soon now, the curfew; but that evening bell

Can never draw the shades on memory  
And quench all light. How often, through the haze  
Of those stark empty moments, I shall see

All loveliness, laid up through brighter days,  
Spread out before me. When the light goes out  
I need not pass down unfamiliar ways,

Bereft and unaccompanied: not a doubt  
But all that I have loved, when daylight dies  
Will follow me; and I shall turn about,

Sometimes in that great dark, with quick surprise--  
Seeing some old loved beauty with new eyes.

EVENING SONG

Slowly the laggard galleons of dream

Move in across the deep;

Soon, in how many homes by hill and stream,

There will be sleep;

There will be quiet folding of all wings,

In hushed and chaste delight;

A secret tremor at the heart of things

Will bring the night.

We may not tell on what far distant shore

The tides of peace begin,

Nor what great waves must swell and break before

All dreams come in.

Enough to know there is no troubled day

But what goes out in peace.

And in God's own appointed time and way

War, too, shall cease.

LULLABY FOR GROWN-UP CHILDREN

Weariness is like a flower

Folded on a stem---

All the lives that close this evening,

God pity them!

All the lives that curl up tightly

On the stem of sleep,

Give them rest and strength, and only

Brave thoughts to keep.

Seal the passing hours from them,

Let no thought of greed

Toss the form or line the forehead---

Great is their need.

Weariness is like a flower

Wasted and forlorn---

Grant to every broken blossom

New buds at morn.

LOVE

THIS IS LOVE YOU

Bright as the silver sheen of drifting wings

Etched by a sea-gull on the breast of night,

Within my heart one high thought sobs and sings:

Beauty and pain, and wonder and delight,

Mingle their cry as one by one old dreams

Reach for the stars--fall short--and sink again;

Still through the night one white bird sways and gleams,

Still on my heart falls one familiar strain:

This is to love you: When all beauty fails,

When every pinion droops and homing birds

Fold up their wings, as vessels fold their sails,

Beyond all dreams, beyond the reach of words,

Serene and still to hold you like a gull

Against life's darkness--high and beautiful.

UPON A DAY LIKE THIS

Upon a day like this we took the road,

Shouldered our joy and buckled laughter on.

Youth-time was ours! I fancy how you strode

Proudly across the weathered fields. The dawn

Was as a bud just ready to unfold,

Crimson with hope; we reached forth eager hands,

Swift through our fingers fell the morning's gold

And broke upon the earth in shining strands.

The day enlarged. We let our laughter fall,

And caught it back in ripples on the wind.

Noon was a flame; and twilight was a small

Shy hand we held, most intimate and kind,

A hand that drew us home from hours of bliss,

But left love's seal--upon a day like this.

LOVE CHANGES WITH THE YEARS

Love that was moonlight, high and white and still,

Love that was wonder waking with the dawn,  
Comes toiling slowly by Life's rugged hill--

Only a shoulder now to lean upon,

Only a pillow for a weary head,

Only a handclasp, soft and warm and tight,

Only a morsel for one asking bread,

Only a candle burning in the night.

Only? Beloved, moons are cold and proud,

The dawn grows chill that youth found strangely sweet.  
And faint the song that echoed far and loud

Before Life dropped its challenge at our feet;

The heart's need now is one to dry the tears.

So blest be Love that changes with the years.

YOU ARE MUSIC

Music is you, and you are music. Never

The one without the other. Though your dear,  
Remembered face be far removed, whenever

The sound of music quickens you are here.

In every cadence I can hear you calling,

In all the vibrant chords that sob and sing,  
With each new tone progression, lifting, falling,

My heart is lifted by remembering.

And when, in quietness, you bend above me

Without a touch, without a whispered word,  
Around me there is music. And you love me

In all great music I have ever heard.

I cannot say, within my heart of hearts,  
Where you leave off--and where the music starts.

## LOVE IN HARNESS

I, who have sung of love's immensity,

Thrilled with its wonder, known its joys and tears,  
Have yet one song of love, content to be

Only a plough to furrow fallow years.

Quiet as Time, eternal as the hills,

More certain than the spring that follows spring,  
Love turns the brown earth over and fills

The deep dank hollows with remembering.

No more a proud high bird to sail the air,

Love walks the earth to plough a patient row;  
But happy laughter fills the furrows where

Child faces follow and wild flowers blow.

And who could grieve for gallant pinions furlled,  
When love in harness recreates the world?

## THE CHILDREN

These are the windows where my soul looks out

On larger fields of ripe experience.

There is a drudgery men talk about,

But I have found it of small consequence:

The many tasks that bind the eager feet

No more oppress me with their weight of care,

For I have learned a secret that is sweet:

These are my wings to try the morning air.

All that I might have been may be in these:

This one may launch the song I did not sing,

And that one hold the dream I could not seize.

Through all the twilight of remembering

These are my windows that let in the light,

At every dawn, these are my wings for flight.

