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Title Pillars to Rememberance

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## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

*By the Same Author*

WALLS AND HEDGES (Out of print)

*Sidgwick & Jackson*

HAUNTED ISLANDS (Out of print)

*Basil Blackwell*

THE VORTEX (Out of print)

*Victor Gollancz*

TRANSVALUATIONS

THE HUMAN DAWN

ENGLISH FANTASIES (Out of print)

THE TOWER TO HEAVEN\*

THE CURLEW CRIES

*Oxford University Press*

TRIPTYCH: I APPROACH

II THE FUGUE OF TIME

III AN ASCENT

*The Fortune Press*

PARIS SYMPHONY

*George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd.*

\*THE TOWER TO HEAVEN is the acting version of BABEL, originally published by Ernest Benn, Ltd., in 1927, and now out of print

PILLARS TO  
REMEMBRANCE

*John  
Redwood  
Anderson*

*Geoffrey Cumberlege*  
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## TO CERTAIN FRIENDS

To Friendship, which is neither given nor bought,  
but, like the wind, comes with free hands of power  
and, like the sun, dwells in clear innocence:

Friendship: the freighted argosies of thought,  
enriching the mind's cities till they tower  
bright o'er a world of large experience:

Friendship: the pollen of the spirit brought  
on the chance gales of being, flower to flower,  
that joy may have unfailing Aprils thence.



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J.R.A.



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I will plant pillars to remembrance.

—*From 'Radha'.*

A faithful friend is the medicine of life.

—*Ecclesiasticus.*

## ONE AFTERNOON

To Gilbert Turner

*Immutable, the trees  
stood in their shadowed silences;  
immutable, the field's green vesture lay  
upon the burning limbs of day;  
immutable, the soul  
of heaven's quiet blue  
looked through  
where the leaves' apse flamed to an aureole;  
immutable, with bended head  
the brazen cattle fed;  
immutable, the sheep  
were like white dreams upon the sweep  
of the breathless plains of sleep;  
while, half-way down  
the hill of sunset, stood the sun,  
immutable.*

*Immutable. But, now and then,  
the trees whispered, like men  
speaking together: now, the beech  
woke to a gentle speech,  
and, nodding gently to one side,  
the pine replied;  
and now, as if a thought should pass,  
the grass  
moved like the universal sighing of space;*

## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

*and now, across the face  
of the centennial oak,  
swept a slow ruffle of cloud—  
I know not if aloud  
it spoke.*

*So, on the calm space-trees  
that fringe the eternities,  
comes the light blowing of a divine thought;  
and the trees whisper to each other:  
sun to child-planet, star to his star-brother,  
and comets passing with faint hair distraught.*

*The universe—and all that dwells  
on the thin planetary shells . . .  
and, like a trouble of winds that move,  
Life:  
a brief song, a momentary strife—  
among the highest leaves, lifted into love;  
along the ground, flowing away in death.*

*A momentary song . . . and then  
the universe again  
is but the memory of a dying breath:  
a memory, where no winds pass  
over the slumbers of the grass,  
where no winds stir the shadowed silences  
—immutable—  
that wrap the slumber of the trees.*

## ONE AFTERNOON

*Immutable, the field's green vesture lay  
upon the burning limbs of day;  
immutable, with bended head  
the brazen cattle fed;  
immutable, the soul  
of heaven's quiet blue  
looked through  
where the leaves' apse flamed to an aureole;  
while, half-way down  
the hill of sunset, stood the sun,  
immutable.*

## TWO KINGS

*To Wilfrid Gibson*

### I. KHUFU

O ay! I am Khufu, and rule a land  
made mighty by the might of ancient kings,  
sober, industrious, frugal—by the sword  
planted, to bear, as its rich fruit, this throne:  
others had power, but mine shows absolute,  
and Egypt lives or dies as if my word  
were a God's vital ordinance. Old wars  
have left me their good legacies of peace,  
and old privations poured into my lap  
their riches: Syrian cedar, and the green  
malachite, and blue turquoise from the mines,  
copper, and gold, and lapis; Nubia sends  
her ostrich plumes, and Punt her perfumed gums.  
O ay, I am Khufu! and the whole earth  
shall hear my name and tremble.

And what then?

I am Khufu, and some day I must die—  
go out like a puffed flame, leaving the world  
I loved, the pomp and livery of my years,  
the crowded millions kneeling to my will;  
be for awhile a splendour in men's mouths,  
and then—nothing! This is the end: this flesh  
crumbled and but a pinch of poor dust blown  
on the wind's contempt. Well to retort: 'Life's worth

## TWO KINGS

the living, if from its burst grape thy tongue  
squeeze the last delicate secrecies of sense——  
what is the skin but offal?' I reply:  
Man does not live in moments, and the sum  
of joys shall not complete him. Or who counsels:  
'Strike and bring down the flying chance—the sky's  
beyond us.'? But the sky is all my wish;  
bird-flight but streaks it, leaving still unchallenged  
its blue supremacy. Or urges one:  
'Man's life's continued in the lives of men:  
thy son shall be thyself.'? I answer: No!  
What are all future glories to death's eye?  
what, to death's ear, all future songs? And if  
a last consoles: 'The snake but sloughs its sheath:  
shall not the spirit of the just man dwell  
with Ra, or in the Fields of Earu  
reap corn of seven cubits?' What shall I  
care for your dim Amenti? or to sail,  
sky-captive, in the sun-barque of the Gods?

This, this I know! I know no other world!  
this Egypt with her hieropompic Nile's  
progression to the bowed reeds' hushed responses;  
this sun's bright triumph through diurnal praise;  
the north wind in the palms, and the black bars  
of shadow on the scorch of sands; these cliffs  
whose grey face, caught by the sun's sudden eye,  
flushes soft-hued in fluted tapestries  
its insubstantial arras; and, at night,  
the stars. Men say they are the ghosts of men . . .

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

O beautiful, poor ghosts, how close you crowd:  
envious, envious of the lives men live!  
Not such would I become; but here in the earth,  
earth the true field of all life's questing loves,  
would I be made immortal—could I but cheat  
time of his hated revenue, and hide  
this body from the prying hand of change.

For what am I? Bone, sinew, nerve, and blood:  
eyes that see, ears that hear, and tongue that speaks;  
this walking flesh that all men call Khufu—  
this much! If somewhat other, as men guess,  
soul that alone gives flesh significance,  
—though what is *soul*, if not  
the spell hope mutters to ease pride's mortal hurt?—  
yet is the flesh that stable anchorage  
where, at adventure's end, soul furls her sails;  
and I, on the high seas of chartless death,  
might hope at least some port.

So it becomes  
soul's need to rescue body. Others have reared  
their pyramids, death's regal seats; but I,  
I will up-mass a mountain, made by man,  
to bring death to his knees! Zoser shall shrink  
abashed, and the built boast of Senefru  
dwindle before me. On the desert's shelf,  
tier above tier my dream of stone shall rise  
splendid in pride and in contempt of death;  
and I, dwelling therein, shall dwell secure.

\* \* \* \*

## TWO KINGS

So—the last block is hauled into its niche,  
and all, save the door's gap in the north face,  
beautiful with smooth limestone, peak to foot.  
There, in a silent room I have prepared  
deep-chambered in the living stuff of the earth,  
dark, secret, inaccessible, my flesh  
shall lie in its sarcophagus of stone  
portcullised against change; while, over it,  
all the hewn strength of my piled pyramid  
shall lift its huge protection. So I win:  
for while one rag of flesh remains, one shard  
of brittle bone, I have not wholly died:  
something remains that was, and is, Khufu.

My pyramid! How splendidly it climbs  
the intense glare of noon—its ramps converged  
on the sharp ultimate peak where all thought ends,  
and the mind rests, poised on eternity.  
How nobly square its faces front the world,  
equable to the light of sun or moon  
upon them, impassive to all winds. Immense  
the spread base hugs the very bones of the earth:  
for, without roots to clamp reality,  
no dream of man nor height of pyramid  
shall stand secure. But this, mortised in truth,  
so stands for ever! Dawns of a million years  
shall lay blest hands upon its kindling brow,  
and the red lips of never-counted sunsets  
kiss it to sleep; while, over it, bright Gods  
shall look from their calm countenance of stars

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

on one like to themselves—freeman of time,  
in his own right immortal; who, like a cry,  
lifts up his faith's sublime last affirmation,  
silencing all oblivion: Behold, I live!

And years shall pass, centuries droop away;  
nations shall come and go—the face of the world,  
changed from its golden look of youth, put on  
the features of its grand maturity:  
and still my pyramid shall stand. Old age,  
that never yet for beauty turned aside  
nor had respect of greatness, shall o'er-scar  
that visage with his scabbled lines: and still  
my pyramid shall stand, and the dim eyes  
of the last generations turn and stare  
on its rough ruin mighty in decay.  
Not utterly shall the blowing desert hide  
its memorable proportion, nor the floods  
submerge it, nor the winds eat up its strength;  
till, in the end, having outlived mankind,  
—though but a tumbled acre of loose stone  
on the sand tilted—it shall be the loud  
boast of some titan earthquake to wrench off  
the granite lid of my sarcophagus,  
and show to the world—even as the last convulsions  
signal its dissolution—Khufu, the King.

## II. SARGON OF AKKAD

Draw near, my son! Yet, yet a little while  
the bird of breath flutters with broken wing  
ere it lie still for ever. O Naram-Sin,  
behold not now thy father's bloody shape,  
nor the wrecked leavings of earth's conqueror;  
but see in me a burnt-out torch of dreams  
where still a blue spark trembles: and from that spark  
set thine own soul alight, that, once again,  
my dream may flare before the world. Let not  
the clash and insult of this overthrow  
be the last sound I hear, but thy loved voice  
singing anew the song that dies in me.  
Earth's conqueror! and yet, not such—not such!  
only a tool in the large hand of God:  
a man made sacrosanct in his own eyes  
by the reached splendours of his dream.

Long since,  
humble and poor I dwelt: my task to tend  
rich gardens and the leafy nests of fruit,  
and all my will to make my garden fair.  
Was there some ragged outskirts, tare or weed,  
or dry unfruitful earth?—I took no peace  
till the brown place grew green, and the wild edge  
owned my sweet law. I pruned the o'er-wooded branch,  
loosening the tree's locked beauty; made through leaves  
casements where the warm lips of ripening suns

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

might kiss the callow melons. Then came that day  
when first the holy Ishtar touched my soul  
with vision and with pain—for it is pain  
to see so far ahead of other men,  
and hope too much—and I was driven out,  
while through my soul the divine voice went crying:  
'Let Larsa be thy lily, Ur thy rose,  
Erech thy fig-tree, Borsippa thy vine,  
Lagash thy golden gourd in its harsh leaves,  
Nippur thy tuber-rose. The world's thy garden,  
and life itself the perfume of thy toil.'

Then swift event, jostling on swift event,  
new-shaped my destiny: the throne of Kish  
cried out to me to save her from the weak  
tyranny that reigned upon it: I became king—  
but hardly king, ere the blown brass of fate  
signalled, and at the head of my packed thousands  
I marched to empire. First fell the walls of Erech,  
and to the shrine of Enlil, stooped in chains,  
Lugal-Zaggisi crawled; then Ur fell flat,  
her turrets and high towers were mounded earth,  
her gateways rubbish; after her, Lagash;  
till I, triumphant, in the Eastern Sea  
washed my red weapons. Eastward still the hand  
of the great Ishtar prompted: I struck Elam,  
the Mountain that strikes terror; I cut off  
the life of Susa; Barakhsi and Ganni,  
Saba and Shirikhum, louted before me.  
Then westward swung the weathercocks of war:

## TWO KINGS

Bassar reëchoed my loud spears; the king  
of Barshakhanda to the shrine E-kur  
I sent fast-riveted; all Amurru  
was mine! From Lebanon's deep-cedared heights  
I gazed upon the sea: my empire's belt  
of lapis! and there, in the rough rocks, carved out  
my images, a terror in men's hearts;  
Taurus, with all her silver-bearing veins,  
no less, was mine. From sea to sea I drew  
the corded seine of my large sovereignty,  
the meshes of my love; then, to my land  
returning, I built Akkad for my joy:  
pulse, brain, and will of this new world risen  
within the world—a knot knotting the net  
the divine Fowler flung across mankind  
to take its wildness captive.

Such was my life. Yet did its outward face  
belie its nature, in that it wore the look  
all proud ambitions in the hearts of kings  
commonly wear; but in my heart a God  
dwelt with his lovely vision: for it was love  
that blew, a living wind, athwart my face;  
the bird of love that spread its wings before me,  
bright in the murk of battle. Long had I seen  
my cities camped against each other, or crouched  
behind their gates in fear: now, 'twas Lagash  
that laughed while Umma wept, and now, 'twas Umma  
that did destroy Lagash. Where, then, was peace?  
where happiness? where wealth? Where all for which

## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

a nation lives: to stand her children's bulwark,  
the nurse of their best manhood? They were grown  
no garden, but a riot and weedy tangle  
throttling my garden's beauty! but I would bring  
them peace: shoulder to shoulder see them strive  
at the wide tasks of empire; that all those things  
that make life worth the having, and man's days  
memorable, should grow strong-stemmed among them,  
blooming the years with joy. For, from the first,  
when flowers were all my business, and ripe fruit  
my duty, I saw clear how nothing lives  
to its sole good alone: all is one Life,  
that through the manifold organs of the world  
strives to one loveliness. Add flower to flower  
throughout a thousand Apriis—what hast thou  
but flowers? Now go, and with far-sighted hand  
plant here thy seed, thy bulb, there graft thy slip,  
where shape or hue or fragrance yet unknown  
invites thee; trim thy bordering hedges close,  
lead water in soft conduits; day by day  
go heedfully about thy joyful task—  
and lo! a garden: beauty in beauty set:  
a sum more sweet than was its sweet addition.  
And so with men: the tyrant or throned power,  
prodigally splendoured in the crowd's gaping sights,  
is but the single blossom, where all else  
are weeds, that is not earth and dung; so, too,  
the crowned acquisitive city that sucks in  
tribute by every root of conquest spread,  
and in the shadow of her huge renown

## TWO KINGS

kills her weak sisters. But the very quick  
of citizenship is that all share the toil  
and glory of their city, and the word  
*Empire* has for its sounding syllables  
the names of nations and of kings. For man,  
that is one life, spends in men's many lives  
his ultimate riches—life to life so knit  
that from their sum a wealth beyond their sum  
piles up, and each, as steward of the whole,  
richer than with a less supremacy.

This was my dream: and so did I become  
the gardener of mankind. Good shared by two  
is doubled good: shared by the multitude,  
that infinite good of man that all men seek.  
So I broke down the barriers that old wars  
had raised; built roads and dug canals: Kissura  
took the young Babylon by the hand, and Opis  
kissed Eridu on her sea-briny lips;  
Akkad received oxen and sheep and gold,  
and, in return, reaped bare her glebes, and stripped  
her vineyards naked; merchandise from Magan,  
the wealth of Elam, Ethiopian bales,  
were seen in the broad markets of Lagash,  
while from her fields Lagash sent droves of asses  
northward and southward; slaves from Amurru  
and slaves from Gutium walked in the streets of Kish.  
This was my dream: out of the curse and cry  
of city at war with city, to lift up  
from all the throats of empire love's one song.

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

Then came that day when, from the walls of Akkad,  
we saw the whole world to its utmost rim  
risen against us. Fools! so to prefer  
their cramped ambitions and contemptible rights  
to the great love of Sargon. Blind! who saw  
servitude where the nobler freedom dwelt.  
And yet—not Sargon's love! not Sargon's will!  
God's love: God's will—and Sargon but his sword.  
Still my good fortune held; and I hurled forth  
victory from all the gates of Akkad: once  
again I felt the meshes of my net  
grow taut; again my dream spread up its wings  
to fly before me.

