

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY

**OU\_172528**

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY



**OSMANIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY**

Call No. 821.08/1192 B. Accession No 21 33/

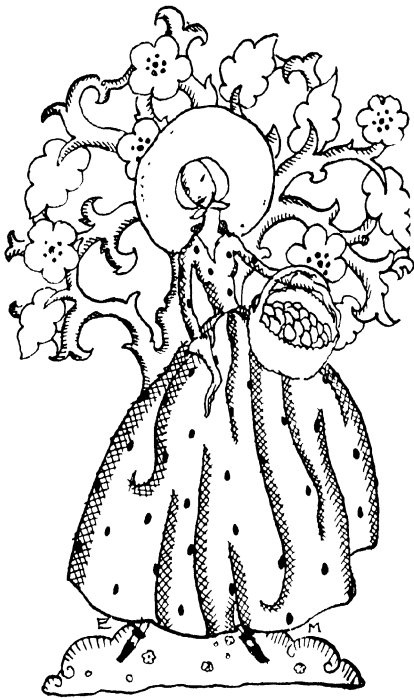
Author Maull, Thomas,

Title Best Rooms of - 1939

This book should be returned on or before the date last marked below.



THE BEST POEMS OF 1939



*The*  
BEST POEMS  
*of* 1939



*Selected by*  
THOMAS MOULT  
*with drawings by*  
ELIZABETH MONTGOMERY

LONDON

*Jonathan Cape Limited*

TORONTO

FIRST PUBLISHED 1939

JONATHAN CAPE LTD., 30 BEDFORD SQUARE, LONDON  
AND 91 WELLINGTON STREET WEST, TORONTO

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY BUTLER AND TANNER LTD.  
FROME AND LONDON  
PAPER MADE BY JOHN DICKINSON AND CO. LTD.  
BOUND BY A. W. BAIN AND CO, LTD,

*To*  
THE MEMORY  
*of*  
WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS  
LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE



# Contents

(An asterisk denotes America)

Introduction	13
David Morton	TOWERS AGAINST TIME
<i>The Lyric, Norfolk, Virginia,* July</i>	17
Geoffrey Johnson	GREAT AND SMALL
<i>Commonweal, New York*, July</i>	18
Charles Madge	THE ORACLE
<i>Time and Tide, London, July</i>	19
H. B. Mallalieu	POEM
<i>Wales, Denbigh, Wales, July</i>	20
William Soutar	‘NATION SHALL SPEAK PEACE . . .’
<i>The Adelphi Magazine, London, August</i>	21
Dylan Thomas	POEM
<i>Poetry, Chicago,* August</i>	22
James E. Warren	LETTER TO MANY
<i>The Atlanta Journal, Georgia,* August</i>	23
C. Day Lewis	ADDRESSES TO DEATH
<i>The London Mercury, London, September</i>	25
Glenn Ward Dresbach	HONEY IN THE WALL
<i>The Yale Review, New Haven, Connecticut,*</i>	
<i>September</i>	29
Ralph Friedrich	OF BEAUTY’S TRANSIENCE
<i>Talaria, Cincinnati,* September</i>	30
Graham Cherry	SEPARATION
<i>The New English Weekly, London,</i>	
<i>September</i>	32
J. P. Byrne	MARRIAGE
<i>The Dublin Magazine, Dublin, October</i>	33
Kenneth Fearing	AMERICAN RHAPSODY
<i>Poetry,* October</i>	34

R. N. Currey	FAUST TO HELEN	
	<i>The Dublin Magazine, October</i>	36
Humbert Wolfe	RIOUPÉROUX REVISITED	
	<i>The American Scholar, New York,*</i>	
	<i>October</i>	37
Irene Wilde	WINGED VICTORY	
	<i>The Poetry World, New York,*</i>	
	<i>October</i>	40
F. R. Higgins	THE RING MAKER	
	<i>The Dublin Magazine,</i>	
	<i>October</i>	41
Nathaniel A. Benson	ELEGY IN SPRING	
	<i>The Canadian Poetry Magazine, Toronto,</i>	
	<i>October</i>	43
Marguerite Johansen	CLOISTER REVERIE	
	<i>The Cornhill Magazine, London,</i>	
	<i>November</i>	45
Robert P. Tristram Coffin	MEN IN THE MOON	
	<i>The American Mercury, New York,*</i>	
	<i>November</i>	46
Randall Swingler	SUSSEX IN WINTER	
	<i>Life and Letters To-day, London,</i>	
	<i>November</i>	47
David Daiches	SPRING IN NOVEMBER	
	<i>Poetry,* November</i>	49
A. S. J. Tessimond	ACKNOWLEDGMENT	
	<i>The London Mercury, November</i>	50
Oscar Williams	DEFINITIONS OF A MOUNTAIN	
	<i>The Coronet, New York,* November</i>	51
Laurence Binyon	THE NORTH STAR	
	<i>The London Mercury, November</i>	52
Ellen Janson	TAKE AWAY BEAUTY	
	<i>The Kaleidograph, Dallas, Texas,*</i>	
	<i>November</i>	56