## TO A HUSBAND ON FATHER'S DAY

Our tall sons move with eagerness and pride,

Like strong trees facing sun and storm and wind.

Against their strength I watch your failing stride,

Your work-worn hands, your white hair slightly thinned.

I do not see the tall sons now; they move

Within a mist of tears, beyond my view:

My heart is quickened by an old, old love,

And all that I can see is you, is you!

They will go on to triumph; they will be

All that we hoped and toiled and waited for.

Here, in the twilight, stand awhile with me:

More, to a woman, than the sons she bore

Must be the one who freely gave his all--

That these might flourish, strong and straight and tall.

HEART'S BATTLE CRY

Amidst a world grown alien with frenzy,

Where most that we have thought no more assures,  
Here, in the hour that may mean destruction,

One thing endures:

I love you. Though all light be lost in blackness,  
Though sudden terrors scorch the shrinking sky,  
Against our doom I lift aloft this fragile

Heart's battle cry:

I love you. Though the world go out in crimson,  
Though cherished beauty wither in the grass,  
God shall endure--and one thing more: "I love you."

These will not pass.

One silver trumpet shall outlast the battle,  
Lifting its call from hill to lonely hill;  
Oh, can you hear, above earth's desolation,

"I love you," still?

NATURE

ALIEN

Within the still, white room that gave me birth,

My body bloomed, the counterpart of two

Who bore me; but alone, across the earth,

Miles from that place, the heart they never knew

By wise moon fairies on a far high hill

Was being woven out of threads of mist;

Its fragile beauty was a thing more still

Than any lake the wind has ever kissed.

And I have borne it secretly within,

A shy soft wonder sleeping at my breast.

And such has been dissemblance I could win

That even those who bore me have not guessed,

When misty moonlight blows from tree to tree,

How near they are at last to finding me.

## GREAT THOUGHTS YOU WEARY ME

Great thoughts you weary me,

    Dignified and stern,

Coming in your robes of state,

    Urging me to learn,

Serious and scholarly,

    Gray heads in a row;

Great thoughts you weary me,

    You weary me so!

I have need of little thoughts,

    Intimate and kind:

Footsteps of departing leaves,

    Laughter of the wind,

Shy white fingers of the rain

    Creeping through my hair,

And the breath of waking buds

    And blossoms in the air.

(Great Thoughts You Weary Me)

I have been so long from these,

    A prisoner with books,

Almost I do forget the stars

    And how a robin looks!

Great thoughts I cannot stay:

    There is that in me

Which thirsts to taste the sea-fog's lips,

    Which hungers for a tree!

I am tired of being wise;

    Let me rise and go

To those who little knowledge have

    And little need to know!

OH IF THE SPRING SHOULD COME!

I am afraid that the elms will leaf!--

Oh if the Spring should come  
Out of the woods on a cool green night

I should be stricken dumb!

I am in league with the wind and rain,

Sombre and gray as I--  
What would I do if a lilac bloomed,  
What if a bird flew by!

Trees in the Spring have a wayward will,

Fearful and fine to see,  
Blossom and bird know a secret thing--

What if they spoke to me!

I am afraid--but I will not run,

Hiding my heart as some;  
I will stand still on the edge of the year--  
Oh if the Spring should come!

ADVENT

I--RIDDLE

What is it that the ground will write

In little, straight green letters--

The apple tree in script of white,

When slim buds doff their sweaters;

The sky in alphabet of blue,

With not a letter sprawling;

What will be written in the dew,

With worms to make the scrawling?

What is the tale of earth and sky,

Can anybody guess it?

I know, we know, my heart and I--

But, oh, let's not confess it!

II--THE WONDER

Cattle are munching it,  
Tasting it, crunching it;

Dreaming of clover

Bees turn it over.

Lilacs are dripping it,  
Humming birds sipping it,

Trees sway and ponder,

Weighing and wonder,

Thrushes are dropping it,

Nobody stopping it;

Squirrel and rabbit

Scurry to grab it.

Dumb things gesticulate,

While, inarticulate,

Young hearts flutter,

Stammer and stutter.

III--GOSSIP

Through the open gates of air  
Gossip comes from everywhere:  
Overhead a reckless bird  
Tells a season in a word;  
Crocus at my garment's hem  
Lifts a whisper on a stem;  
Chipmunk sits up straight to hear  
What his tail can tell his ear.  
And my heart, the ruthless vandal,  
Plunders this delightful scandal.  
April waiting on the stairs  
Thinks she takes us unawares!

APRIL ASSAULT

Marching over rain-drenched meadows,

Rank on rank they swarm:

Little legions, flower forces,

Take the world by storm.

First confuse the eye with color,

Then with fragrance fret

All the cautious, all the prudent,

All the hard-to-get.

Fiercely move the bright battalions

Under April skies:

Stab with stamens, pelt with petals,

Devastate disguise.

Lost the heart, though well it may be

Wary to a fault--

None can stand before such brilliant,

Beautiful assault!