And now this! now this!  
Utter defeat! my torch of dreams extinct!  
all I attempted, nothing! . . . all I did!  
O come, before the last spark falter out,  
reach here thy soul and kindle it from mine;  
that thou blaze on before the world—my dream,  
the fire of the world's hope. Let not these eyes  
shut on blank night; still, still let them behold  
one image on their last oblivion stamped:  
on the world's edge, the soul of Naram-Sin  
flaming: God's dream of the world made one in love—  
flaming upright against the roaring skies.

# NOSTALGIAS

*To F. R. Bell*

i

Son of this latter day,  
I look back as I may  
upon the woven, prime  
shadows and lights of time:  
on the arras of faded years,  
where, through the green and brown  
of many a tale untold  
of love and forgotten tears,  
the bolder red and the gold  
tell of the things of old  
that glow in a world's renown.

ii

Helen walks white again  
on the windy wall of Troy,  
while Hero looks in vain  
for the flash of a swimmer's joy,  
and the Moon, unwonted pale,  
stoops in her amber veil  
o'er a sleeping Shepherd-boy.

Serene the Stoic light  
burns in the Painted Porch,  
while Mænad shout and torch

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

assault the Thracian night;  
Beauty herself stands mute  
before Praxiteles,  
and crowded tiers salute  
the victor, Sophocles;  
while Cyprian airs blow sweet  
over Dædalian Crete  
and the foam-soft Cyclades.

iii

Rose-red the dawn-light falls  
on Thebes with her sculptured walls,  
where Pharaoh walks awhile  
by the grey hieratic Nile;  
or the tamarisk-shade lies cool  
on the lazuli lotus-pool,  
where the great propylæ stand  
rose-red on the golden sand;  
till, to the zenith spread,  
half heaven has flushed rose-red,  
and the large night consecrates  
Thebes with her hundred gates.

iv

A stem that bears no flower,  
topless stands Babel-tower,  
while the mid-day sun burns down  
on terraced Babylon,

## NOSTALGIAS

and bulls with heads of kings  
guard Nineveh with wings.

In the marts of Sidon and Tyre  
are bartered the wares of the world;  
or Adventure with sails unfurled  
puts out for the ports of desire:  
past all familiar coasts  
and the Pillars of Hercules,  
where the Scillies hang like ghosts  
in the mists of the Western Seas.

### v

And like a marble frieze  
that cinctures a temple's dome,  
imperial centuries  
blazon the fame of Rome:  
the brazen eagles shine  
through the dusks of the palm and the pine,  
and the brazen trumpets blow  
loud over sand and snow;  
trireme and quinquereme  
with the beat of regular oars  
waken the sea-birds' scream  
and the echoes of outraged shores;  
in the faith of the steadfast Dead,  
from Tigris to Solway Firth  
the Roman peace is spread,  
like wings, over all the earth.

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

vi

And I see through the deeper dark  
sad Iseult's closing eyes,  
and the anguish of King Mark,  
and Tristram's agonies;  
and through the shadows I hear  
weeping as heart would break,  
the weeping of Guinevere  
for Lancelot du Lake . . .  
while Arthur, mortal-wan,  
in a sailless ship glides on  
to the Vales of Avalon;  
and, far from the world removed,  
where the last high turrets fail  
into the samite-white,  
mystical, faint moonlight,  
Percival, pure and proved,  
kneels to the Holy Grail.

vii

Son of this latter day,  
I look back as I may  
on the fading red and gold  
of the tapestried days of old;  
and I bewail my fate  
that I so late was born,  
and like an exile mourn:  
as Adam turned his eyes,

18

## NOSTALGIAS

wistful, upon the Gate  
of distant Paradise.

But when five thousand years  
shall have rolled over London town,  
when the Present, that may not last,  
has become the enduring Past,  
and all our glory and tears  
ghosts and a song's renown——  
will some child of that later time  
look back to this earlier day,  
and sigh for the golden prime  
of a young world faded away;  
bewailing, too, his fate  
that he was born so late:  
as Adam turned his eyes,  
wistful, upon the Gate  
of distant Paradise?

## CUI BONO? AN ODE

*To Alyse Gregory*

i

Cruel are you, O World! and the more so  
that make us fools of beauty. Not for pain,  
    life's shadow, nor old age,  
    time's doubtful privilege;  
not that the little that is all we know  
is but the wet verge of unsounded seas;  
not for the worthlessness of all earth's gain,  
    and all earth's poverties;  
not that faith finds the feet of clay,  
not that hope sickens of delay,  
not that love's self comes to decay——  
    no, not for these!

Not for the terror and the wounds of strife  
million defeat, and few brief victories  
    purchased so dear with tears;  
not for the long regret of later life  
    for unreturning years;  
not for the dumb regret of one  
    who leaves love's daily tasks undone  
    that he may live at ease:  
—O the sad ghosts that haunt for ever  
the shades of his unhappy peace!

*CUI BONO? AN ODE*

Not for the far-off mountain-peak  
we went so long ago to seek,  
    so long ago in vain:  
the Mount of God, on which there shone,  
long since, the visionary dawn  
    of earth's more perfect day;  
the Mount of God—now long since wrapped away,  
    veil upon veil,  
in ever deeper dusk . . . O never,  
never to be forgot! and never,  
never to be sought again!

Not for that doubt,  
bitterest of all, which must assail  
even the bravest when they look  
on the last chapter of the book,  
and read there how the noblest heart, the loftiest brain,  
    do on a sudden cease  
and, like a candle, are put out—  
no, not for these I count you cruel, not for these!

ii

But that all life, from Moneron to Man,  
is futile, futile, futile, at the last!  
that Chaos ends the world that it began,  
and the blank Future matches the blank Past:  
that the vast armies of the Living march  
on through the centuries—they know not whence—  
    in hunger, lust, and violence,  
    in terror—and they know not whither—

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

on through the centuries, under the roaring arch  
of alien heavens stretched immense  
in fierce indifference;  
and that the cry  
wrung out from their grey agony  
goes thither,  
but never brings an answer thence!

Vain as a wraith of smoke, vain as the flight  
of some brief wing across a summer's sheen,  
or through the summer dusk a sudden meteorite,  
Man's tragic splendour, blazoning God's night,  
leaves that night dark. As though it had not been,  
the splendour fades, and through the blind  
immensities of time and space  
leaves not a trace  
behind.

Broken by sobs, wisdom's last word is said:  
'Behold, all that we are!  
Nothing in part, and nothing in the whole!  
The golden sun burns to a dull red star,  
an eye of sullen coal  
to glare upon the frozen earth—frozen, and mute, and dead!'

iii

And I? Poor fool of Beauty! I have felt  
as if in me there dwelt  
a strong and clear divinity

*CUI BONO? AN ODE*

that, like a flame, leapt upward to the sky:  
my spirit has gone out upon the path  
of the blue thunders in their wrath;  
taken the clouds, exultant, and made thereof  
wide wings to fly;  
I made the very sunlight my stretched hand  
to move in glory over sea and land,  
to touch the flowers of summer and the snows  
of winter with my love;  
I was the cragged embattled wall  
of veteran cliffs that stand  
unmoved for ever against the throes  
of oceans to sublime rebellion stung;  
I took the silver smoke  
of the white waterfall  
and wove of it a mantle for my limbs,  
sitting, since ever the earth was young,  
a dripping River-God, on the rock-fountain's rims,  
wrapped in his misty cloak;  
I became grass,  
joyfully therein to drink the fresh May shower;  
and quiet trees  
watching a thousand seasons pass;  
and many a bright and honey-treasured flower  
to tempt the ranging bees.  
The dawn has been my watchword, and the moon  
my consolation; I have known the peace  
of lonely summits in the drowse of noon,  
and of deep sea-ward caves  
filled with cold echoes and the hollow croon

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

of indolent-lapping waves;  
the setting sun has been to me  
Death's majesty, and night,  
with all her crowded companies of light,  
my Immortality.

In them I lived again: through them I went  
out from the narrow cell of self,  
the prison of my discontent:  
I became Delling, Dawn's red Elf;  
I became Odin, lost in thought  
upon his lonely mountain shelf;  
and Thor  
wrapped in the smoking firmament.

I was Balor,  
furious against the fate pronounced for me;  
Nuada, and Long-handed Lugh, and fought  
titanic fields beyond the strength of man;  
and I was Mananan,  
Lir's son and Suzerain of the Sea,  
who with my cold sibylline lips revealed  
age-weary secrets to the silent shore.

For I was more  
than man; and from my manhood rose up healed,  
as from a bed of sickness. Time was mine,  
an Ariadne-twine  
to bring me through the labyrinths of chance  
safe from the horns of circumstance;  
and space,

*CUI BONO? AN ODE*

a mirror wherein I need but glance  
to see my face.  
I belted on Orion's sword, and hung  
on the broad wings of Cygnus; I sat down  
in Cassiopeia's chair,  
and on my forehead set the Northern Crown;  
I swung  
wide in Andromeda, loop on delirious loop,  
and, proud from Argo's poop,  
watched the star-spindrift spinning past  
swift on the blast  
of infinite winds athwart that Deep forlorn.  
I was a God—no less! I laughed to scorn  
the troubles whereto men are born,  
walked, as in native right, exempt from toil and pain;  
I was a God! the universe became  
a divine toy of speed and flame,  
a thing to break to pieces and build again  
a thousand times to while away  
one moment of the Everlasting Day.

And then,  
—O little twist of thought! O treacherous cry  
out of the heart of my humanity!—  
all passed: I was no more a God!  
no more exempt! but trod,  
one of the long monotonies of men,  
a way unknown and desolate,  
with no more mastery of fate  
than a blown leaf in rough October's breath,

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

one living thing that strove alone,  
and prayed, and hoped, and often in secret wept;  
a stone  
in the grey Avalanche of Being blindly swept  
to the sharp drop of death.

iv

For death I met on every road of thought;  
down all the lanes of fancy; on the bare  
tops of imagination—everywhere  
that final Nought  
confronted me: and not alone my own,  
nor most! but the dread image of this earth  
when all the energies of birth  
are spent, and all life's works destroyed,  
and faith, and hope, and even love, proved void;  
this earth, the awful sanctuary  
of barren Rock and Sky and Sea,  
Death's naked Trinity;  
this earth, fast-held in changeless night and day,  
gone on her way  
into the last oblivion! O then, *Cui*,  
*cui bono?* then, I cry.

If but some God took profit from our pain;  
or man could gain  
one gift, one gift, to grace Eternity!  
But on our modern Calvary  
only the Cross is left us, only the Cross!

*CUI BONO? AN ODE*

the Cross—and, hung thereon,  
    none  
to give it dignity!  
No heavenly Treasure to cancel out earth's loss;  
no divine Hope to set against despair;  
    no Love, tragic and infinite,  
reddening far-off the silent line of night!  
Only a human Sorrow standing there,  
    dishevelled at the foot of it,  
    weeping away her sight.

v

There's where I count you cruel—where I curse,  
above all else, your beauty; for, thereby,  
    my spirit, lifted once so high,  
is now cast down in ignominy and scorn:  
than be the sport of such a universe  
'twere better far never to have been born!  
Better the senseless dance of atomies,  
of barren stars on futile orbits spun,  
and never an ear to hear the wind that cries,  
    nor eye to praise the sun!

Only a hope, that is despair's own twin,  
a faith, that is the counterpart of doubt,  
    that, having shown  
your inmost being, you yet conceal, within  
    that inmost, Something still unknown,  
unguessed of us and past our finding out:

*PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE*

Something that shall make plain  
    this strife, this pain;  
some Meaning that shall justify  
    man and man's misery;  
some Purpose, though unlike our own,  
    yet to our own akin——  
    this, only this,  
reins back the frantic chariot of the mind  
    from the steep giddy rout,  
down! down! and headlong to the blind  
    brink of the last abyss.

## LUXURIANCE

*To Hyllarie Johnston*

Old boulders of stone  
thick-grown  
with the lush mosses' ever-renascent green:  
grey boulders with the sheen  
of the rank weed,  
which the swift fingers of the stream  
comb in their speed  
into long strands and level tresses of slime——  
Old boles of oak  
wearing again green moss for cloak,  
rough trunk round which the ivies climb:  
ancient heroic theme  
made soft with interlacing leaves of rhyme——  
Foxgloves: and each is like a spire:  
belfries that clash  
the bells of marriages to the least touch of wind;  
and each is like a bridal torch  
where the red fire  
burns upward: blossom of flame, pale ash  
of petals where the flowers fall thinned,  
brown stains where the flames scorch——  
Poplars: the trembling minarets of life,  
crying above  
the tangled undergrowth in strife  
their soft muezzin: *There is but one God, Love!*——  
Elms, which the lightning of strange passion killed:

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

elms that held up, long since, their royal breasts to feel  
the stars' faint lips, and be fulfilled  
of the round, pendant, amorous moons of night;  
and the night pleased where he willed:  
then, in a sudden violence of delight,  
slew with the white  
last kiss of the keen steel—  
Play of the water: the provocative splash  
of leaping runnel; bubble of foam that floats  
on cold green eddies, like the flash  
of mirth on the still face of joy;  
curve of clear flanks; the curl  
of wet hair clinging to bare throats;  
the undernotes  
of pain continually heard,  
sorrow of passion linking light word to word:  
the woman-nature looking through the girl,  
the man's old need troubling the laughing boy—  
Leaves of last year: leaves that alone  
of all things born are sweet in death;  
smell of crushed twigs; the heavy breath  
of sun-burned bracken; memory-laden lime;  
tang of stripped bark; and, from hot fields away,  
clover and thyme,  
and grasses newly mown  
into sharp hay . . .  
And, over all, evening's large light that wraps  
in a rich saffron mantle with crimson hood,  
caught in cloud-fringes through the mountain-gaps,  
this multitudinous solitude:

## LUXURIANCE

this strife  
of flowers, this silent struggle of trees,  
exuberant lust and desperate urge of life,  
that hides behind a look of peace.

O the round bosses  
of boulders soft in mosses!  
O the round breasts of cold stream-goddesses!  
O the soft shoulders streaked with slag  
of wet long tresses!  
I would go naked! I would fling my white  
man's body to satiate your delight!  
I would have joy of you, and you of me!  
I seize your hair; I twine  
and tangle my fists in it; I drag  
your fluid lips upward to mine,  
and my soul downward to drown in river-kisses.  
O skin of the young sapling beech!  
I reach  
my bare arms round your bare  
slimness of stem as round a waist;  
your hands go straying through my hair;  
your hot bark-lips are good to the taste!  
The grass has delicate fingers that invite  
to a strange bridal: O sweet Earth,  
see, I will lie with you full-length,  
and with my drunk-up strength  
call what new Oread-shape to birth!  
Now I would be a woman: I would know

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

the fierce gnarled muscles of the warring oak——  
O let the hair of all your leaves  
blind me! your roots, like thieves,  
explore my body! and your rough beard flow  
down my breast-valley like a cloud of smoke!  
or—lover of rocks—see one, with stern brows, lean  
hungrily over me: in swift eclipse  
hiding the green  
of branches and the deepening blue above;  
and I would feel the cruel lips  
fasten on mine, and, ere death came  
through a black tumult of joy in one sharp stroke,  
wake in the granite eyes the flash of an old flame!

For I am filled, as is a cup with wine,  
with the first lusts of Nature. I press close  
to the rank body of Life; and touch, with gross  
inquisitive hands and lips grown sore  
with sensual kisses, the divine  
rude Flesh of the world. I am no more  
of men: neither of birds, nor beasts, nor trees;  
but, as the sap and hunger of all love  
rises and cries aloud in these,  
so my transformed humanity  
absorbs them: leaf, and trunk, and root,  
liquid of stream, roundness of stone,  
seed-time, and harvest, and gathering of fruit,  
pursuit of beasts, nesting of birds, traffic of bees,  
man's joy and woman's: these become my own——

## LUXURIANCE

and they are love, and they are fate,  
green Aprils, red Septembers, of all time;  
and I in them am made sublime:  
and I in them transcend  
man's measure and man's end;  
and they in me  
and my clear rhyme  
are made articulate.