R. C. Trevelyan	TO A CHILD LISTENING	
	<i>The New Statesman and the Nation,</i>	
	<i>London, November</i>	57
Louis Ginsberg	LETTER TO HEINE	
	<i>The Paterson Call, New Jersey,* November</i>	58
Walter de la Mare	POLLIE	
	<i>John o' London's Weekly, London, December</i>	60
Janet Lewis	A LULLABY	
	<i>Poetry,* December</i>	61
E. H. W. Meyerstein	LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE	
	<i>The London Mercury, December</i>	62
Marya Zaturenska	CENTURY OF ATHLETES	
	<i>Life and Letters To-day, London,</i>	
	<i>December</i>	63
Keith Thomas	WELL-MUSCLED GUARD	
	<i>The Kaleidograph,* December</i>	66
John Gawsworth	THE BENT BOUGH	
	<i>The Observer, December</i>	67
Axton Clark	AMERICAN PRELUDE	
	<i>The Yale Review,* December</i>	68
Ruthven Todd	LEGEND	
	<i>New Verse, London, January</i>	72
Keith Douglas	POEM FROM A SEQUENCE	
	<i>Bolero, Oxford, January</i>	73
Anderson M. Scruggs	MAGNOLIA TREE	
	<i>Holland's Magazine, Dallas, Texas,*</i>	
	<i>January</i>	74
William Justema	THE TWILIGHT OF THE YOUNG MEN	
	<i>Life and Letters To-day, January</i>	75
Marguerite Janvrin Adams	AMERICAN HISTORY	
	<i>Spirit, New York,* January</i>	77
Leonora Speyer	SWAN DYING	
	<i>Voices, New York,* January</i>	78

Orgill Mackenzie	THE CRUCIFIED TREE	
	<i>The Adelphi Magazine, February</i>	80
Lilian Middleton	SNOWFALL	
	<i>The Boston Transcript, Boston,* February</i>	81
Lilian Bowes Lyon	THIN AIR YOUR PROVIDENCE	
	<i>The Adelphi Magazine, February</i>	82
Laurence Whistler	A WINDOW TO MOVEMENT	
	<i>Poetry, London, February</i>	83
Martha Bacon	NIGHT IN PARADISE	
	<i>Harper's Monthly Magazine, New York,*</i>	
	<i>February</i>	84
B. Northrop	MY KINGDOM	
	<i>The Observer, London, February</i>	85
Louise Crenshaw Ray	REMEMBERING AN ENGLISH	
	GRANDFATHER	
	<i>The Cornhill Magazine, February</i>	86
Anderson M. Scruggs	MAN IS FOREVER LONELY	
	<i>The Forum, New York,* February</i>	88
Ralph Friedrich	EVEN ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS	
	<i>Wings, California,* January</i>	89
Maxwell Bodenheim	ONE GENERATION	
	<i>Poetry,* February</i>	91
Andrew Young	THE STONE EAGLES	
	<i>The Nineteenth Century, London, March</i>	93
Eisdell Tucker	SPRING SOWING	
	<i>John o' London's Weekly, March</i>	94
Witter Bynner	SWEET CHARIOT	
	<i>Poetry,* March</i>	95
Ruth Hedger	LANDSCAPE FOR A MOOD	
	<i>English, London, March</i>	98
D. S. Savage	LIFE OF LORD TENNYSON	
	<i>Life and Letters To-day, March</i>	99
James Walker	MOOD AT DUSK	
	<i>John o' London's Weekly, March</i>	101