WILL GOD REMEMBER SPRING?

Will God remember spring this year, when all

The world has grimmer business than to look  
On beauty? Will He let the old songs fall

From downy throats, unsheathe the icy brook,  
Splash color with divine abandonment,

Drench us with perfume? Will He think it worth  
His while to make Spring, when men consent

Again to slaughter, and war walks the earth?

Oh, I am starved for beauty! Though the drum

Beat out destruction, I cannot forget

Earth's gracious green adventure, and I come,

Heartsick to pluck one long-stemmed violet.

Last year I found them in this very spot...

Will God remember? What if He forgot!

THAW

All is forgiven now that dogwood blooms

And redbud quickens on the burnished bough,

And every honeysuckle hedge perfumes

The countryside. All is forgiven now.

The clean cool curve of furrows freshly turned,

Young blackbirds strutting sleekly by the plow,

Are harbingers whose meaning we have learned:

Spring has come back--all is forgiven now.

And what of us who, winter long, have moped

Beside the fire and let earth's bleakness sift

Into our souls? Now, better than we hoped,

God gives again His reassuring gift:

Another Spring. Shall we not do our part

And thaw the long, long winter of the heart?

PASTORAL

The pasture-land is inches deep with grass,

Where hungry cattle browse:

And after them, across the fields, my thought

Moves with the cows.

Nipping a clump of this, and crunching that,

They strip the meadow clean

Of leaf and blade; but still my thought pursues,

And eats between:

The delicate design of spider lace,

A black-bird's dizzy bliss,

The fragrance of the clover-bloom, are things

That cattle miss.

The pasture-land holds inches less of green,

When drifting cattle cease--

As full of earth's fecundity as I

Am full of peace.

## SONGS OF WHITE SILENCE

"And the white silence brims the hollow  
of the hills" -- Rupert Brooke.

## WINTER INTERVAL

Stars are white silence on the lips of night

When skies are clear; and when the troubled frown  
Of winter storms obliterates their light

The snow is, still, white silence drifting down.

Farewells are soon white silence on the heart:

Words are forgotten when the sound they make  
Fades into years; but after words depart,

A long white silence is the slow heartbreak.

(Songs of White Silence)

II--FOG

Cool as a curtain blowing in the dawn

And frail as spider's silk,

Across our known horizon has been drawn

A silence white as milk.

What secrets scurry now into the brush

Where squirrel or cony slips--

Who knows? The world is only breathing, "Hush,"

A finger on her lips.

(Songs of White Silence)

III--SAND DUNES

So silently the white sands shift,

Nor here nor there

One can discern a fall, a lift,

Of their despair.

Each dune beneath its burden seems

A lost delight,

A hill whose only trees are dreams

Too still, too white.

(Songs of White Silence)

IV--SPRING KNOWS TOO

Spring knows white silence too, and she will come

Light-footed in the silver wake of showers:

One morning, on the pear tree and the plum

Will drop the silent snowfall of new flowers.

We shall know spring for lark, for thrush, for wren,

For gallant butterflies and droning bees;

But first, and loveliest, we'll know her when

White silence creeps across the orchard trees.

OLD GARDENER

He hears that somewhere wars are lost and won,

Science advances, new stars meet our ken;

He leans upon his spade and lets the sun

Grow hot along his back. The dreams of men

Are not his dreams: he keeps a dream of seeds,

Of cool drops falling on the thirsty soil;

His coveted career this simple toil.

He has a notion that the universe

Revolves about his hoe, that every clod

He breaks is pregnant; and his thoughts rehearse,

Daylong, upon his partnership with God.

Nightlong his darkness kindles with the glow

Of every starry bloom he taught to grow.

## TRAILS

Trails are not dust and pebbles on a hill,

Nor even grass and wild buds by a lake:

Trails are adventure and a hand to still

The restless pulse of life when men would break

Their minds with weight of thinking. Trails are peace,

The call of dreams, the challenge to ascent;

Trails are the brisk unfolding of release

From bitterness and from discouragement.

Trails are the random writing on the wall

That tells how every man, grown tired at heart

Of things correct and ordered, comes to scrawl

His happy hour down--and goes to start

Life over with new eagerness and zest.

Who breaks a trail finds labor that is rest.

## THIS IS TO WALK

I walk, for walking is not steps alone

In delicate precision, each on each,

But walking is all motion I have known:

Bright curve of waves along the sun-swept beach,

Slight stir of silver poplar leaves; the long,

Slow undulations of the ripened grain,

Wind-tossed; and in the quiet dusk, the song

That falls in slender cadences of rain.

This is to walk: Not just to lift the feet,

But oh, to lift the heart wherever breaks

The tide of motion, to take up the beat,

The pulse, the rhythm; though the body aches

With grim frustration, all the senses thrill.

This is to walk--while lying still, so still.