## THE OLD GODS

*To Gerard and Mary Casey*

i

They have withdrawn to dwell  
in coomb and citadel,  
and wheresoever the mountains shroud  
their tops in terror and in cloud:  
for they are angry; they are blind  
with hate for humankind.

—Hate for the valley-folk,  
the people of the plain:  
for where is now the reek of smoke?  
the blood of black goats slain?  
and where is now the knife of stone,  
the boy or girl of kingly birth  
led to the sacrifice——  
that can alone  
preserve mankind and fertilize  
the earth?

Their shrines, their festivals,  
forget them; and none worships now  
in their sad circles tilted and grey  
on hillside and on moor.  
Midsummer Day  
breaks blank upon the mountain's brow;

## THE OLD GODS

the air  
shakes to no hymns; no lips adore,  
crying aloud, as the light falls  
between the ruined walls  
and strikes the Druid's empty chair.

### ii

But you old Gods, that are denied  
of all that did you reverence,  
deny not me!  
I know you, what you are:  
true children of the Force that burns  
in star-dust, of the Force that turns  
the star-dust to a star;  
the Strength that with the silent hand  
of ages, or loud earthquake-shocks,  
laid down the platforms of the land,  
and reared the turrets of the rocks;  
the Power  
which is the sap of every tree,  
the loveliness of every flower,  
and in the prowling beast, and in the bird of prey,  
goes forth in hunger and to slay——  
Power that no less, do what he can,  
is the Prime Mover in the soul of man:  
that enterprise, and battle, and lust, and pride,  
which to the last he must obey.

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

iii

O Gods, deny not me!  
For I confess you: you that are,  
each one, some nameless Avatar  
and member of Omnipotence!  
My knee  
bends at the rising of the sun,  
bends to the splendour of the sea;  
to the stream heard among the hills,  
to the wind's voice that fills  
their hollows with its roaring antiphon;  
I sacrifice  
to all the stars of night,  
and to the light  
of the new moon beautiful in the skies;  
and I salute  
in man, and flower, and bird, and brute,  
and in myself, the One  
primal, eternal, and irreversible Might.

iv

O Gods, deny not me!  
Deny the coward, deny the liar,  
the hand that trembles, the foot that slips;  
deny the heart untried of fire,  
deaf ears, blind eyes, and unadoring lips;  
deny the man who goes about  
to take his fellows in his snare;

## THE OLD GODS

deny the spirit full of doubt  
and of despair;  
deny the sluggard in his bed,  
the glutton at his table spread;  
deny the man who is not free  
with great and inward liberty——  
who cannot love, and cannot hate,  
and is the shuttlecock of fate;  
deny the heart that is not pure;  
but O, deny not me!

For I would win to that last citadel,  
shrouded in cloud and terror, where you dwell:  
the last dread throne where you endure,  
obscure, and lonely, and sublime,  
beyond all change and all the range of time;  
and I would stand  
unshamed before you, and from your hand,  
blood-red in its millennial strife,  
—O Many-in-One!—eat the true Bread of Life,  
and drink the Wine of Immortality.  
O Gods, who are my Gods, deny not me!

# ANIMA MUNDI

*To Arnold H. Lewis*

## I. SICUT ERAT IN PRINCIPIO

*An Unknown Philosopher, fifteen thousand years before Christ, meditates upon the Mystery of the Universe.*

So, as the fine result of all, what gain?  
All moves: winds, waves, grasses, and streams, and trees;  
slow-pasturing clouds traverse the sky's blue prairie;  
tides rise and fall, and so do suns and moons;  
stars climb the abrupt banks of heaven: some  
take gradual pathways, some the sheer ascents  
that lead them straight to the top point of night;  
and some—long have I watched them,  
when no sleep came in the clear winter dark—  
that, following not their fellows' gold migrations,  
go, and come back, and change upon their tracks:  
one, and the softest glory of our dusk,  
now leads the sun, now lingers after him;  
while, like an exiled prince, heaven's brightest ghost  
wanders aloof. All moves—save this great disk  
of the Earth, that seems asleep; but, in its sleep,  
I have heard men say that profound shudders  
came and went past; and some have heard its voice:  
dim booming syllables, like distant storms  
and thunder in the answering hills.

All moves:

Why does it move?

## ANIMA MUNDI

I take my spear, flint-tipped;  
noiseless as dusk, creep through the forest; listen  
where, not far off, my unsuspecting prey  
draws nearer; see his grey fell in the brown;  
lift up my spear and hurl it: the spear moves . . .  
Because I hurled it? Rather,  
because my belly hungered. But a twig snaps;  
he hears it; up go ears—out nostrils; swift  
dies the retreating rustle of his escape:  
here terror moved him. Or, suppose the fight  
roars round me with the clatter of its shields;  
a javelin stings me; instantly my hand  
flies to the smart: here it was pain prompted.  
Or, long ago, when youth was in my blood,  
why ran my feet so fast?  
why closed my arms about her hot surrender?  
why moved my lips to hers? then it was joy,  
hope, and desire, and all that makes up love.

Hunger, and fear, and pain, and passion—these  
move me, and the beasts like me. What of winds?  
Have I not heard their sad and lost desires  
go whispering through the world? have I not heard  
their terror? And clouds? Do not the clouds drop tears?  
I have seen the fanged waves eat up the shore,  
and is it love or fear that drives the sun  
burning across the day? and, across night,  
the moons that live and die, even as we?

So, all that moves is manlike and has soul:

## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

that second self that slips its leash in dreams,  
looks up at us astonished from still pools,  
and which in the last breath escapes for ever.  
Passions, as much more mighty than our own  
as gales out-race us and as seas out-rage,  
move everywhere about us; and, of these ghosts,  
needs must I deem that some deserve our love,  
others the tribute of our fear, and gifts  
to appease their anger, as a man takes gifts  
in lieu of life from one who slew his kin.  
The serene winds that come with the first leaves,  
breathing I know not what glad discontent,  
the shadow of dark trees when summer thirsts,  
brown streams, and wells in the green glow of woods,  
the bush that yields us berries, and the bough  
that drops us acorns—and, beyond all else,  
the august sun whereby the body lives  
and light visits the soul: all these I deem  
call for our grateful love. But the loud tribes  
of the storm, whirlwinds striding to destroy,  
rivers that rise and drown us in their wrath,  
lightning and thunder, mountains that spit up flame,  
desolate rocks that mock us, and the grey  
fury of waves: these deem I terrible—  
fearfully to be approached. So may we find  
some not too tortuous track across the world,  
praying those manlike things that work us good  
still to befriend us, with gifts reconciling  
the thousand menaces that ambush time.

\* \* \* \*

*ANIMA MUNDI*

But what is this? this thin, wan, shadowless light,  
crept, as I talked, upon the world? The birds  
move twittering in the trees as though night came,  
and it grows cold. No cloud . . . O look, poor eyes!  
the sun is shrunken to an arc of moon . . .  
a great piece bitten out of the day's heart!  
O Darkness, do not swallow up the sun!  
If thou art hungry, I will give thee food:  
if thou art angry, I will bring thee gifts:  
all that I have of precious! See, O Night,  
I will kill the firstling of my flock for thee!  
my son! and offer up his flesh. O Power  
that moves behind the terrors of the world,  
spare us! O God, be merciful to us!

## II. ET NUNC

*A German Philosopher, walking one fine morning in the Rosenthal at Leipzig, meditates upon the Mystery of the Universe.*

So, as the fine result of all, what gain?  
O let thought rest, and let quick feeling speak  
from vestal sanctuaries no thought unveils!  
For who has yet by searching found out God?  
though, having found Him, we may build some shrine  
out of the noblest substance of our thinking  
to house belief, and make  
out of imagination's best some image,  
reverently undefined,  
to set in the heart's niche upright. Thither  
shall come those moods of worship and of hope  
that else must wander by fallacious ways  
into unprofitable exile:  
for God is the soul's Fatherland, so hath  
some City of Thought to be His capital.

This clear May morning brings its anodyne  
to the mind's ache of searching. Doubt, that sat  
over against us in the lamp-lit room,  
weary of disputation, falls asleep;  
and truant Wonder, slipping out of doors,  
calls Faith to meet him and renew, once more,  
their boy and girl companionship. Thought dreams:  
but dreams, too, are of God—as Homer says.

*ANIMA MUNDI*

Now fly from every hawthorn, red and white,  
the bannerettes of spring——  
fly, red and white, as are the morning's flags;  
for May and morning in alliance move  
to colonize man's heart with joy. The fields  
are pale with the dew-misted gossamers;  
sharp with a thousand songs the thin air shrills;  
while, where the high-road runs, the new-leaved poplars  
stir in a slow delight, still half asleep.

How lovely does the early face of day  
look down upon that still more lovely face:  
Earth's—unimaginably old, yet young  
with youth to cloud the very dawn with envy!  
And how this mood of Earth fills every pause  
of my long years of thinking: as the tide,  
flooding through glaucous rocks, links pool to pool  
with salt sea-rivulets that run and laugh——  
till, for the flash of fragmentary skies,  
flames the full prospect of reflected heaven.

How did I doubt what shows so morning-plain?  
question, what surely once my soul knew well,  
so swiftly now the truth  
obliterates in joy the last misgiving?  
This Earth, that I have travelled with so long  
as a blind man keeps company with day,  
blazes upon some new keen sense of sight,  
living! and the dear Mother of all life.

## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

Yes, and the trees that take her substance  
and turn it into root, and trunk, and bough;  
and leaves, in ambush for the passing winds  
to rob them of their music: what are they  
but lyric transformations of Earth's thought  
projected into time? And how her laughter  
goes rippling in the extravagance of flowers!  
while I have heard the whisper of her prayers  
breathe through the hill-top's solitary grass.

Mother of life! and every living thing  
more than itself a thousandfold! For all  
are to her soul what senses are to us:  
innumerable eyes, and ears, and tongues,  
to see, hear, taste, her beauty. The bird's flight  
passes through her, a conscious flash of pleasure;  
what reveries are hers, seen through the eyes  
of the sea's fishes? how the lion's roar  
throbs its deep pedal through her changing song!  
And man? No longer pitiable; no more  
Nature's reverse and lonely contradiction;  
no more the stranger in a house of hate!  
Closer than man to man, is man to the Earth:  
concrete in him her far first impulse moves,  
and she, through him, to what august ends,  
guessed at by him as little as in my mind  
a thought foresees the science that it builds.  
And death? An eye closing  
in her eternal seeing, while, distinct,  
all that that ended life had been and known

ANIMA MUNDI

remains in her, as the day's sights remain  
distinct on the shut eyelids of the dark.

So, all the linkages of visible life  
are but the signs of that invisible bond  
binding together in gathered consciousness  
all that has slipped through the years' careless loves.

But if so Earth, then why not all the stars?  
O the wild gale, through which  
the shining wings of speculation climb!

Yes, they are Angels! Strange, that man invented  
those manlike others, feathered as are birds,  
to skim through heaven, when all heaven is bright  
with these unwinged harmonious presences:  
Æthereal Dominations, that contain  
all in themselves we lesser beings seek  
with our poor limbs and senses through the world;  
moving how perfectly upon their ways,  
squadroned in countless fire—their choice, our law.

Angels? Then ἄγγελοι! Then Messengers  
of God! and thought takes its last daring flight.  
As I am to the Earth, so is the Earth  
to that profoundest and last Life of all:  
only one voice that lifts its stellar note  
in the everlasting Concert: one full pulse  
of joy in that unwearied Joyousness:  
one mother-kiss in that immortal Love.

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

So, consciousness, sphere beyond sphere, ascends—  
each, one and many: man has his tribe of thoughts,  
sorrows, desires, and hopes; Earth grasps the sweep  
of all the million things that dwell in her,  
and all the millions of her years; while God  
holds all the gold experience of the stars  
in the great urns of everlastingness:  
so holding—since Earth is a star, and I,  
one of Earth's thoughts—my very thought of Him,  
and all I am, close to the heart of love.  
Sphere within sphere, that love envelops all,  
from Sirius to the dust beneath my feet;  
and I, sphere above sphere, send up my love  
to shout *Te Deum* with the tongues of space.

## THE EIGHTH PSALM

*To Lucy Penny*

*Domine, Dominus noster.*

O Lord, how excellent  
in all the earth Thy Name:  
and, star to star, exultant sent  
far through the echoing firmament  
in shouts of soundless flame.

And yet an infant's cry  
hath more of Thy divinity,  
and more than all the splendours of the skies  
confounds Thine enemies.

Star beyond star, Thy heavens plunge away,  
gulf beyond gulf, past the last hope of sight:  
our narrow view is cancelled with the day,  
and Thy long vistas open on the night.

An old moon founders on the plain's dun rim,  
the changing planets swim in the deep sky,  
athwart the lambent zenith curves the dim  
white glory of the myriad galaxy.

And beyond these, beyond the ultimate coasts  
where the still tides of stellar silence sweep,  
a million universes, faint as ghosts,  
haunting the fringes of the cosmic sleep.

Then what is man, I cry,  
that Thou shouldst have regard of him?

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

For Thou hast made him but a little less  
than Thine Angelic Hierarchies:  
in love, less than Thy Seraphim,  
in knowledge, than Thy Cherubim:  
yet crowned, for all his lowly birth,  
with knowledge and with love,  
and by these lifted high above  
his origins of earth.

Lord of the world is he: as Thou, of Heaven——  
for Thou into his hands hast given  
dominion over all that Thou hast wrought:  
His will subdues to his own use  
fowl of the air, fish of the flood, flesh of the field;  
while, to the impassioned hunger of his thought,  
the profound earth, the sea,  
and the sidereal night, at last shall yield  
their soul of mystery.

Against the heaven's span,  
how small a thing is man!  
how swift the earth-drawn meteor dives to death!  
Yet when he saith: *I will! I love! I think!*  
the universe doth like a dream  
dissolve and into nothing shrink,  
and all vast time becomes a stream  
whereat his spirit stoops to drink.

O Lord, how excellent  
in all the earth Thy Name.

## THE CLIFF

*To Meum Stewart*

*To anyone setting out from the village of Sraheens in Upper Achill and walking in as straight a line as he can north-west by west until he reaches the extremity of the island, the elevation of the land will appear as I have here described it: for he will pass, first, over the heights above Campport, then, over the Menawn Cliffs, and stand at last on the top of Croaghaun. Starting from this profile of the country and thinking back into its imagined geologic past, I perceived in this process but one more symbol of the soul's way, and was led, one night at Dooagh, to write the following verses.*

Featureless  
in its vast loneliness,  
the plain  
stretched on in dead identity,  
many a league away.

Almost it seemed  
to touch the hazy edges of the world:  
there, where the sky,  
a dome of polished lazuli,  
rested on pillars of cloud-quartz up-hurled,  
light-kissed  
to quivering amethyst  
by the warm passage of the day.  
But, far beyond it, the sea lay:  
invisible, save as a line that gleamed  
like a thin silver ring  
round the last rim of everything.

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

Over the plain, the cliff  
stood with eyes fixed upon the west;  
it raised itself from the earth's breast,  
as if to strain  
its sight beyond all reach of sight,  
where, far across the lonely leagues of land,  
the white  
footsteps of the ocean pressed  
a narrow strip of sand.

The cliff?  
Rather the depth of strata'd stone,  
flesh of earth's flesh, bone of earth's bone:  
the hidden belt of rock that came  
—serried layer and contorted fold—  
up from what old  
rage of forgotten passions? what unguessed  
desire? what storm of subterranean flame?

Over the plain  
—featureless  
in its vast loneliness—  
the cliff  
stood with eyes fixed upon the west.

Years passed—millions of years. At length,  
out of the earth new strength  
poured through its nerves and veins of stone;  
and the rock-belt

## THE CLIFF

felt  
the slow huge impulse pass  
profound through all its buried mass,  
as the earth's blinded need became its own.