THIS IS THE TRAGEDY

God pity eyes that have not seen the dawn,

Twilight, or shadow, or a wind-blown tree;

But pity more the eyes that look upon

All loveliness, and yet can never see.

God pity ears that have not caught the notes

Of wind or wave, of violin or bird;

But pity more that, daily, music floats

To ears that hear and yet have never heard.

God pity hearts that have not known the gift

Of love requited, comfort and caress;

But, O God, pity more the hearts that drift

From love's high moment to forgetfulness.

This is the tragedy of common sense:

To dim all wonder by indifference.

MOONLIGHT IN GIANT FORREST  
(Sequoia National Park)

Never will moonlight blow from tree to tree

Down any foreign highway of the world,

But out of memory will come back to me

This silent forest. Every pinion furled,

No wind abroad, not any footfall, even,

Only the still, pale sky, the canyon floor  
Mysterious and dark--and out of heaven

Moonlight that drifts like mist from some far shore.

Never was moonlight like to this, I think,

Blown down through great trees, solemn and sublime.

So might have fallen over heaven's brink

The world's first moonlight at the dawn of Time--

Soft, secret, blinding, beautiful descent,

Leaving man breathless with astonishment.

## THE GREAT TREES WAIT

Only man works to make his living longer,

To feed the flesh, establish brain and brawn.

High on the hills, more wise and how much stronger,

The great trees wait from sunset unto dawn,

From dawn to sunset. Effortless, they gather

Something that quickens into bark and root.

Only man seeks for life; the great trees, rather,

Are letting life seek every branch and shoot.

Only man rushes headlong, hither, yonder,

Lost in a vain attempt to prolong life.

High on the hills the great trees dream and ponder,

Serene above man's struggle and his strife.

Unmoved they wait, content to stand and give

God's endless flow of life a place to live.

TREES IN THE FOG

Trees in the fog are reaching for my heart--

Ghost fingers glisten where night's fallen pearls  
Lodge for a moment. Beauty is a part

Of that frail mist that yonder drifts and curls--  
Aye yes, and longing. Though I am aware

Of nothing uttered, no voiced agonies,

This way passed sorrow lately I could swear.

Some grievous burden broods upon these trees.

Reach for my heart, ye weighted down with woe,

Soft through the fog I breathe my sympathy!

Dear, hapless trees, grief-bowed, I know, I know,

On whom like sorrow fell but recently--

Fell, and was still; then vanished down the years,

Leaving, like yours, a jewelled trail of tears.

## OLD TREES

Old trees have gathered stillness through the years:

Life's swift relentless lash that drives the crowd  
Hither and yon, to laughter or to tears,

Has left old trees unhurried. They are proud  
To sift long shadows with green finger-tips,

Smother small bird-talk, pull the twilight down  
And wear it like a girdle for the hips,

Or higher with one white star for a crown.

Old trees have played the host so many days

To winds, and wings, and broken-hearted men,  
They are good listeners. They do not praise,

Nor blame, but fold the heart in silence. Then  
Why bring to men our wordless agonies?

Let us slip out and take them to old trees.

BARREN

Lonely as nothing else ever is lonely,

Barren as nothing else ever is bare,

So is a dry hill, treeless, with only

Acres of bleak dust curved to the air.

Nothing is stark as a curve that must follow

Blindly a course that the builder forgot,

Nothing is desolate as a long hollow

Cupped to the roots of a tree that is not.

TEARS ARE BUT SPINDRIFT

When little leaves are leaning to the light,

Tears are but spindrift, blown along the dark.

Who hopes to hug his heart-break, has the night;

But when the dawn spills silver, and the lark

Spills music, and the languid lips of leaves

Loosen to let out laughter, there is less

Than shadow, even, of the thing that grieves,

Skirting our lost horizon of distress.

The heart, however faithful to its pain,

Has found no armor to withstand the way

Of each new morning coming back again,

As though it were the world's initial day,

Weighted with wonder woe cannot dismiss.

Tears are but spindrift in the face of this.

SAND DUNES

The grizzled mendicants are moving by,

The old men of the beach. They do not come  
With quickened step: they are so slow the eye

Can only guess that they are edging home.

And now they pull the silence like a cape

Across their faces as they near the shore:  
They are remembering youth's wild escape

From parent-waves that now they hunger for.

They are remembering bleak trails afar,

That knew no healing water; and the strife  
With wind and sun. They do not know they are

Part of a great adventure that is life.

They only know the tide comes in to meet

With them: and they are tired: and dreams are sweet.

THERE IS CRYING

There is crying in the heart when the night wind blows,

When the ghost-fog creeps and the grey gulls start  
From the far dune's edge where the still tide flows,

There is crying, there is crying in the heart.

There is crying in the heart when the last leaf falls,

When the first star stabs with its silver dart,

When the marsh grass stirs and the lone loon calls,

There is crying, there is crying in the heart.

There is loneliness that goes beyond the sky or sea,

There is longing that can tear the world apart:

For the things that were and the things that cannot be,

There is crying, there is crying in the heart.