Slowly the rock-belt rose: with every layer  
forced from the dark deep upward, one step higher,  
as if it climbed a monstrous stair  
to the dreamed top of its desire;  
arching itself, till, like a back,  
the black  
ridge bulked against the burning air,  
it strove  
perpetually to project  
itself into new being—till, at last,  
when many a million years were passed,  
erect  
it lifted its stone forehead to the sun,  
triumphant in the solemn consciousness  
of great deeds done.

It towered five hundred feet above  
that last success,  
dwarfed now to failure. Then the stress  
ended, and, like a weary man, it stood  
motionless:  
undulant sweeps  
of grassy lassitude,  
and steeps

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

of dim precipitous fatigue.  
And the plain, many a league,  
stretched out below it; and the sea  
still seemed to be  
a thin and silver ring  
round the last rim of everything.

But now,  
the plain, no longer featureless,  
wore invitation on its seamless brow;  
and on its limbs, for lovely dress,  
meadows of fresh green gentleness;  
and there were two  
lakes of blue,  
like slabs of polished lazuli  
from the same quarry that had roofed the sky.

Nevertheless,  
the cliff  
stood and looked out across the plain:  
westward to where the sea  
gleamed like a thin and silver ring  
round the last rim of everything.

Years passed—millions of years.  
Once more, the inward fire  
and obscure hunger of the earth,  
through stony nerve and stony vein,  
blind and profound was felt;

## THE CLIFF

and the rock-belt  
again  
trembled through all its strata'd tiers,  
and monstrosly gave birth  
to one last mightiest effort and one last desire.

Century following century,  
the cliff  
rose steadily.

O what tumultuous agonies  
swept  
upon it from the windy sea!  
what white and desolate mists of doubt,  
what phantoms of disaster, crept  
over its cold and dripping slope——  
blotting out,  
even from its steadfast eyes of hope,  
the sun of its large courage and the skies  
of its belief!

Wide  
the black wound-fissures gaped upon its side;  
and there was born  
many a secret and forlorn  
pool of grief.

Century following century, the hill  
rose still:  
up through the rain,  
up through the mist and wind;

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

the grass grew thinned  
upon its flank, and now, alone,  
sharp stone  
crowned its scarred forehead with a crown of pain.

Then, from the west, the trumpet of the gale rang clear:  
eastward in rout  
fled the white mists of doubt  
and the grey phantoms of disastrous fear;  
and, suddenly,  
the cliff  
stood amazed,  
rigid in abrupt victory: stood and gazed  
upon the whole immensity  
and blazing revelation of all space.

All space: for there the sky and sea,  
the thought and its reality,  
in a red furnace of divine embrace  
fused into one their twin infinity.

The sky above,  
and, at its feet, the sea . . .  
and never plain, nor field, nor lake,  
to break  
its joyous leap of vision and stretched cry of love!  
only a strip of sand, to be  
a hint of earth's mortality;  
and, beyond this, the immortal and unwall'd  
splendour: the ocean-glory that had called  
its heart from the foundations of the world.

## THE CLIFF

So had the passion that began  
before the memory of man  
achieved  
in this last effort of prodigious cliff  
its goal:  
there all it had believed  
lay public to its seeing,  
flung broad in a gold chaos of tempestuous light:  
that final prospect when the soul  
receives its sight:  
that instant when the winds of life and death  
are mingled in a single breath,  
and finite love and finite being,  
face to face,  
meet Love and Being Infinite.

So stood the cliff . . . while, far away,  
where sea and sky were fused in one,  
with wings and banners cloud-unfurled  
the fierce Seraphic Armies shone,  
light-kissed  
to quivering amethyst  
by the large sun  
that passed  
through the flushed gateways of eternal day.

So stood the cliff,  
one moment: and then cast  
—O last  
and irretrievable abyss!—

*PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE*

itself over its own life's edge:  
down! deep below deep, ledge below reeling ledge:  
down! swinging precipice flung from swinging precipice:  
down! exultant, naked, free,  
shattered, and dead, and splendid, to the sea.

## THE LEAF

To Thomas Moulton

*One leaf was on the poplar there:  
one leaf, and all the tree beside  
was winter-stripped and bare.  
One leaf—and, many a curving line,  
the branches, dark and fine,  
streamed upward, like a drift of evening smoke,  
into the cold, and grey, and wide  
November sky.*

*The wind came with the roar  
of angry pebbles on the shore;  
and the wind broke  
fiercely against the tree and set  
it swaying to and fro,  
like an old woman rocking in her grief.  
And from its branches came, as it were, a high  
thin wail of voices: a regret  
for things  
lost with the summers and the springs  
of long ago.*

*The leaf  
clung  
wildly to the twig-tip:*

## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

*Now, it was like a lip  
that trembles at the taste of fear;  
now, like a clear  
far signal of distress  
flung  
over the sea's grey heaviness;  
and now, it hung,  
a moment, almost motionless:  
almost—for, through it, now and then, the thrill  
of a light movement passed,  
like the faint tremors ere, at last,  
a dying thing lies still.*

*And then, again, the leaf would cling  
with its thin frantic fingers desperate,  
wildly, and would not loose its hold:  
but struggled with the cold  
wind desolate.*

*The last pale candle-flame of thought  
left to the darkness of old age,  
lit long ago, and brought  
who knows from what dead fire of youth and spring?  
The last frail hope that, as it dies,  
clings to our ruin, and defies  
the winter of the soul, the rage  
of time, and all the hurricanes of fate.*

## LYNCEUS

*To John Cowper Powys and Phyllis Plater*

Zum Sehen geboren,  
Zum Schauen bestellt,  
Dem Turme geschworen . . .

—Goethe

### I

#### (i)

Its terraced slants of vine  
pressed to no honest Rhenish, but a wine  
more deadly than Medea's brew,  
subtler than Circe ever knew,  
and those who drank it grew  
drunk with insane  
imagination, till their human brain  
became a chamber of unhuman dream.  
Nor was the broad and royal stream  
that past it rolled the crenellated Rhine,  
though every rock against the sky  
concealed its singing Lorelei,  
and boatmen there had heard  
songs without sound of knowledgeable word  
that wailed upon the dusk of day  
and in wild-lovely echoes wept away.

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

(ii)

It seemed to grow  
out of the very hill  
on which its grey foundations stood,  
as a tree grows out of its natal soil:  
no toil  
of man's! rather, the skill  
of some fantastic Fafner-race  
or Nibelungen-brood:  
creatures that still  
—though dead so many a year ago—  
lived in the evil legends of the place.

Its steep  
circuit of curtains, and each sharp  
buttress and bastion, coign and scarp,  
prolonged the sweep  
of flaring cliff beneath it: a blank face  
where, without trace  
of joint,  
changed the unquarried into quarried stone . . .  
deep  
lay the ravine below.

Tower behind tower it rose, wall above wall,  
chaos of roofs and gables, with, here and there,  
a breast of battlement, or a spire's finger-point;  
at every angle sprang into the air  
delicate turrets, while, in the midst of all,

## LYNCEUS

—and yet alone  
as any king upon his throne——  
frowned the keep.

(iii)

And every turret, wall, and tower  
was pierced with windows—grey by day:  
for not one pane  
of all their hundreds gave again  
gold of the dawn, blue of the noon,  
or crimson cloud of even;  
save one  
that, far aloof,  
under the topmost roof  
of a faint finial-like tourelle,  
kept watch upon the passing hour  
and flashed its joyous signs to all the flags  
of heaven.

But when night fell  
thick in the valleys, and the hills put on  
their magic caps in which they are not seen,  
when sleep had touched the lid of every flower,  
and the broad river's blue and green  
turned to rose and amber, turned,  
through fading ambers, grey,  
then, tier on tier, its hundred windows shone——  
yet with no living lamp, but wan

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

as the last lights that fail  
in old men's eyes . . .  
as if behind each casement burned  
only the pale  
tapers of frail dead centuries.

(iv)

And boatmen there who, through the night  
on swift and silent journeys fared,  
declared  
that none,  
father or son  
for generations back, had ever  
seen in the glass of the black river,  
from all the castle's hundred windows, one  
glint of reflected light.

II

(i)

Within the crumbling barbican  
still leaned a rank of rusty pikes;  
the old portcullis with its rotting spikes  
was never dropped, the draw-bridge never drawn;  
from set of sun till dawn  
might any enter there who would:  
but never one in all the landskip round  
was found  
with such a ghostly hardihood.

LYNCEUS

(ii)

But had such been, he would have seen  
grasses growing green between  
the courtyard cobbles—the unguarded door  
wide-flung before him . . . from within  
have heard a music brisk and thin,  
and swish of silks upon a polished floor;  
while, dim  
and shadowy over him,  
—its hundred windows, line on line,  
blank with their antique taper-shine——  
the castle-outline streamed from sight  
into the zenith-dreams of night.

(iii)

And had he entered—drawn by sound  
of delicate harmony——  
turning to right, between two rows  
of faded flunkeys with their faint flambeaux,  
he would have found  
a ball-room thronged with gay gentility.

There,  
viol da gamba, viol d'amor,  
hautboy, and flute, and harpsichord,  
made on a dais dainty tune:  
coranto, jig, and rigadoon;  
while many a laced and silken lord,  
with ruffled wrist and powdered hair,

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

danced with his lady-loveliness,  
flushed and fair;  
or here a pair,  
hushed in a soft-embayed caress,  
paramoured;  
and there, on cushions velvet-deep,  
a weary Columbine asleep;  
or there, in Pantaloon-disguise,  
one masked with laughter to the eyes . . .  
but to the eyes! for sad and full of doubt  
through the dead face the living eyes looked out.

So, through the figures of their ball,  
stepped they gay and debonair—  
and one and all  
were phantoms thin as air!  
and through them, as they curtsyed, bowed, and turned,  
minced in measured minuet,  
peacocked in pavane,  
through flirt of fan,  
caper, curvet,  
burned  
the pallid tapers on the sconced wall.

(iv)

Or,  
dauntless, had the visitor  
turned not right, but left,  
might he have seen in spacious rooms  
women at distaffs and at looms:

LYNCEUS

but so fine their warp and weft . . . !  
thread they spun  
would have snapped at wink of sun,  
and their fabric, fancy-gay,  
melted like a mist away—  
slipped from the luckless wearers satin, silk, and lawn,  
to leave them thin and shivering in the chill of dawn.

(v)

And, in a third, he would have found  
care-furrowed men with hungry brows  
at felted tables sitting round,  
like merchants in a counting-house;  
with looks alert, lest thieves  
break in and steal, with fingers lean and deft,  
they reckoned over, piece by piece,  
the golden measure of their trade's increase.  
But, had the earthly visitant  
stolen to ease  
spirit's or body's want,  
he would have gained, for all his desperate theft,  
pursefuls of yellow maple-leaves.

(vi)

Then, did he further dare  
ascend the vague main stair,  
tread soft through many a vaulted corridor,  
he would have entered—spite of self,

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

held of breath and reverently—  
the castle's ancient library.

There, from the floor,  
like forest tree-trunks growing close,  
high to the branchèd ceiling rose  
columns of volumes, shelf on freighted shelf:  
vellumed Athens, vellumed Rome,  
and old black-letter, many a tome;  
here, locked in oak and iron chests,  
rolls of precious palimpsests;  
there, manuscripts more costly-rare  
than ever hands that wrote them were.  
Not a tongue  
spoken among  
quick or dead of the human race  
but here had found appointed place;  
while there were books of Geometric lore  
—Pythagorean—  
that seemed to speak the very tongue of God.

There, many a scholar, young and old,  
pursued his thought in silence: one  
stood at his desk, another trod  
with meditative pace and slow  
to and fro, to and fro;  
one sought to trace  
man's story from its clouded dawn,  
another dreamed upon the page  
of Stoic Greek or Indian sage;

## LYNCEUS

one strove to learn what laws may hold  
pale planets to their paths of gold,  
another, for what prize  
comets run  
their races round the sun.

But there were some—but few were these——  
to whom all this  
was weary foolishness:  
they sat withdrawn,  
spelling with charmèd lips and earnest eyes  
the ever-living loveliness  
of poets dead and gone.

And even as they read,  
innumcrably  
—as the brown leaves fall dead,  
leaf after leaf, from the autumnal trees——  
innumcrably,  
through all that library,  
leaves from the Tree of Knowledge, brown  
and wrinkled, fluttered down:  
there on the floor to lie——  
history, philosophy,  
prose and rhyme . . .  
soon indecipherable as hieroglyph or rune,  
soon trodden under foot, and soon  
swept up and whirled away in the blind draught of  
time.

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

(vii)

Then might, at last, the visitor  
—if still his courage served him well—  
climb  
by a steep spiral stair that wound  
up to the topmost last tourelle:  
the turret that alone  
caught glint of sun or moon;  
and as he circled, up and up,  
the world beneath his feet would drop,  
all sound of merriment  
—coranto, rigadoon—  
grow  
faint and stop.

Through the loopholes he might see  
light of moon or light of star,  
and sleeping landskip reaching far  
in dark serenity;  
or, through the highest loophole of his round,  
might discern the eastern, grey  
approach of day.

Here must he pause, and might no more  
adventure and no further go:  
for here a door  
forbade all passage. Time  
had worked with worm and rat-tooth on its wood,  
with rust upon its hinge and lock;

LYNCEUS

yet it stood,  
clamped to its jambs of quarried rock,  
impregnable. It seemed to be  
port to a prison-cell,  
or postern to some secret citadel  
to which none held the key.

(viii)

Listening there,  
the visitor might hear  
sounds  
of quiet breathing, quiet feet:  
and, listening, feel  
suddenly upon him steal  
. . . fear!  
then fearfully retreat,  
tiptoe down the spiral rounds  
of the steep stair;  
and with no look to left or right  
—his brain,  
tumult of question, hope, and doubt—  
creep out  
into the common world again  
and the first whispers of the waking light.

## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

### III

#### (i)

For now the hills  
throw off their hoods of darkness, and the woods  
show deeper shadow on the lighter earth;  
long since, the stream,  
steel-grey in all its length,  
has nursed a cold foreknowledge of day's birth:  
but now its ambient mirror fills  
with warmer premonitions—amber, rose——  
as heaven grows  
from joy to joy, from strength to strength.

In all the castle's hundred eyes  
the shine of tapers dims and dies;  
row upon row, they stare,  
like a dead man's, blindly there,  
and catch no golden echo from the skies:  
what though the prophet-cast,  
in alb and chasuble turned priest,  
through the last mists from dawn's swung censers  
streaming,  
lifts high above the world, in rapt surrender dreaming,  
the wafer of the sun.

Blindly there  
the castle's hundred windows stare,  
blind, and cold, and phantom-grey,  
and give no welcome to the day;

## LYNCEUS

save one:

one that, aloof  
under the topmost roof  
of that faint finial-like tourelle,  
that loftiest, holiest, loneliest citadel,  
flashes its joyous ensigns, silver-white,  
in *Salve!* to the Lord of Light.

(ii)

There is a tale that tells  
—so legends run,  
father to son, father to son——  
that in that highest of tourelles  
a solitary watchman dwells,  
a Lynceus in his tower:  
thence,  
from break of day to fall of night,  
as the clock strikes the hour,  
he looks with ever-hopeful sight  
far over hill and plain,  
valley and forest, and the shining course  
of the broad river flowing: looks to see  
the first sun-glint on flag or spear,  
dust of foot, dust of horse,  
announcing that the Prince draws near——  
the Prince, and King to be:  
Lord of the castle, lawful Heir,  
right Ruler of that rich domain.

## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

Then will he blow upon his silver horn  
one loud blast clear,  
and all the phantom-train  
that keep therein their motley revelry  
—as ghosts of thought themselves adorn  
in weeds of feeling long outworn  
to hold their shadow-revels in the human brain——  
shall flee,  
helter-skelter,  
headlong from all its precincts—flee for shelter  
to the old woods enchanted,  
and many a haunted  
cavern of the outer world . . .  
there, self-involved in dreams, to lie  
for ever prisoners of oblivious sleep.

Then, once again,  
high on the castle's midmost keep  
the royal flag shall fly  
wide-unfurled:  
upon an azure field of sky,  
or and gules; and, once again,  
strong upon his Father's throne,  
in undisputed sovereignty  
the true King reign.

(iii)

So Lynceus in his tower,  
as the clock strikes the hour,

## LYNCEUS

keeps watch upon Futurity:  
while from his high tourelle, aloof  
under its finial-peak of roof,  
—of all the castle's hundred window-squares  
blind and grey——  
his window, his alone,  
in many a flashing signal flares  
*Hail!* to the coming day.

## BEFORE ARARAT

*To Nellie Humphreys and Iola Atkinson*

*Over the leagues of lifeless sea  
the white bird passed—repeatedly  
the buffets of the savage wind assailed her flight;  
while in the west, under the frown  
of purple thunders southward rolled  
along the marches of the night,  
mantled in light and, like some old  
rich-frescoed saint, gold-aureoled,  
the sun went down.*

*The white bird passed: no sign was there  
of living thing in all the dark  
vast waters spread, and, overhead,  
no sign in all the empty world of air:  
no sign of land—no mountain-peak  
pointed above the seas its naked reef,  
no top of tallest tree from which her beak  
might pluck one token-leaf:  
nothing—save, far below her flying,  
in the grey troughs of ocean lying,  
the tempest-battered ark.*

*And Noah looked forth:  
east, and west, and south, and north,  
stretched fierce and wide  
the sombre waters desolate,*

## BEFORE ARARAT

*while in the west the last dun light  
of the sun died;  
and night  
came down upon the world—menace, and fear, and hate——  
through which not one star burned:  
not one small lamp of hope through all the skies of fate.*

*And as the white bird, wearily  
and heavily flying at her journey's end,  
returned  
and at the feet of Noah fell dead,  
Noah, sighing, to his children said:  
'To-morrow, I will send  
over the lifeless leagues of sea,  
over the world deep-drowned in misery,  
another dove:  
for God is not perpetual wrath, but everlasting love.'*

## PRELUDE TO BEVERLEY

*To Edgar and Connie Appleton*

The dark curtains of time are rolled aside: dimly,  
as lit by a moon through clouds, the primitive shapes  
appear:  
inland, on the Humber's edge, and thence to the headland  
of Flamborough,  
the crescent of ancient coast, the white chalk-sweep  
of the Wolds;  
and, mile upon mile at the foot of it, where now the North  
Sea lies,  
an immense plain, with many a lake and shallow mere,  
and, faint on the blue horizon, the flash of the vanishing  
ice.

The centuries pass: from the distant hills and the valleys,  
southward  
in vague processions, the ancient animals of the earth  
recede:  
the huge and shadowy mammoth, the giant deer and the bison;  
while eastward, the great plain stretches, with its desolate  
lakes and meres,  
and thereon no green thing growing, nor the footprint of  
beast or man.

The centuries pass and are gathered together: now are the  
margins  
of lake and of mere clothed with green vegetation; forests  
of birch appear, forests of oak, with the delicate alder;

PRELUDE TO BEVERLEY

the brown bear appears, the short-horned ox, the horse and  
the otter,  
while the beaver builds his dam in the shallow path of  
the stream.

Till, at last, man too appears—primitive, uncouth, savage:  
with his rough-chipped axe of stone, his flint scraper  
and knife;  
hunting and fishing by day, and, at night, eyes fixed on  
the fire,  
projecting who knows what dreams on the screen of the  
years to be!

The centuries pass: behold, from the south, a new people!  
Pale  
flashes the sun on their axes and spearheads of polished  
stone;  
clad in the skins of their sheep, drinking the milk of their  
goats,  
hunting and fishing, they live their days; they die and  
are buried:  
over their bodies the long barrow is built—their  
monument,  
when all else has perished, even from then until now.  
O land of the living, how thick are you strewn with the  
graves of the dead!

The centuries pass: over the grey North Sea, setting out  
in their hollowed logs for ships, from their home in the  
distant Rhineland,  
behold, again a new people! See, how the sunlight flames,

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

red fire on their axes of bronze, red fire on their  
bronzen spears!  
Conquering, they come: they establish themselves in the  
land: the land  
is matted and sown, the crops are reaped with sickles  
of flint;  
new Gods appear: the stone circle is set on the hill;  
in the field, the stone pillar—symbol and source of  
fertility.  
Tending their flocks and their herds, sowing and reaping  
their fields,  
they live their days in the land; they die and are buried—  
their bodies  
asleep on their sides, crouched up, like a child unborn  
in the womb,  
—O hope of man's immortality haunting the tombs of men!—  
and, high over all heaped up, the circular barrow—their  
monument,  
when all else has perished, even from then until now.  
O land of the living, how thick are you strewn with the  
graves of the dead!

Behold, once more, with their weapons of iron, a new people  
appearing:  
borne in their two-horsed chariots, driven by charioteers,  
conquering, they ride forth with their weapons of brandished  
iron:  
arrogant over the land reigns Camulus, God of War.  
Conquering, they live their days in the land; they die and  
are buried:

PRELUDE TO BEVERLEY

a great pit is dug, and, upright in the pit, the chariot,  
the two horses, the charioteer—and, upright in the chariot,  
the dead chief grasps his weapons of iron: so shall he ride,  
proud and chariot-borne, unbowed to the last victory.  
O hope of man's immortality haunting the tombs of men!

Suddenly, through the confused murmur, the echoes of bygone  
times,  
like trumpets sounding along the shapeless moan of the wind,  
suddenly, new names resound: the clarion-names of Rome!  
Ostorius Scapula sweeps to the north. The great Ninth  
Legion  
advances from Lincoln to York: *Caer Ebur* becomes *Eburacum*.  
The great main roads are driven, straight as the justice  
of Rome,  
turning aside for no obstacle, straight over hill, over  
plain;  
and, along the great main roads, after the armies following,  
as a tender woman stooping and binding the wounds of the  
fallen,  
the civilization of Rome, and the gentler duties of peace.  
New Gods appear: altars are built to Jove and Bellona;  
Mars usurps the terrors of *Camulus*, God of War;  
men call upon *Hercules*, the divine Emperor, upon *Mithras*,  
*Serapis*;  
and, with these, breathed for the first time on the winds  
of Britain,  
the holy name of Christ.

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

But what man avoids his fate?  
what nation its destiny? Over the grey North Sea, the  
sunlight  
pale on their circular shields and the regular flash of  
their oars,  
in their long ships foamy-necked, over the swan-road,  
behold them,  
the Seed of England, raiders and robbers, the first Saxons!  
Assaulted by foes without, corruption within, Rome weakens:  
the legions withdraw; Britain is left to her fate defenceless:  
breaching the Wall of Antonine, breaching the Wall of  
Hadrian,  
sweep down the fierce Caledonians; over the Irish Sea,  
Scots in their long galleys; over the North Sea, Saxons!  
The night approaches: and, against the dark of approaching  
night,  
like terrible red torches, the flames of burning villages  
light for the last time the savage and pitiful scene.  
The light of the red fire dies, and, like a curtain, the night,  
the dark night of History, falls over land and sea.

Once again, the curtains of time are rolled aside:  
clear in the light of early day, England appears,  
—not yet the intimate look of the gentle face we know—  
covered with dense forests, scarred by repeated wars;  
nevertheless, England! the land of our faith and love.  
Now, from western Iona, from Lindisfarne in the north,  
ever more swiftly spreads the Good News of the Kingdom  
of God:

## PRELUDE TO BEVERLEY

Ethelburga comes from Kent, and, with her, the priest,  
Paulinus;  
Edwin, King of Northumbria, is baptized in the faith of  
Christ.  
Saint Cedd sings Mass at Lavingham; the monk and the nun  
appear;  
while, on the green headland of Stréonesháll, looking down  
on the sea,  
over her monks and her nuns, Saint Hilda, the Abbess, rules.  
Here Cædmon dreams his dream; and, most to his own wonder  
sings, for the first time, a Song in the English tongue;  
and here, among the learned already renowned for learning,  
among the pious of heart already renowned for piety,  
lives John, a simple monk, and a son of the Yorkshire Wolds.

What man avoids his fate? O blessèd fate of John!  
For hence, with his dear companions, with Herebald, his  
faithful friend,  
he goes forth preaching the Gospel, lighting the candles  
of Christ:  
see him, Bishop of Hexham! see him, Archbishop of York!

Now once, with his dear companions, John came to a lonely  
place:  
a lonely and open place in the dense Wood of Deira:  
hushed with the forest-voices, hushed with the late sunlight  
asleep on its shallow streams where the beavers built  
their dams.  
Silent they stood: Nature with its great innocence surrounded  
them:

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

innocent! far removed from the strife and the glory of  
Christ:  
and the Saint, in this lonely place, in the great surrounding  
innocence,  
by the Stream of Beavers, ordained, to the strife and the  
glory of Christ,  
A House to be built, where holy women and holy men  
might pass, in labour and love, their days in the peace of God.

So was built, in labour and love, the Minster of Beverley:  
humble dwellings of wattle and wood, and a humble church—  
humble dwellings of wood, where now, to the glory of God,  
stand, in immemorial beauty of stone, these towers!  
Humble dwellings of holy women and holy men:  
but the Saint, before he left them, to return to his own  
labours,  
hung in the timbered tower of their humble church a bell,  
a bell to sound through the hours and the days as the  
centuries passed,  
a summons of Life to the living, for the dead, comfort and  
hope.  
And the Saint and his dear companions went their ways in  
the world;  
till, after many a year, and his labours done, the Saint  
came, once again—and now for the last time—to Beverley,  
to end his days in prayer and peace in the place he loved:  
and reverently his children, his sons and daughters in God,  
laid his body to rest in the church he had built; and sadly,  
sadly the passing-bell tolled for the soul of the Saint.

PRELUDE TO BEVERLEY

But what grave shall confine man's spirit? what burial-place  
his hope?

Far and wide through the land spread the fame of the Saint:  
pilgrims flocked to his shrine; his very bones wrought  
miracles;  
and under his banner kings rode forth to victorious wars.

O who shall avoid his fate? what man? what nation? Once  
more,

over the grey North Sea, behold them, over the swan-road,  
in their long ships foamy-necked, with the flash of  
regular oars,  
they come—the Danes! raiders and robbers, heathen and  
terrible!

Like a storm they pass, and where they have passed—ashes  
and death!

Like a storm through the Wood of Deira, and the lonely  
peace of Beverley;  
and, where they have passed, ashes and death! and, askance  
through the shadows,  
terrified men and women—a few—fleeing for life.

For three years desolate, no man setting foot therein,  
desolate

lies the lonely glade in the Wood of Deira: desolate  
the stream where the beavers built, and, beside it, burnt  
and black,  
desolate, all that is left of the labour of love of the  
Saint:

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

ruins and ashes, burnt and black! and, among the ruins,  
the Saint's bell fallen silent, the bones of the Saint  
scattered.

But what grave shall confine man's spirit? what burial-  
place his hope?

In twos and threes they return; sadly they greet one  
another;

with the tears salt on their cheeks, reverently, with  
stooped backs,

they search in the black ruins; they gather the bones of  
the Saint.

Then, on the black ruins of all their past, heroic,  
they erect, in labour and love, a new House to the glory  
of God:

once more, the sound of their prayers is heard in the  
Wood of Deira;

once more, in the lonely peace of Deira, the sound of the  
bell.

The bones of Saint John of Beverley are gathered together  
and buried;

but the soul of Saint John of Beverley, as the long  
centuries pass,

through all changes, through all centuries, guarding and  
guiding,

broods over the place of his choice in the vanished Wood  
of Deira,

over the House he founded, over the Minster and Town.

*PRELUDE TO BEVERLEY*

For what grave shall confine man's spirit? what burial-  
place his hope?

Men and their works shall perish; their names be no more  
remembered;

but the Spirit of Man, for ever, in courage, and faith, and  
love,

goes on for ever, from glory to glory, and from height  
to height.

## MOUNTAIN-LOVE

*To Gerik and Natalie Schjelderup*

By closest sympathies  
lovers exchange their qualities;  
so love unites dissimilar things,  
fulfilling each with each:  
gives passion thought, and gives thought speech,  
and dead words living wings.

Where the steep hills lean over,  
and the rock-ridge above  
looms blank in dim mist-smother,  
or with drawn brows  
scowls black upon the crouching earth:  
in a small house of stone,  
like a worn boulder overgrown  
with the dense mosses—for so dense the firs,  
dwarf-oak, and hazel make a cover  
for the rough mountain-base——  
an old man dwelt alone.

He had been born in that small house,  
and there, as child, and boy, and man, had dwelt;  
the hill had stood beside his birth:  
as, in old legends, beldames stand,  
with gifts of evil and of good  
—and none knows which—in either hand:

## MOUNTAIN-LOVE

the hill had stood and turned her face  
upon him. From the first,  
she,  
and not his mother,  
had taken him and claimed him hers;  
and it was she who nursed  
his weak humanity on the strong food  
of dreams that grow in solitude.

And he,  
growing to boyhood, felt  
for her more than a boyish love:  
not as her son, not as her brother,  
not as her friend . . . a passion deeper sown  
clamped roots about his heart; and, as he changed,  
changed but to grow; and, as he grew, estranged  
his manhood from mankind:  
the hill became the mistress of his mind,  
and every thought  
caressed her like a lover.

By closest sympathies  
lovers exchange their qualities.

He bought  
the lacerated hill-side: every steep  
ascent, blue cleft, and overarching slope;  
the lake, the gorge, the precipice,

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

and the top's solitary cairn were his.  
And there he fed a thousand sheep  
on the wild grasses of his dreams  
and the wild flowers of hope.  
The streams  
spoke love's continual message in his ear,  
and the white mist that filled  
another with white fear,  
thrilled  
the passion of his breast:  
as if a woman drew her veil  
over a face made pale  
by sudden love confessed.  
And there he planted thickening groves  
of cedar and of fir,  
with, here and there,  
the spire  
of the thin delicate poplar, to adorn  
his mountain: even as men make fair  
with invitations to desire  
—jewels for her neck and hair,  
and rich robes round the feet of her—  
the woman of their loves.  
And she, as if in gratitude  
for the green gift of trees,  
spread round the little house of stone  
where her man-lover dwelt alone  
inviolable peace.

## MOUNTAIN-LOVE

By closest sympathies  
lovers exchange their qualities.

So he lived on to the white winter of age:  
unaged for ever she remained.  
Each from the other gained  
who knows what strange similitude  
from their so diverse heritage!

His brow was like a hard  
boulder of stone, by the winds worn,  
by rains defaced; in his regard  
gleamed quartz and mica; and the proud  
head, where the long white hair  
drifted, was like some solitary, bare,  
high summit with its mane of cloud.  
And to his soul, no less,  
the rock had entered: tenderness  
was like the plain which the great hill treads down;  
pity—the white flower of another's pain——  
a flower that drooped neglected on the plain.  
Men feared his frown,  
as men would fear the storm that sweeps  
black on the mountain's ragged steeps;  
and in repose his face took on  
the ancient loneliness of stone;  
while there were moments—when he dreamed,  
when his thoughts kissed  
the dreadful image of his love——

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

that his face seemed  
no face: but one of the blind crags that move,  
huge and forlorn, behind the mist.

And O what vague humanity  
had charged the mountain's old indifference  
with, as it were, the unshaped elements  
of thought and sense!

All other hills rejoice to feel the light  
press shining palms upon their naked breasts,  
and laugh when the wind passes  
its cool soft fingers through their grasses;  
their lakes give back unclouded noon,  
or the clear stars and clear-cut moon  
of night;  
or, if the calm cloud-shadow rests  
upon them, 'tis a holy  
melancholy  
falls over them to consecrate  
their large humility.

And they are loved by all; or, if one fears,  
'tis as the little trembling before the great:  
man, and the handful of his years,  
before eternity.

Their streams companion him, until he find  
their summits, like still shrines apart——  
sweet conversation for his mind,  
and silence for his heart.

## MOUNTAIN-LOVE

But this!