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NIGHT SONG

Now shadowed shapes are moving up the hills

Of twilight, they that were the happy hours,  
Dawn-pastured, eager; and the slow dark spills

An inky silence, spills and overpowers

The last gold hilltop. Now a fear of night

Fumbles the marsh grass, hesitant. Unshaken,  
Skyward the little new moon climbs, a bright

And certain promise that the dawn will waken.

Frail hope, indeed, but by it are dispelled

Earth-tremors, and the dark grows hushed with dreams,  
Heavy with sleep, kind boon, and quiet held

Against the heart for comfort; darkness seems  
Kinder than day itself, to one who knows

High on the hills the white dawn-flower blows.

## NIGHT SILENCE

Nights I have known--and stars, but never one

Like this that now in gracious mood lets down  
Through twilit pools of shadow and of sun

A canopy of silence on the town.

Now blooms one star with something less than light,

And something more than peace the shadows hold;

No breath of wind stirs even; and the flight

Of homing wings is here a thought untold.

This is not night--it is warm hands that bless;

Such quietness comes not of dusk alone.

From some far world infinite kindliness

Slips like a silver mist into our own;

And with it dreams, that make the silence sing

Less of the night than of remembering.

AUTUMN TWILIGHT

Here in the autumn twilight beauty lies

Upon the hills, as motionless as sleep.

There will be stirring where the shadows creep  
Down in the marsh grass, as the heron flies,  
And motion higher, in the dreaming skies,

When homing wings reach up and climb the steep  
Ascent of heaven; but the hills will keep  
Beauty, so still one wonders if it dies.

There is no name for beauty that can be

A thing so quiet as that far, faint line  
Of purple silence, guarded by a tree

So straight, so still, it scarcely seems a pine.  
Here in the shadowed dusk one can but see,

And reach for wonder words will not confine.

PASTORALS

I--MORNING MEADOW

The whole of joy comes out to meet us now:

Lambs at the sunrise frisking with delight;

The whole of peace is yon reflective cow,

    Munching a dream with each indifferent bite  
Of corn or clover; from the eastern slope

    Grey shadows scuttle, wary of the morn.

Young lambs are joyous caperings of hope,

    Old cows are satisfaction mixed with corn.

White frisking lambs upon a sunrise hill

    Youth-long my thoughts were; and age-long shall be  
Contented cattle taking oft their fill

    Of fragrant dreams with calm complacency.

O morning meadow, dreaming in the sun,

My whole heart is a cry that we are one.

(Pastoral)

II--THESE WINTER FIELDS

These winter fields are more than leafless trees

Gone the lone way of desolation, or

The mute heartbreak of withered grasses. These

Are beauty gone to rest, dreams to explore.

Now from the misty realms of summer floats

Remembrance of pale perfumes faintly shed.

Frail bits of bird-song dropped from dewy throats

Haunt us as something that is not quite dead.

These winter fields are all that we have known

Of spring's bright magic, summer's lazy lure,  
Sleeping a moment. We are not alone

In barren pastures, wasted now and poor:

This calm cool edge of evening lifts a cry

From yesterday, of loveliness laid by.

III--BIRDS IN THE EVENING

Birds in the evening have a dearer way

Than song to win us. When the shadows creep  
Westward at sunset and the little day

Is just a tired child that longs for sleep,  
Birds in the trees are wanderers come home:

Shy twitters, timid flutterings attest  
That naught down windy ways they found to roam  
Was half so precious as a little nest.

Birds in the evening are the heart's desire

For peace and shelter: less a feathered throng  
Than darkness falling and an open fire,

The glow of candles, dreaming; and the long  
Slow lift and settle of their weary wings  
Is more the folding of remembering.

IF YOU SHOULD FIND A DEAD BIRD

If you should find a dead bird on the ground,

Oh, do not make

A grave to hold it--an earth-house where sound

Cannot awake.

One must not bury music. Never press

Cold clods upon

A fallen singer. Song is spaciousness

Though it be gone.

To let a dead bird lie is not neglect.

Oh, leave the place:

When song is hushed, grant it the last respect

Of light and space.

SONG FOR SUMMER'S END

We shall go back to former days, but not

As formerly will they be burdened. We

Shall meet across the pathway of our thought,

Sometimes, the shadow of a giant tree;

Above accustomed voices we shall hear

Again a gushing stream where gray trout bask;

Or lift the startled vision to a deer,

Gazing at us across some time-worn task.

We shall go back to former days--and yet

No day will ever be again the same:

New strength for toil, new hope for each regret,

Go back with us. Life cannot break the claim

Imposed upon the heart in that still place

Where we have walked with beauty face to face.

## HARVEST EVENING

Against the barn he piles the pumpkins high.

So fraught with labor,

He leaves the golden pumpkin in the sky

Unto his neighbor.

Beside the sink she stands, and sifts and stirs,

So busy baking--

When all the sugar-cooky stars are hers

For just the taking.