Not even the sun could bring  
peace to its grey top desolate;  
and, when the cloud  
threw over it a sudden sweep of wing,  
it stood as in a cold black fit  
of anger and of hate;  
and, when the wind would talk with it,  
it boomed and roared aloud:  
cried  
aloud in baffled and bewildered pride,  
loud in bewildered pain——  
cried till the wild bewildered air,  
in baffled echoes of despair,  
cried back again . . .  
and the rain  
inconsolably  
wept from the weary sky.

O what a sad humanity  
had charged the mountain's old indifference  
with monstrous phantasms of thought and sense!

And all men feared it—though they knew not what  
held for their hearts the heart of fear:  
not the abyss,  
not the black lake and precipice,  
not the unearthly, palely drifting  
light of the mists where the dim cliffs went shifting . . .  
something as strange as human love,

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

something as cunning and as kind,  
as sweet, and pitiless, and blind,  
and grey in cruelty.

And there was only one who feared it not,  
and only one who held it dear:  
a white old man who dwelt alone  
in a small house of stone.

By closest sympathies  
lovers exchange their qualities.

# MY FRIEND IS DEAD

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE

*To Catherine Abercrombie*

## I. DEDICATION

How much of beauty the flower owes  
to the rich earth in which it grows!  
earth of Love's tended garden, whence  
Song draws its sweetest sustenance.

Sun, wind, and rain, the good sky gives  
to bless the growing stem and leaves:  
but, without earth, what bloom were given  
to recompense the gifts of heaven?

Rich earth, whose secret love transmutes  
the dung of time to golden fruits,  
and whose long patience turns by stealth  
grief into hope, and waste to wealth.

And now, in this sad latter day,  
how proudly shall the rich earth say:  
On this bare spot once grew from me  
the perfect flower of Poesy.

## II. MY FRIEND IS DEAD

εἰ δὲ θανόντων περ καταλήθοντ' εἰν Ἀΐδαο,  
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ κείθι φίλου μεμνήσομ' ἑταίρου.

—Homer

Now from the silent garden of his grief  
each brings some gift to honour your dear death:  
one, the immortal laurel's glistening leaf,  
one, the clear lily of impassioned breath;  
this, the bright daffodil of burning thought,  
that, the dark violet that hides its pain  
    in shadows—and one has brought  
a rose, and every petal wet with rain.

And I? What shall I bring?  
I, in whose bare-swept garden now  
no seed to any flower will grow;  
    where, from each bush and bough,  
the last leaves fell, time-shrivelled, long ago;  
I, whose grey winter wakes not to the spring,  
what emblem of my love, what tribute shall I bring?

No leaf! no flower! This sprig of last year's heather  
dry, twisted stalk, and dust of withered bells,  
    where, through the bitter weather,  
the old blind wind's unending chronicles  
    are full of partings and farewells;  
this heather gathered where the lonely moor  
throngs to my gate, ay, to my very door:

*MY FRIEND IS DEAD*

type of that solitude that rings us, each and all,  
spite of the friendly hedge, the intimate wall;  
type of those awful other solitudes that wait  
on the last closing of life's garden-gate.

And it is fitting—for your noble Song  
has qualities that to the moors belong:  
something aloof, and incontaminate  
by the world's little gains and little cares;  
companion of the days and nights of fate,  
and breathed upon by universal airs.

Naked to every sky: where sun or moon might cast  
the slow shadows of clouds, the swift shadows of wings;  
strong with the present strength of the enduring Past,  
and still with all the stillness of essential things.

Naked to every sky: O the long battles fought!  
O howl of the black North! O nights of secret tears!  
here where the world's enigmas did combat with man's thought,  
O the pierced shields of faith, and reason's shattered spears!

Naked to every sky; O splendours of what Dawn  
kindled your soul's horizon at the hour of praise!  
O glory of what Night, when, all earth's lights withdrawn,  
suns from beyond our darkness touched you with their rays!

Not yours the flowery valley, the green plain—  
though, now and then, when the sun shines,  
stray celandines make gay the glen;

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

though I have caught, when skies were still,  
a faint bird-trill like a shy thought;  
though I have seen, when moons were white,  
the rivulet's bright-loomed water-sheen——  
not yours the flowery valley, the green plain,  
the breathing forest's leafy antiphon;  
if joy—then joy that waits not on the sun:  
if peace—then peace which is the bride of pain:  
such peace, such joy, as one alone may find  
here where earth's brow touches the feet of heaven,  
the peace and joy of the self-conquering mind  
to active love and contemplation given:  
the mind self-dedicate from purest youth  
to truth, and only to the truth.

So it is fitting that I bring you this,  
who have no flower to bring you, and no leaf  
whereon to write, Apollo-like, my grief:  
my cry for Beauty torn to the abyss  
where all things perish . . . man and sprig of heather,  
gone to their deaths, gone to their deaths together!

When, on my morning walk, I saw it there,  
shrunk on the brown moor bare,  
a thought to my poor spirit came——  
a thought, sharp as a tongue of flame,  
and heavy as despair;  
I thought: A few brief months ago,  
this wasted heather was aglow  
with purple like a robèd king——

MY FRIEND IS DEAD

and then you too, you too, were then a living thing!  
and now, you too, you too, are dead,  
life's crown put off, life's purple shed!  
Alas! the moor shall soon again  
put on its cloak of royal stain,  
but your dear life, alas! shall know  
no second blossoming.

Take, then, this sprig of heather: let it be  
a mute remembrancer of all  
you may no longer hear nor see;  
I lay it on your pillow—let it recall  
the earth you loved, each pleasant sound and sight,  
in gentle dreams through the long night . . .  
as, when a Pharaoh died, on his tomb-wall  
men painted pictures of familiar things  
—oxen at plough, women at loom, the wings  
of birds in the green delta-reeds—that he  
might save his soul from final vacancy,  
and live again, though but in dreams unproved,  
the life that he had lived and loved.

So may this wasted heather bring  
pictures of hedge-rows fledged for spring;  
of late May-ploughings, where the white  
flights of the wild gull slant in light;  
pictures of summer harvests rolled  
in cataracts and lakes of gold;  
of stubble-fields, like sheets of bronze  
burnished in rich September's suns;

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

and winter, when the long lines flow  
of hill and hollow hushed in snow:  
pictures of earth, and time's recurrent year,  
to you whose new-envisioned eye,  
beyond all seasons of our hope or fear,  
looks full upon Eternity.

And O, if it may be that any sight,  
so pictured on your chamber-wall, should wake  
in your still spirit even a faint delight,  
forget not him who painted it! forgive  
its little skill for his will's sake,  
and in your hushed remembrance let his memory live.

## LAZARUS

*To Bethel Jacobs*

Dead: and believe it, you! though now the doctors  
look wise and, murmuring 'Catelepsy', shake their heads:  
to die? to sleep? small difference when sleep's so deep!  
buried, that's certain: four days and three nights in the  
tomb;

and that I was wrapped in grave-clothes, that I know:  
for when I was again alive—or again awake,  
as the doctors have it—I felt the sisterly hands  
of Martha and Mary unwind the cerements from me:  
from chin the chin-strap, that clamps the teeth so fast  
shut on death's secret; from eyes the bandage, though still  
I kept my eyes fast shut. Terrible enough,  
after the total dark of death, that red  
flaming curtain from zenith to horizon falling,  
that veil of newly pulsing sun-smitten blood  
my eyelids hung between the world and me:  
terrible enough that dazzling anguish, without  
daring direct vision! And then I felt  
neighbourly hands that clothed me with fresh garments . . .  
how light, how easy, the flowing vestures of life,  
after death's stiff habiliments! Yes, I was dead  
and four days entombed: four days had I known liberation  
from joy, pain, hope, and regret; I lay as quiet  
as the quiet stone on which my body rested,  
and, at first, senseless, mindless, as the very stone:  
utterly cold—all heat of living extinct,

## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

all fire of desire and passion long since ashes,  
with not even a thin wisp of the smoke of thought.  
At first . . . but gradually consciousness—moon through  
    mist,  
to the clear sunlight of conscious living—returned:  
shadowless, an equable attention, diffused, indifferent,  
lacking all like and dislike. As from some point  
of remote vantage, withdrawn, I now looked back  
on the arrested pageant of my thirty-five years of  
    living,  
my brief mortality; rapidly scanned it, as a man  
with a glance lightly skims a familiar story—  
here and there a phrase, and often a single word  
that evokes in all its detail a whole episode.  
I saw myself with my sisters, Martha and Mary,  
a child among children, playing in the streets of  
    Bethany,  
or with a stick, in the dust of the school courtyard,  
tracing my Aleph, Beth, Gimel; then as a boy  
wandering alone through the shadowy groves of Olivet;  
as a growing lad reciting the psalms of David,  
or amazed in Jerusalem, awe-struck upon Mount Moriah;  
and now as a young man, and again wandering  
through the groves of olives—no longer alone. But so  
    cold  
was the light of that vision, so remote that familiar  
    story,  
that not one throb, one sigh of love's nostalgia,  
troubled my peace—death's peace—as I looked once more  
on the face of my bride, or felt her lips in the very

## LAZARUS

ghost of a kiss. I saw myself as a man  
plying my trade—my children playing about me,  
retouching as with clear brushes my faded infancy;  
my old ambitions, my dreams, revisited me:  
for my sons, ambitions proud as the cedars of Lebanon,  
for my daughters, dreams sweet as the grapes of Eshcol.  
Again I looked at my father, dead before me,  
without one tremor . . . at my mother, dead before me,  
without one tear; and again I, who had wept  
days together in inconsolable grief,  
closed with untrembling hands my wife's dead eyes,  
while from my living eyes not one tear fell:  
for the dead weep not, no tremor assails his heart,  
no trembling his hands, who lies at rest in the grave.  
The days and the months passed, and my grief grew gentle,  
and gently the years passed; Martha and Mary  
dwelt with me here in the old house at Bethany,  
I plied my trade, my children grew up around me.  
And again I lived that memorable hour, when Mary  
—'twas a summer afternoon, and the shadows lay black  
in the street—  
brought to the door of our house Jesus of Galilee.  
There in the doorway he stood, a tall, gaunt figure;  
against the black of the shadows the pallor of his face  
and his white garments made a diffused radiance . . .  
then he entered and spoke, blessed me and all the house,  
came and sat down, and Mary sat with us—but Martha,  
thoughtful of others, fetched meat and drink for our  
guest.

That moment, O friends, alone among all life's moments,

## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

now seen once more in the rapid summary of death, sent me again its authentic message: a challenge flashed from the crowded past to the empty present, the challenge of a future unguessed by the past or the present.

All the rest of my static pageant of years, though I knew it mine, might have been, for all I troubled, the story of another's life; this, this was personal: a signal from deep unto deep of essential spirit, one look from his soul to mine: a look that pierced all barriers of time, all life, all death: a look charged with the silence that reigns beyond life and death, terrible with the sword-like splendour of ultimate truth. Calmly and quickly the few remaining months passed quietly—Jesus had gone again into Galilee; I saw myself fallen sick with my last sickness, tossing in burning slumbers, muttering, delirious, afire with fever, afire with fierce anxiety for my children's welfare and future, my dreams and ambitions quivering like figures of smoke thwart-blown by the wind. I looked at my own dead body; I felt them washing it; I felt them wrap it in grave-clothes; I heard my sisters' despair, my children's weeping, my friends' lamentation; and Mary crying aloud: O if only Jesus had stayed, our brother Lazarus would not have died! But Martha, even then, was busy and thoughtful of others, thoughtful of those who came to wash me, of those who wrapped my body in grave-clothes, of those who bore it

## LAZARUS

to the shelf in the cave and closed the cave with a stone.

That was the last picture of my book of life,  
the book I had read rapidly through, and now  
closed for ever. This was my life as a man,  
lived, finished, and done with: its good and its evil,  
alike, things of the past, things irrevocable;  
its hopes and its fears ended; the scroll rolled up,  
stored away in the archives of God's memory,  
and my concern no more. For I was dead:  
and what is death but the curt denial of life?  
a reversal of all its intentions? the total cancelling  
of all its values? Now might the axes fell  
all the pride of Lebanon, I should not grieve; and the  
storm

strip the vineyards of Eshcol, I should not complain.  
The past and the future were alike to me indifferent;  
I was all present, and held my past and my future  
like the two ends of a rod between my hands—  
the measuring-rod that measures all human worth.  
For I was dead. Now, like a finished music,  
the last recollection faded; only one image,  
like a note sustained after the music is finished,  
still persisted: the face of Jesus—his eyes  
as that day at Bethany they looked so long into mine,  
and the faint prophetic smile that troubled his lips.  
Four days—so men assure me—dead and buried . . .  
it might have been four years, or four thousand years!  
though time still moved, but moved in a new direction:  
not parallel now with the passage of our earthly journey,  
rather away from it, so that the glance which traversed it

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

was a fixed stare. The scroll of my life, rolled up,  
beginning to end, bulked like a solid object;  
its yesterdays, to-days, to-morrows, equally present . . .  
equally distant, for now swiftly my spirit  
withdrew. It seemed . . . or I dreamed—what dreams may  
come?—

that I lay alone, naked, on a stony pinnacle,  
aloft in the hollows of space and infinite night;  
this rock upheld me, gave me identity: my soul  
was the crown of its growth; its base, my being and root.  
Distant immensely, like a great wheel's circumference,  
—and I at the silent centre—the life of the world,  
the circle of birth and of death, in endless monotony  
spun at the rims of existence; and I knew, without seeing,  
that my own life, my pageant of thirty-five years,  
a minute fragment, spun past on the racing edge.  
But I, beyond life, remote, at the silent centre  
lay without motion: all interests now withdrawn,  
my spirit's filaments snapped and retreating inward,  
till even the far-off hum of the blind circumference,  
the hum of the mingled myriad voices of time,  
died, and the last silence encroached upon me.  
And in that silence I heard the whisper of water,  
the hush of a shoreless ocean swiftly rising,  
swiftly ascending my rocky flanks of identity;  
darker the darkness grew, while a wind, colder  
than the breath of the wintry Taurus, blew upon me.  
I felt my body stiffen, my very mind  
froze to a field of icy phantasms. Long since,  
all passion spent, the genial movements of thought

## L A Z A R U S

had passed like a slow procession of floating shadows . . .  
now, the very shadows froze. Images,  
drained of their human meanings, grew fixed before me,  
hollow simulacra—till even these succumbed,  
like wind-arabesques on the desert sands at nightfall,  
to the infiltration of the all-pervasive dark.  
Night, and the sea, and the awful wind of death  
closed upon me; I felt the first cold ripple  
of the tide against my flesh; my heart contracted;  
my mind shrank in to a bare point of being . . .  
Suddenly, I heard a voice, shattering the darkness,  
splitting the silence as an axe cleaves a tree:  
*Lazarus, come forth!* and immediately powerful hands  
—O, not of men!—lifted me. I seemed to float  
on a miraculous current of air, till gently I stood  
erect, felt under the soles of my feet firm earth,  
and on my face the strange heat of the sun.  
Now sisterly hands unwound the cerements from me,  
from my chin the chin-strap, the bandage that bound my  
eyes . . .  
unaccustomed, terrible light seared my eyeballs!  
quick as I could with my stiff joints, I covered  
my blinded eyes with my hands; little by little,  
let the new splendour filter between my fingers,  
till I could bear unshrinking the fiery curtain  
of sun-suffused blood. Then, when the pain had lessened,  
—I felt like the High Priest when he lays his hand  
on the great veil of the Temple—I raised my lids  
slowly, and, dazed, looked out upon a new world.  
But in that glory—O Light, after death's darkness!—

## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

only one thing I looked upon, one thing I saw:  
his face, as he stood gazing upon me—his face,  
familiar of old, yet now indescribably changed.  
Have you not known a moment when the earth put off  
her familiar visage, as a snake sloughs its skin?  
It may be but a fringe of trees against the skyline  
when the sun has set, dark-etched on the soaring rose;  
or the posts of a gateway across the street, kindled  
to pillars of burning gold by the mid-day fire;  
or the crown and noble flanks of the Mount of Olives . . .  
familiar companions of our daily seeing, yet now  
suddenly seen anew with a piercing clarity:  
those are the trees that fringe the frontiers of

Paradise!

no gate of Solomon's Temple, for all its beauty,  
shone like those pillars of fire—O gate to what Temple?—  
while Olivet's sweep and rise, in the splendour of dawn,  
is the very Hill of the Lord! The unchanged is changed:  
drenched with significance—shot through and through

with light

beyond all the sun ever gave—touched by an air  
more buoyant, more sweet, more strong than the wind of  
morning;

the puzzle-pieces of life have flashed together;  
the complete pattern blazes; a word is spoken  
to answer for ever the deep doubts of the soul.