The night goes by in glory. Lost in cares,

They miss its beauty.

The harvest of indifference is theirs;

And dust and duty.

## ICE STORM

Was it but yesterday these bushes bowed

Before the wind in meek obedience?

Their rigid branches now so cold and proud

Seem frozen scimitars of insolence.

Earth is a crystal palace overnight.

Touch not, move not: A hundred fallen spires  
Are clinging to the fence lines, brief but bright.

One gesture, and the whole returns to wires.

Such brittle beauty breaks. Stand silently,

Lost in a world where looking must suffice.

Breathe not, breathe not: lest breath returning be

A knife thrust in the throat, a blade of ice.

## WINTER WALK

Come let us walk on silence, let us go  
Across the pasture: write upon the snow,  
In furtive footsteps that will soon be white,  
Our little legend for the coming night.

Then let us go beyond the level land  
Where trees, in armour soft as silk, all stand  
Like sentinels; full gently let us creep,  
Nor wake the small stream from its crystal sleep.

Oh let us step as softly as all furred  
And feathered creatures do: a single word  
Might break the brittle moon and let it fall  
In silver splinters--that would shatter all.

**GENERAL**

TO MY MOTHER

I think, when I look in your tender face,

How most like God it was to give me you.

Music and laughter have their time and place,

Beauty and sunlight, and a dream or two;

But oh, my Mother, when my eyes look back

Along the years these other blessings fade--

I glimpse your face and nothing do I lack,

Remembering the wonder that has made.

And how like God it was that other things

He gave in measure: Some have more, some less,

A limit to the smiles, the songs, the wings.

But all the love, the peace, the tenderness

That make a mother, pure and undefiled,

God in His love gave once to every child.

SONG FOR THREE DAUGHTERS

I--REBECCA

Your coming is blue larkspurs in the sun

Against an old brick wall.

So blue your frock, your burnished hair so red,

Your slender grace so tall,

My heart takes on new vistas in your height,

As proud wings take the air--

Only to lose all distance in the soft

Confusion of your hair!

II--RUTH

You are a yellow tulip round and sweet

    Within a windy place,

Unruffled and secure. Contentment shines

    Discreetly on your face.

To touch you is to call the spirit back

    To paths of dust and dew--

Glad of the common earth and little girls

    Comfortable as you.

(Song for Three Daughters)

III--LOIS

Your cheeks are apple blossoms in the dusk,

Your hair the shining stuff

Of goldenrod and primrose; to tell you

No flower is enough.

One sister gives me wings, and one transplants

My feet upon the ground--

But, little one, you open pansy eyes

Slowly--and I am drowned!

## CHRISTIAN DOCTOR

He knows the healing ministry of hands,

The drugs to give, the potion to impart--

But, more than body ill, he understands

The deep, deep need of every patient's heart.

His kindness is a fire that lights the room

Against all chilliness: he has a way

Of smiling that dispels the deepest gloom,

And skies that clouded are no longer gray.

God enters with him through the sick-room door;

They probe together for the hidden hurt.

Men call him "doctor." He is this--and more.

With manner gentle, and with touch expert,

He heals our scars and takes away our pains.

And then he goes; but, somehow, God remains.

## SOUTH PACIFIC

### I--BOY FROM TEXAS

Whenever sudden swirls of shifting sand

Snarled at our pup tents in the twilight, we  
Would see him leave the chow line, and go stand

Staring into that angry yellow sea,

One finger on his lips, one anxious ear

Leaned as though listening for some far word.  
We listened too; but all that we could hear

Was his own muttering, "The herd, the herd."

We knew he counted cattle in his sleep

At night; the Texas Whiteface came to be  
The company of dreams; that he would creep

Down dusty highways of the mind, where he--  
Battles forgotten--would be home again,  
Rounding the herd up on some Texas plain.

## II--BOY FROM VERMONT

He used to watch the orange sun burn out,

Leaving its crimson stain; but there would be

No sky for him--for all he thought about

Was bright leaves falling from a maple tree:

He walked knee-deep in sunset clouds across

That sky, and thought each shining mound he kicked

A heap of leaves he gave the wind to toss,

Or flaming ones his vagrant fancy picked.

And when the slow fogs came, as was their wont,

Their dismal dripping never seemed to fail

To bring his grin and "Boys, that's old Vermont

With maple sugar dripping in the pail."

You couldn't get him down with war or weather....

They walked all roads--he and Vermont--together.

(South Pacific)

III--BOY FROM CALIFORNIA

Above the rumble of artillery,

He said he heard another louder roar:

The sound of great waves coming in from sea

To break upon a well-remembered shore.

And he would reach his hands out through the night,

Groping for something. There are those who say

That, even in the dust and smoke of fight,

He always smelled a little bit of spray.

And when the great gray-winged birds of doom

Came over, he was slower than the rest

To duck for cover, finding less of gloom

Then beauty in them. From the lonely crest

Of his white dream he saw gray gulls instead:

And "Santa Monica" is all he said.

IV--BOY FROM KENTUCKY

For him the stars were stallions of the sky,

Feeding on bluegrass. Down the long, long slope  
From zenith to horizon he would hie,

After his supper, on a lazy lope.

"Boys, down in old Kentucky," he would say,

"The grass is bluer than that patch of air.

I wonder who feeds sugar to the bay,

Or strokes the roan, now that I am not there."

We let him talk. And if a stray shell came,

He never cringed, but with his Southern drawl

He said, "You missed me, baby--that's a shame.

But listen, now: there is no use at all

In racing with Kentucky in this strife--

I've ridden Thoroughbreds for all my life."

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

I--VISITOR FROM YESTERDAY

Who<sup>e</sup>ver reads may find himself a host

To more than words: a quaint, invisible,  
Disturbing presence, moving like a ghost

From yesterday. A strangely lovable,  
Engaging ghost, who cannot quite forget:

"Poor Richard" leans from out the past to peer  
At how the line is spaced, the type is set.

He almost seems to say, "What have we here?"

How could he rest? That brilliant, tireless mind--  
That helped to frame the freedom, speed the mail,  
Investigate, invent--must somehow find

The long, long sleep a trifle trite and stale.  
It takes the eager, the inquisitive,  
So long to die--who have so much to give.

II--HE DREAMED A STOVE

Perhaps from out the gleaming coals it came,

When backs were freezing and each face grew hot,

The swift idea: why not capture flame

And lock it in a box? What not, why not?

It might have been like this. Nobody knows

Just where the thought is born that makes the deed,

Nor really cares, just so it grows and grows

And reaches out to fill a heart-felt need.

He dreamed a stove. But oh, he dreamed much more:

The smell of home-made bread and popping corn,

The old men gathered at the country store;

And children, huddled on some icy morn,

With hands outstretched. All cherished, all esteemed,

All simple, warm and friendly things--he dreamed.

(Benjamin Franklin)

III--MAN WITH A KITE

Was he a boy upon a windy hill,

His kite-string in his hand, when first he knew  
The wild applause of thunder and the thrill

Of lightning flashing on the startled view?

Was he a boy, when first he felt the pull

Of something stronger, stronger than the wind:  
A young idea, bright and beautiful,

That could be more, if harnessed, disciplined?

And did he run along the hills with it

And toss it, with his kite, into the sky;

Then draw it to himself and try to fit

The thought into the scheme he meant to try?

How many years, how many kites took flight,

Before he knew he held the key to light!

IV--FIRE! FIRE!

No matter where he went, or what he saw,

He had a spark that kindled into flame.

The fire of learning and the fire of law

Were both, alike, ignited in his name.

This is a truth philosophers confess,

These are the things that statesmen talk about.

But any dozing school-boy cares much less

For fires so started, than for those put out.

He planned protection. He could not foresee

The racing engines, screaming sirens, all

The frenzied furer that would one day be

Earth's high adventure for each eager, small,

Uplifted face--unmindful of school books--

Lost in a world of ladders, hose and hooks.

(Benjamin Franklin)

V--HOMETOWN

(Philadelphia, U.S.A.)

The youth who walked the shabby streets of home,

Contesting for their shabbiness, could tell  
What toil and tears it takes before men come

With confidence to hand the freedom bell:

The long, long look along the years, that must

Precede the written word, the law laid down;

For he, who holds the future in his trust,

Must walk beyond the streets of any town.

Most men find daily living dull and slow:

These only reach the ultimate by strife.

But some men garner greatness as they go

About the ordinary tasks of life,

Seeing in simple things what few can see--

And these live larger than locality.

VI--HERE WAS AMERICA

Here was no man--but all men put in one:

Creative thought, inventive skill, the zeal  
For perseverance at a task begun.

Here was the high white hope that all men feel,  
But few attain to. Here was reaching up,

And getting under, probing deep; the far,  
Remote ideal extended. Here the cup

Of living held one bright, imprisoned star.

Here was America: the something more

Than land, or language, something yet to be,  
Not found in field and forest, hill or shore:

The great enduring passion to be free.

Not just in documents upon a shelf,

But freedom written in the man himself.

THE OTHER WORLD

## THE BOOK

The books men write are but a fragrance blown

From transient blossoms crushed by human hands;  
But, high above them, splendid and alone,

Staunch as a tree, there is a Book that stands  
Unmoved by storms, unchallenged by decay:

The winds of criticism would profane  
Its sacred pages, but the Truth, the Way,

The Life are in it--and they beat in vain.

O traveler from this to yonder world,

Pause in the shade of God's magnificent,  
Eternal Word--that tree whose roots are curled

About our human need. When strength is spent,  
Stretch out beneath some great, far-reaching limb

Of promise, and find rest and peace in Him.