So I saw him, Jesus the Galilean,  
the same, yet never the same: the edge of a Sword  
whose pommel is held in the very grasp of Deity:  
in the midst of time's roaring seas the naked Rock

## LAZARUS

of Eternal Life: the rigid Axis of Love  
round which the universe spins like a whirling wheel . . .  
the infinite Light of God focused in Man,  
and Man burnt up and renewed in the furnace of God,  
and of them Twain, one Being—God and Man.  
So I saw him, my friend, Jesus of Galilee,  
as amazed we looked at each other—he, too, was amazed:  
the smile on his lips, no longer prophetic, now flashed  
triumphant certainty; but in his eyes—those eyes  
that flame through Heaven and Earth, ay, and Hell also,  
riddling Creation with the arrows of absolute knowledge—  
burned, as they stared into mine, an unanswered question;  
as if I—I, Lazarus—knew the one thing  
hidden from him: for I had been dead and buried,  
and now was alive again, while for him that secret  
still dwelt in the future, gathering fast and unknown.

## TWO PSALMS

*To Peggy Goodman*

### I. THE HUNDRED AND FOURTH PSALM

*Benedic, anima mea.* (God in Nature)

My open eyes behold,  
now as of old,  
Thy presence and Thy glory in the earth;  
of all the things time brings to birth  
Thou art the secret being  
made plain to my love's seeing.

Thou art not hidden in Thy cloaks of light,  
nor in the curtained firmament  
wherein, as in a traveller's tent,  
Thou lodgest for a night;  
nor in the watery deep wherein Thy power  
foundeth Thy silent chambers for an hour.

The chariot-wheels of Thy desire  
spin in the nebular whirls of space,  
and, like a singing wind from sky to sky,  
Thy wingèd feet of thought go by;  
Thou dreamest—and before Thy face  
Thy dreams take shape in starry fire.

And in the midst thereof Thy hand  
fixed firm the iron axle of the globe,  
and round its glowing granites threw

TWO PSALMS

—roaring, tempestuous, and blue—  
the oceans like a blowing robe.  
The waters heard the thunders of Thy will:  
they fled away, and the dry land  
appeared—the island-summit of one lonely hill;  
at Thy rebuke they fled away,  
the mountain-summits rose, the valleys lay  
steaming beneath them, and the sea kept its bound;  
and now, with cheerful sound,  
poured from the rocky wells above  
the streams and joyous rivers of Thy love.

Thy love, that nourisheth  
all creatures that draw breath,  
the beasts of every field and the wild asses;  
and every bird that flaps its wings,  
and every throat that sings,  
morning and evening, in the branchèd tree.  
Thy love, whence grow the grasses  
of meadow and of lea,  
food for all cattle—and, for human need,  
each herb that springeth from its seed,  
and wine, and bread, and oil,  
to gladden and refresh  
man's spirit and his flesh  
after his toil.

The cedar-saps of Lebanon  
out of Thy love are drawn;  
Thou art the quiet breathing of that wood

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

where the stork builds her nest;  
to Thee, the conies of the rock,  
to Thee, the wild goats look,  
who dost preserve the high hill's solitude  
their refuge and their rest.

The punctual splendours of the sun and moon  
have made Thy steadfast purpose known:

Now,

night falls upon the forest, and on stealthy feet  
its hungry dwellers seek their meat;  
the young lions roar: and it is Thou  
who art their hunger: Thou, their prey;  
and then 'tis day——

and the young lions in their den

lay them down to sleep again;

while men

rise from their slumbers and go forth,  
till evening comes, to labour in the earth.

Labour of Heaven: since no less Thine it is——

our clouded goals, Thy sunlike destinies;

our failures shall not maim Thy love's success,

whose faith outlives our faithlessness,

whose wisdom in the best we are and do

liveth and laboreth too.

Thy riches fill the earth, and the wide sea  
through Thee is mighty—beautiful through Thee,  
its noiseless denizens of weed, and shell, and fin;

## TWO PSALMS

there go the ships: Thine is the joy of man,  
and Thine the joy of that Leviathan  
whom Thou hast made to play therein;  
these  
wait upon Thee: Thou art their strength, their pride——  
and all the hungers of the seas  
in Thee are satisfied.

And then Thy face is turned from us away  
and we are troubled: In the skies above,  
and in the earth, and in the seas beneath,  
invisible Thy blind destructions move;  
soon fails the little wind of breath,  
and where life was is death.  
And, seeing this, I say:  
This, too, this is Thy love.

And even as I say it, lo, once more  
Thy Spirit is abroad upon the earth;  
Thy passion, busy to restore,  
breathes over hill, and plain, and sea, and shore,  
and the great cycles swing from death to birth.

Unchangeable in change, Thy love lives on!  
Thy glory is for ever! Now with the voice  
of every living thing that feels the sun,  
beholding them, Thou shalt rejoice  
in all that Thou hast done:  
Earth trembles at the rapture of Thy look,  
and at Thy touch the shaken mountains smoke.

*PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE*

O Love, which art my Universe! I, too,  
will sing Thy praises while I have my being:  
faithful art Thou, and honourable, and true,  
high as the heavens are high, and as the deep seas  
deep;

Thou Sun of all time's seeing!  
Thou Wind of all the world's delight!  
and, when night falls, the starry sleep  
and silence of the night.

II. THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINTH PSALM

*Domine, probasti.* (God in the Soul)

Self-ignorant, I know  
nor what I am, nor whither go:  
Thou knowest me with perfect knowing,  
both what I am and whither going:  
I could not take one step of thought  
did I guess not,  
beyond my walls of mental night,  
Thy Universe of Light.

If I am blind to Thee,  
Thou art not blind in me.

My deeds see not their end;  
I but half comprehend  
the words I speak;  
Thou knowest what my lips intend,  
Thou seest what I seek.

Fears and desires to which no thought gives voice  
my silent hopes—Thou knowest what they are;  
the untrodden paths that wait upon my choice  
Thou seest from afar;  
for my self-ignorance is made  
in Thee Thy knowledge, and the goal  
Thy secret purpose sets is laid  
a hand upon my soul.

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

As light in flame,  
as salt in the wide sea,  
as life within the living frame,  
Thou knowest me.

Too high for me, O Lord,  
and terrible, Thy seeing!  
Thy knowing, like a sword,  
cuts to my core of being:  
naked my spirit lies  
and helpless to the blaze  
of Thy fierce purities;  
where, now, shall my shame hide?  
now, whither flee my pride?  
Not to the desert-tracts of space——  
all heaven burns with Thy bright evidence;  
nor shall the bitter heart's last reticence,  
the dungeons of impenitence,  
conceal me from Thy face.

Self-flight is not escape from Thee:  
there is no refuge in the dawn,  
beyond the utmost of the sea  
I find Thee still—beyond the sun.  
Surely the dark shall cover me! I say;  
but the night shineth as the day,  
and light and darkness are to Thee as one.

When I am far from Thee,  
Thou art not far from me.

TWO PSALMS

For am I not Thy thought made flesh?  
one moment of Thy world-intent?  
I am no flight caught in the mesh  
of sightless accident:  
Ere I was fashioned in my mother's womb,  
I was in Thee Thy purpose; in the gloom  
and æoned lapse of time, or ever the stilled sea  
felt the first atom-thrill  
of individual will,  
Thy brooding dream prefigured me.  
And when Thou buildedst me this cell,  
this hermitage of nerve and bone,  
Thou didst not leave me here to dwell  
utterly alone:  
I touch Thee in my breath, my brain, my blood,  
and far within my prayer's profoundest solitude.

O wonderfully made! my spirit  
the living lore of ages doth inherit,  
millions of years in me have come to flower;  
and every change the years have wrought  
bears the close impress of Thy thought,  
Thy signature of power.

All that I am is Thine:  
the little I call mine  
is but a floating island on Thy tides of might;  
Thy moving destiny  
ordains my liberty,  
my very wrong is made the measure of Thy right

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

the faint Shechinah-spark  
borne in this body's ark  
was kindled at the Founts of uncreated Light.

How precious, then, shall be  
Thy thought of me:  
For in Thy thought I am eternally  
that Filial Splendour that I am not now——  
one singing Star of Thine Epiphany,  
of Thy True Vine, one golden-fruited Bough;  
and now, an exile in a famined place,  
but in Thy thought, even now, Thou featest with Thy  
    Son;  
and here, a blinded runner in time's race,  
but in Thy thought, the Crown for which that race  
    is run.

How precious, then, shall be  
Thy thought of me:  
no longer shrinks my darkness from Thy day;  
Love wields the sword of sight——  
O Love, my night  
cries out to Thee aloud: Unsheathe Thy sword and  
    slay!

Slay Thou the thought that burns  
its incense on the hill  
of evil old idolatries;  
slay Thou the thought that turns  
its back upon Thy will,

*TWO PSALMS*

to follow after vanities;  
slay Thou the traitors at my gate  
whose mouths are full of blasphemies:  
Behold, I hate them with a perfect hate,  
that are in me Thine enemies.

Self-ignorant, I know  
nor what I am, nor whither go:  
Thou knowest me with perfect knowing,  
both what I am and whither going;  
and now I pray:  
Search Thou my heart, my thought, and see  
if any way of grief be left in me,  
and lead me in the Everlasting Way.

# LAKE AND CRAG

*To James Norbury*

In a black mountain-cup  
the still lake lies;  
while, over it, sheer stone,  
black, tragic, and alone,  
into the ever-distant skies  
the crag towers up.

It is a place of solitary grass,  
harsh rocks that heap  
their ruin into forms  
of broken altars and old Gods overthrown;  
the screams  
of the grey hawk, the cries  
of wounded winds, the moan of weary storms,  
the bleat of sheep  
lost where what misty shepherds pass,  
the sad long rush of streams  
—white water shooting down the steep . . .  
these are the only sounds that break  
the silence of the lake:  
It is a place of lonely dreams  
and lonelier peace.

It is a cup of sacrifice,  
a lachrimal of ancient tears;

## LAKE AND CRAG

it is profoundest penitence,  
a soul for ever on its knees;  
it is the soul that has forgone  
all joy and loveliness of sense,  
all griefs,  
save one alone——  
all hopes, all fears,  
all passions, all beliefs,  
save one:

To be so shut and hidden away  
behind its world-renouncing walls,  
that all it knows of day  
shall be the sacerdotal suns;  
of night,  
the moon's face, like a nun's  
coifed in light.

So hidden that no echo falls  
from any world outside;  
so empty of pride,  
void of ambition, destitute of gain,  
so patient in its pain,  
that all the Infinite  
shall suddenly be born in it;  
and God, as in an inn  
by time's wayside,  
lodge therein.

And over it,  
proud, solitary, mighty, and aloof,

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

the crag towers up—lifting itself  
by treacherous ledge and perilous shelf,  
sharp scree and precipice,  
by violence above its own abyss.

It, too,  
would win the Infinite;  
and see—self-hurled  
above itself—the reach of all the world  
below it, and above,  
light in the unapproachable blue.

It is the will that puts all things to proof,  
strength built on self-inflicted pain,  
and triumph torn from despair's jaws;  
it is denial of all laws  
save what its nature does ordain;  
it braves the loneliness where griefs and fears,  
hopes and desires, have fallen away: behold,  
shingle and boulder rolled  
to the lake's edge, stone cataracts of tears!

It would exalt itself, and in its exaltation  
lift up the earth. The passive fields, the streams,  
plains, and the valleys where they lie  
calm in their green security,  
forests that love the shade,  
the unambitious hill, the placid slope:  
all these are made  
the unconscious sharers of its dreams,  
co-partners in its hope.

LAKE AND CRAG

It would affirm for them the pride that they deny,  
know the whole truth they do not dare to know;  
while they shall sweeten and shall justify  
its spirit's isolation.

And though  
many a time the mists drive over  
its lonely head, and cover  
its soul with cold bewilderment,  
there come  
wonderful moments, when the sun  
crowns the scarred forehead of its stone  
with light; or when the firmament,  
night and her moons and stars, are given  
to be for it  
beauty, and joy, and peace: an infinite  
possession and eternal home.

The lake, humble in mute abysses——  
the crag, proud on its precipices——  
this  
is the last, sharp antithesis  
of the soul's highest adventure and sublimest quest:  
Inward—until, all things forgot,  
and self itself remembered not,  
all being held in an extremest rest,  
the soul, like a still lake, shall lie  
and in the deeps thereof  
mirror eternity;

*PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE*

Outward—until the senses hold  
all riches, and the spirit enfold  
the world and all therein in one wide reach of love,  
and, throned on knowledge and sustained in might,  
towers  
in splendour and in plenitude of light,  
a king among the congregated powers,  
the crowned triumphant princes of the sky.

And both sky-conquerors!  
the soul that kneels, the soul that soars——  
seekers of heaven each by his chosen road:  
for, from the first,  
Man is a holy hunger, a divine thirst,  
for that which is  
the Certainty of certainties;  
and, whether he go in or out,  
sole in his going or thronged about,  
flee or embrace the world and the world's doubt,  
predestined to discover God.

## WORLD-DREAM

*To Walter J. de la Mare*

God dreams his world in me,  
therefore is my world true:  
therefore my skies are blue,  
and blue-grey is my sea;  
therefore my hills are strong,  
my rivers joyous-loud,  
where rough pines in a crowd  
to their rough margins throng.

The flowers that please my sight,  
the rainbow through the rain,  
are thrills of his delight  
along my nerves and brain;  
trills of young birds in shade,  
wind in the greening tree,  
are his sweet meanings made  
articulate words in me.

So, too, when wild airs moan  
round the bare steeps of stone,  
or when sea-cliffs resound  
the black wave's white rebound,  
when from the storm's reared hood  
strike lightning's steel-bright fangs,  
the beat of mortal blood  
repeats immortal pangs.

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

Without me and my kind  
how could his world have being?  
A myriad eyes were blind  
that multiply his seeing;  
mute were a myriad tongues,  
and deaf a myriad ears,  
through which he sings and hears  
his choric Zion-songs.

All are his instruments,  
his ministers of dream:  
what poised experience  
where golden eagles scream?  
what eye of pictured sleep  
stares in the coralled deep?  
and what fierce vision broods  
in Congo solitudes?

All are his instruments,  
my hieroglyphs of dream:  
Sound echoing to what sense,  
where golden eagles scream?  
what crystal simile  
flashes the fish in sea?  
and where red lions roar,  
what burning metaphor?

In the sun's zenithed glory,  
stars, and the moon's mild fire,  
he writes in me the story  
of his unknown desire;

WORLD-DREAM

and, when my love, enraptured,  
follows the meteor's flame,  
his thought is almost captured  
and christened with man's name.

The Dream goes on for ever  
—only the dreamers die—  
past reason's last endeavour,  
belief's last ecstasy;  
like the brief season's grasses,  
life's flowering seeds and passes . . .  
only the Dream goes on  
through night which knows no dawn.

## ON PISGAH

*To Frank Merrick*

I go out to them in grief. Youth's easy tears  
lie laked in my remembrance of wrongs suffered  
by them known suddenly mine. What shall they count:  
Egypt? her crowns, possessions? or the true love  
of the false mother? All loss for love is gain;  
and the old nurse, true mother, drags my thoughts  
by more than a mother's love: by the tribe's grapnels  
fast in my flesh, and pain—her heritage,  
now become mine. Thongs, contempts, servitudes . . .  
these hold me, would ambition fan old fires:  
candles, to the blazed furnace of pity! O backs,  
stooped to the scorch of serene suns! O hands,  
numbed with dead clay! Millions of bricks, and each  
on the endless road of sorrow a stone set up.  
Pithom cries from her towers Israel's long grief,  
and the hinged gates of Zoan shriek her wrongs.

Ho, you coward limb of a damned tyranny lifted!  
what! again lifted? Then, as a felled ox,  
lie where my pity, turned rage, has sprawled you dead.  
And you, poor brother, wrap your weals from the sun,  
and do not sob.

How? Shall my own betray me?  
whisper? accuse? throw me to their oppressors  
for guilt-offering? Fools! Miserable! But what

## ON PISGAH

folly to mine, who at a blow lopped off  
my uses, self-betrayed! O sheep of Midian,  
teach me patience: teach faithfulness to one  
unfaithful to love through love's too naked faith.  
Not to forget: let the stamped iron of the years  
brand deep into me my sin, and hold before me  
its white-hot shape. Forgotten faults live on:  
mine's to destroy, to unrivet love's chained hands.

Here, even here, over the years and the leagues,  
I hear it, see it: Zoan's hinged gates complaining;  
Pithom from her towers crying; prone bloody mass  
that was a man's body, and tears stifled at night.

Solitude. My soul sends me. Height and the winds  
call: Horeb her grey top lifts to noon's hush . . .  
What waits there? Smoke on the hills; skies black; moanings  
of thunder; roar of the beating gale about me;  
the world blotted away . . . O fiery bush,  
which the flame burns not! and, suddenly, Thy voice . . .  
and my spirit shaken as a reed in storm:  
'It is I manacled by the Nile! O son,  
deliver Me! What is done is done,  
and a new deed waits doing, that you alone  
—so sanctified—can, and shall, do.  
Fierce focus where burns through  
Love's anguish of light, O visioned mind,  
that alone sees Me, and alone understands  
their needs that are My need, I live in you,  
speak in your words, act in your hands.

PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

Go down, and from his bonds unbind  
captive Israel, in which man's agony  
is multiplied in Me.'

Called, shall I stay? O swaddling-bands of love,  
must I wrench you from my soul grown to a man's?  
Done! and I go forth naked.

Shrilly again  
Pithom's towers cry; shrilly complain the hinged  
high gates of Zoan. I am come, my People!  
Set hope ablaze among you: hold you fast  
to the urge of freedom in you, which is God's  
striving. A Nation, I oppose your rights  
—not wrongs—to the wrong of Egypt's right in you:  
Be still, and watch the wonderful works of Love.

'Let us go, sceptred Evil!' Then, see Nile  
flow blood, a corrupt God; see the Goddess  
in foul frogs trodden under foot, Apis  
eaten of lice. 'Let us go, sceptred Evil!'  
Then, dog-flies itch you; murrain on beasts, the land  
stripped; Mendes sickened, Mnevis dead; boils swollen  
upon you—your magic stiff with scabs. 'Let us go,  
sceptred Evil!' Then, see serene heaven darkened;  
mighty thunderings; hail, and fire in the hail;  
plumped barley and flowered flax destroyed; locusts—  
God's broom to sweep Egypt bare of all green,  
leaving you famine; darkness felt by the hand—  
your Ra laughed to scorn, and his bright eye blinded.  
'Let us go, sceptred Evil!' Loud in the night,

## ON PISGAH

wailing for the first-born—from the King's son  
to the dungeoned felon's. Ho! So you cry us: 'Go!'  
Loins girded, staffed and shod, Smoke-and-Fire-canopied,  
we go. For the last, the high gates of Zoan,  
the towers of Pithom, cry.

Succoth is passed;  
Baal-zephon over against us. Complain not now,  
O Israel: 'The sea before us, and the hosts  
of Pharaoh after us!' Be still, and wonder.

Hark! the east wind . . . the sea swept back . . . dry land . . .  
the Pillar of Smoke moves. What but himself shall cry  
*Halt!* to man's onward-going? Not the rage of kings,  
nor the unwilling spites of Nature. Look back: the veered  
wind blows from the west . . . galloping waves, foam-snorting  
plunge Egypt under a roared onslaught of hoof.  
Captivity's at end, and the new menace  
of freedom is ours. Easy it is to endure,  
but hard to enjoy: slavery's task's a trifle  
to the great work of liberty.

'I call,  
Jehovah, from the thunder-pall  
of Sinai. Write my laws on stone  
imperishable—two laws alone:  
Love Me, the last, hid Substance of Mankind,  
with a fiery, patient, lowly, joyous, blind,  
and ultimate love; and each one love the other,  
more than man wife, than brother brother,  
daughter her father, or son his mother—

## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

but as self self. So shall you see  
Me in all men, all men in Me;  
without which seeing, life is a dark night,  
and all man's wisdom, power, wealth, delight,  
sorrow, and knowledge, and worship—nothing!

Out of the cloud  
and terror I descend. What! at the foot  
of God's own mountain? song and obscene dance?  
Bull-Apis worshipped again in a gold Calf?  
No faith? no patience? Stone to its native rock,  
I hurl God's Tables shattered: Unworthy is man  
of the divine laws of Love. Stroke on sledge-stroke,  
break your idolatries; pound your gods fine:  
strewn dust upon the water, drink your sin.  
Who is for me? Go with drawn swords among them;  
flay their iniquities in three thousand deaths:  
For better a nation go maimed to its promised land  
than whole to its destruction.

I will once more  
brave Sinai, and again win from Love's heart  
inexhaustible his perfect law for man:  
to fuse their hordes, and from their diverse wills  
forge one: the Nation's.

No faith! No courage! See,  
they murmur, who despicably desired  
Egyptian flesh-pots. A little thirst's enough;  
a little hunger scares them—although the rocks  
pour streams, and heaven rains manna for man's faith.

## ON PISGAH

How weld of these a Nation? of these: that Whole  
where each lives in the Whole—the thought of the Whole,  
like a pillar of fire, going before his thinking?  
where man's the limb, and God the heart: one Body  
to move in a sacred dance if limbs move true;  
but like an epilepsy to froth and twist,  
where each sets up for himself a good to follow,  
negligent of the Whole's enclosing good?  
How shall God be in men Man's ultimate Treasure,  
where every will pulls to its sole advantage?  
where the first hardship daunts, and the cry is heard:  
'Better was bondage than this liberty!'  
Faith! faith! I must hold fast to my own vision,  
though none else sees: faith only can meet faith's lack.

O their faint-heartedness . . . and this, after  
the bloody routs of Amaleck! Victory in sight,  
and Canaan, by the spies' report, more fair  
than even our hunger made it. Still the old cries:  
'Why hast thou brought us out to die in the wilderness?'  
'Give us bread.' 'Come, let us get us a captain  
that shall lead us back to Egypt.' Is God too hard?  
Is Life beyond you? and is all hope perished?  
my love like water poured out on the dry sand?  
But if too hard for you, what of your children?  
The old hopes of the earth, burnt dim in men's tired eyes,  
flame to new glory in the clear eyes of childhood . . .  
God! there's our answer. So, let us make the desert  
home—grave of despair, and hope's heroic school—  
till hope, full-grown, goes up to conquer.

## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

### Beasts

crouched in their lairs, Dathan, Abiram spring  
to devour me. How? Have I grown stiff in power?  
despot? . . . who only loved with both hands full?  
What am I but Love's servant? Treacherous yet,  
O People! impatient of God! tired of the Love  
that holds you safe, and hating Love's poor deputy.  
Obey my pointing, for I have eyes and see:  
not them! only for their own good they traffic,  
to cram their bellies; but me, whose divine title  
is that you are more to my soul than my soul's self.

Those years are passed: their revolts, griefs, despairs.  
All dead: Aaron, on the torn crags of Hor;  
Miriam, by the wells of Kadesh—and I alone  
left of the Host plucked out from Egypt, death  
twitching my sleeve. Thank God, I have seen Sihon  
slaughtered at Jahaz; Hebron seized; and all,  
from Arnon to Jabbok, ours; Gilead brought down,  
Kenath and Havvoth-jair! And, for the rest—  
Jordan crossed, Canaan possessed—'tis not for me:  
my splendid Joshua shall lead Israel on  
triumphant. And I? For the last, I will climb the hills  
I love, where Pisgah from the plains of Moab  
o'er-looks that land promised of old—that land  
of milk and honey, where I shall never dwell:  
Far-seen from this still height, valley and plain,  
lake, river, city, village, and field, and farm;  
Gilead as far as Dan, all Naphtali,  
Manasseh, and Judah to the hinder sea,

ON PISGAH

Jericho, and the City of Palm-Trees, far as Zoar:  
beautiful land, to be my People's home  
and the praise of God.

O God,  
art Thou not very near? What changes me?  
I see the world no more as a man sees it:  
no more as a man—but with the self-same eyes  
wherewith Thou seest it!

It is not Israel  
that I brought out of Egypt; no longer Israel  
before whose feet the seas dried up; not Israel  
to whom, Smoke-canopied, Thou didst give laws;  
not Israel that shall conquer. Behold, it is Man!  
and Thou, the profound Spirit moving in Man:  
bringing him out of bondage, through the wastes  
of fear and sorrow, into Eternal Kingdoms.  
Space dwindles, and time's dwarfed! Earth's Zin and Paran;  
Egypt, all within and without that would hold Man bound;  
all barriers, Red Seas cloven by divine willing;  
all mountains, God-wrapped Sinais thundering law;  
Canaan, the world as Thou wouldst have the world;  
Jerusalem, Man's City built of Love,  
and all life's surge and stress, Mankind's great Exodus.

# THE GOD HU<sup>1</sup>

To Ethel Downs

—A hewn block of Eternity,  
sits the God Hu.

His steadfast eyes  
look eastward, where the level sills  
of the abrupt Mokattam Hills  
cut the skies.

Around and billowing far away  
stretches the Libyan waste: a white  
still sea by night;  
by day,  
a sea of golden heat lost in a whisper of light.

Far off, the Nile: on either hand,  
a line of palms against the wall  
of roseate cliff enclosing all—  
a belt of corn against the yellow sand.

—A hewn block of Eternity,  
sits the God Hu.

Nearby,  
huge presences upon the blue,

<sup>1</sup>'Hu' was the Egyptian name of the Great Sphinx. (See Dr. E. A. Wallis Budge, *A History of Egypt*, vol. ii, p. 50.)

## THE GOD HU

—Menkaura, Khafra, Khufu—  
watch whence their living souls are hid,  
each in his secret pyramid;  
the presences of three dead kings  
—Menkaura, Khafra, Khufu—  
watch while the north wind sings  
the world's old songs to the God Hu.

A cool  
fresh-water pool  
shines like a sapphire in the burning ring of day;  
and, at its margin, brown  
bare-footed Arab girls kneel down  
filling their pitchers: now, their bodies sway  
slowly, as on their heads they bear  
the balanced jars of earthenware.

—A hewn block of Eternity,  
sits the God Hu.

Silent as space,  
and patient as all time:  
the base  
shaped in the unliving stone,  
Matter—and out of Matter grown  
the lion-limbs of Life;  
and the whole finished, made sublime,  
by the serene sad flower of strife,  
Man and Man's face.

## PILLARS TO REMEMBRANCE

*Epitome  
of the world's Force won through  
from mountain to humanity,  
sits the God Hu.*

*Out of the waters, Nu  
lifts up the Boat of Being—there,  
the Twelve Hours raise their hands in prayer,  
saluting Ra: thus is begun  
the world's long voyage. Then, the sun  
sets over Memphis; Temu goes  
into the port that no man knows,  
—not Menkaura, Khafra, Khufu:  
the voyage of the world is done.*

*—A hewn block of Eternity,  
sits the God Hu.*

*Night—and the stars alone  
shine on the face of stone,  
shine on the calm, proud, wounded face:  
only the tapers lit in space  
—candles of altars—candles set  
round the still body of regret—  
illuminate  
the broken lips that smile at fate.*

*Only the candles of the skies  
shine on the silent eyes:  
cisterns that hold  
how many sorrows wept of old!*

THE GOD HU

*only the soft and myriad light  
shows where the crowded centuries  
look out for ever from his eyes,  
eastward, beyond the sills  
of darkened hills,  
to see  
the first gleam of dawn's silver key  
turn in the hushed and ancient wards of night.*

*—A hewn block of Eternity,  
the faith of all humanity,  
the symbol of all certainty,  
sits the God Hu.*

## EPILOGUE: FROM THE PROMONTORY

*To David Bone*

A voice cries  
over the last rims of the sea:  
a voice cries with the morning! The clouds blow  
their golden trumpets splendidly:  
roses of orient passion strew  
the broadening avenue  
where the white feet of the young Day shall go.

Distance is in that cry—and ships  
pursuing what unknown  
vision across the fabulous seas!  
and islands, whose names alone  
—Ambrim and Arag, Samoa, Marotai—  
spell with adventure's alphabet  
wonder, and perfume, and all time's regret,  
and desolation, and most holy peace.

A voice cries from the morning and the sea:  
a voice cries, and my soul in me  
reaches out hands  
of longing unspeakable to the new light.

O weariness of heart! O weary lands,  
crossed by so many roads, worn by so many feet,  
seeking their little Gods through the old night!  
O weariness of heart! I would be free  
to seek my God in some eternity

FROM THE PROMONTORY

where no road ever came, no foot drew nigh,  
and no man ever yet  
brought gifts, or burned the sweet  
incense of rapt, forlorn austerity.

O Superessential Loveliness,  
ungarmented of time, unlimbed of space!  
O terrible Lover, whose disastrous kiss  
scars with no lips! O naked Innocence,  
wearing as a mantle the world's wide events,  
and the world's joys and sorrows as a moving face!

I would strip off the accidents of man!  
even thy thinnest robe, the white worn body of Christ:  
thy multitudinous Brahm-investiture:  
thine ocean-dress wherein thou art Mananan:  
thy beasts and trees wherein thou art loved as Pan!  
Rock and earth's solid heart shall not endure  
my ravage and lust of worship! nor the swift  
innumerable atom-horde, nor the hosts of stars!  
I come, my Everlasting! my unpriced  
ultimate Treasure of seeing! and I will lift  
the last curtain before thee, break the last bars  
of my mortality, and see thee pure,  
unfettered, perfect! and, consumed by strong  
utter surrenders, intolerable joys,  
die in that glory wherein I lift my voice  
high over the earth in one last triumph of song.

THE END

## NOTE ON THE PRONUNCIATION OF CERTAIN WORDS

The words *Cui bono*, where these occur in the poem of that title, are to be given their 'legal', not their 'restored', pronunciation: *Cui* is, therefore, to be sounded as *Ky*, rhyming with *sky*, and *bono* with its first 'o' short, as in *bonnet*.

In the Egyptian names in *Khufu* and *The God Hu*, and the Babylonian names in *Sargon of Akkad*, the vowels should be given their Italian rather than their English values, but without exaggeration. In particular, 'u' should always be sounded *oo*, long or short according to the stress, and never as 'u' in *cut* or as 'u' (ew) in *acute*. When two vowels come together, each is given its ordinary sound: e.g., 'au', in *Menkaura*, sounds like *ah-oo* (rapidly spoken) and not like 'au' in *author*; similarly, 'ea', in *Earu*, sounds like *eh-ah* (fully pronounced) and not like 'ea' in *hear* or *heat*. The combination 'kh' is to be sounded as 'k', while 'ch' has the slight guttural sound heard in *loch*.

The stressing of these words should cause no difficulty, as, for the most part, it follows that of the normal verse-line.

On page 81, the word *Stréoneshàlh* (the headland above Whitby on which the Abbey is built) is pronounced as *Stráy-o-nes-hàlh*, with the final 'h' sounded as 'ch' in *loch*.

On page 138, the word *Marotai* is stressed on the first and last syllables and pronounced as if it were spelt *Morotye*, rhyming with *sky*.

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