GOD WITH US

In the carpenter shop of Joseph

There was more than the bright tools made:  
Sometimes a Song in the silence,

Or a Light where the young Lad played.

In the home of Mary and Martha

There was more than the guest who came:  
Sometimes a Voice in the darkness,  
Or out of the shadow, Flame.

In the judgment hall of Pilate

There was more than a man forsooth:  
There was a Peace and a Presence--  
And the Answer to "What is truth?"

## JOSEPH OF NAZARETH

Did Joseph know the secret that God hid

    Within the heart of His dear Son? And did,  
Sometimes, his raucous rasping saw grow still,

    The while he gazed upon a distant hill?

And did his lifted hammer sometimes fail

    In mid-air, and his hand forget the nail,  
The while his blurring vision seemed to see

    The far-off shadow of a single tree?

Then did he turn, his strong arms open wide,

    And reach and draw the young Lad to his side?  
Did they, together, put the tools away

    And walk the fields--and work no more that day?

## HOW MUCH MORE GOD

Man spends his strength on granite and on steel,

He builds his structures reaching for the sky.

Above their puny pretense, quite alone

The timeless mountains stand aloof and high.

Man writes his name in symphony and song,

Along the path where weary mortals plod

He seeks articulation. There remains

More music in the silences of God.

Man flings his feeble flutters into space

And prides himself on progress and on change.

The silent stars, eternities away,

Maintain their secret orbs remote and strange.

Man breaks the alabaster of his heart.

But all the precious ointment, sacrificed

To voice his human love, is lost beside

God's love, unspeakable, in Jesus Christ.

AN OLD HYMN

Came back across the far hill of the night,

Lifting our darkness to a steady glow,

Something that was half music and half Light---

Came back an old hymn on the radio.

After emotions, that we could not speak

With Bach and Brahms had torn our spirits wide,

This was cool fingers on a fevered cheek:

"Abide with me, fast falls the eventide."

This was all gentleness, humility,

This was white holiness that came and curled

Closer than flesh about our frailty;

And this was healing for a broken world.

Long time we sat and clasped security---

"O Thou who changest not, abide with me."

KEEP ME SINGING

Thy wonders around us

Are easy to find,  
Great beauty to see, Lord--  
But there are the blind.

In treble and tenor  
And in the bass clef,  
Sweet music to hear, Lord--  
But there are the deaf.

Thy fields and Thy forests,  
Thy mountains, proclaim  
Good paths to be walked, Lord--  
But there are the lame.

So many with senses  
No longer acute!  
Dear Lord, keep me singing--  
For there are the mute.

## THE THOUGHTS OF GOD

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.---Isaiah 55:9

The thoughts of men drift down the stream of time,

To lose themselves at last beneath the sand.

But far above, majestic and sublime,

The thoughts of God are granite peaks that stand  
Eternal and alone. No matter how

Men nobly strive to share the broken crust  
Of their best thinking, all one day must bow

Before God's thoughts--and grovel in the dust.

So let us climb the mountains of the Word:

Reach out to touch God's thoughts; so let us scale  
The highest pinnacles. For Christ the Lord

Has said that though all else must fade and fail,  
These will endure. When thoughts of men all cease,  
God's thoughts will still be life and joy and peace.

## THE LOVE OF GOD

God left His glory on the sunlit hills,

He dropped His peace beside all quiet lakes.

He put His power where the torrent spills

From mighty cataracts; where thunder shakes

The dome of Heaven and wild lightnings flash;

Where oceans lift their calm and level length

To mount in breakers, foaming as they crash.

And in all growing things, He put His strength.

But when God wanted men to glimpse His love

He chose a wooden cross--a simple thing:

One timber pointing to His throne above,

And one stretched out to human need. Oh sing,

My ransomed soul, throughout eternity:

The love of God, in Christ--on Calvary!

## BANNER OF LOVE

He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.--Song of Solomon 2:4

His banner over me was love, was love!

Say not the way was long, nor fierce the strife:

For He was there, and every moment of

The earthly conflict was abundant life.

Speak not of hopes deferred, of dreams laid down--

Through all of these His presence has sufficed.

This was my joyous privilege, my crown:

In every furnace, to have walked with Christ.

His banner over me was love. Let this,

And only this, be written where I lie

When all life's toil and tears I shall dismiss;

Raise over me this single battle cry--

Write it in words of flame for all to read.

Who knows the Saviour has no other need.

WHO GOETH HENCE

When death shall come to summon us at last,

Some will remember children and the sound  
Of little footsteps hallowing the past,

As driven snowflakes hallow oft the ground;  
Some will remember sunlight on a fence;

And some the breath of blossoms in the rain;  
Some will glimpse stars. And all the going hence  
Of these will be a wishing to remain.

But some will think of One who said, "And I,

If I be lifted up will draw to me

All men." And when these latter come to die,

With faces lifted to Eternity

They shall go forth with calm, untroubled eyes,  
Like children hasting to a glad surprise.