Muriel Rukeyser	ELEGY
<i>Life and Letters To-day, March</i>	102
J. C. Hall	AND WHAT FOR PRAISE?
<i>Oxford Magazine, Oxford, March</i>	105
Cyril Hume	LANDFALL
<i>The Yale Review,* March</i>	106
David Gascoyne	EX NIHILO
<i>Poetry,* April</i>	108
W. H. Auden	IN MEMORY OF W. B. YEATS
<i>The London Mercury, April</i>	109
Daniel Whitehead Hicky	WILD HERON
<i>The Forum,* April</i>	111
Ralph Friedrich	I GIVE YOU
<i>The Prairie Schooner, Nebraska,* April</i>	112
G. W. Stonier	GOD'S GARGOYLES
<i>The New Statesman and the Nation,</i> <i>May</i>	113
William Soutar	EXPECTANCY
<i>Country Life, London, May</i>	116
Clifford Gessler	HAWAIIAN BLUES
<i>The American Mercury,* May</i>	117
James Wreford	GOES TO THE GRAVE TOO SOON
<i>The Listener, London, May</i>	119
Herbert Palmer	DAVID AND GOLIATH
<i>John o' London's Weekly, June</i>	121
Gustav Davidson	BIRD OF TIME
<i>The Queen's Quarterly, Kingston, Ontario,</i> <i>June</i>	122
Wilfred Rowland Childe	DAWN IN AVALON
<i>Jongleur, Bradford, June</i>	123
Paul Tracy	GOAT GIRL
<i>Frontier and Midland Magazine, Nebraska,*</i> <i>June</i>	124

Robert Francis	NOTHING IS FAR	
<i>The Virginia Quarterly Review, Virginia,*</i>		
June		125
Stanton Coblenz	FOGHORN	
<i>The Tramp, Anacortes, Washington,*</i>		
June		126
Alfred Noyes	THE BUTTERFLY GARDEN	
<i>The Times Literary Supplement, London,</i>		
June		127

## Introduction

CALAMITY had not yet fallen upon the world when the harvesting of this volume was completed. But poets are prophets and seers, and no reader of the *Best Poems* anthologies during late years can have failed to observe that in a remarkable number of contributions war was, specifically, not vaguely, foreshadowed. The writing on the wall may also be discerned in the following pages, although the editor's purpose has been to refrain from underlining it. Indeed he is frank enough to confess that several poems which are sufficiently worthy in themselves to have been included in earlier compilations have given place to alternative poems of equal merit that owe their being to the lovelier inspiration of peace. It must not be forgotten that one of the poet's functions is to speak, as Mr. Archibald Macleish reminds us, of 'the things that are possible to men'. And among these are the old harmonious things that will return.

In a speech delivered at the University of Chicago last year Mr. Macleish asked: Why do poets, generation after generation, time out of mind, repeat, 'The sea is beautiful, women are beautiful, the sun is beautiful'? Because for each man it is new? No. Because for all men it is old. Because the loveliness, the poetry, is in the commonness, the recognition. Because it is the love, the wonder, that is poetry and not the object of the love or wonder. Generation after generation, poetry has kept this record of the hearts of men. . . .

The latest of the collections which date back as far

as 1922, practically covering, that is, all the work done by English-speaking poets between the two European wars, is an attempt at a record of the hearts of contemporary men and women who, feeling life in a more exalted if not a deeper way than the rest of their kind, have interpreted it in the most recently published verse. The compiler wishes to re-emphasise that the word 'Best' is used in the title of this collection only in the sense that the seventy-five poems included are his own artistic preferences. They are reprinted from the periodicals (as distinct from books) of Great Britain and the United States, Eire and Canada, and for technical purposes the year begins in July 1938 and concludes in June 1939. It is futile to regret at such a time as this the death of several important periodicals which encouraged the writing of poetry. All that can be hoped for is their eventual resurrection. . . . An apology is due to the poets who could not be reached when the customary request for permission to reprint the poems was broadcast. Will they accept the excuse of abnormal circumstance? . . . Again the co-operation of the friends of poetry, notably Mr. Herbert Palmer—a helper in an especial way—is gratefully acknowledged, and so is the help of the poets, editors and publishers whose friendship for poetry has added happiness to a unique editorial task that was happy already.

THOMAS MOULT.

THE BEST POEMS OF 1939



DAVID MORTON

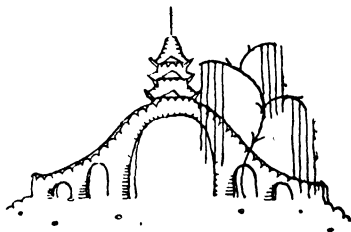
TOWERS AGAINST TIME

THIS heavy labour after words in rhyme  
And phrases fashioned to the shape of song  
Is set against the blowing winds of Time,  
The grievous, the inveterate, the strong,  
That flow forever down this mortal meadow  
Where every sweet is broken and undone,  
Where every flower is bent to kiss the shadow  
That was its sure attendant in the sun.

Only sometimes . . . somehow . . . the flowing  
storm

Swirls round the word that rears the stubborn  
tower, —

And one lost summer that was sweet and warm  
Is warm and sweet again in this new hour,  
And on the yellowed page of the old book,  
Will wear again her bright and mortal look.



# GEOFFREY JOHNSON

## GREAT AND SMALL

HERE in this coign, the very heart of June,  
The bee's bell booming in the nettle-spires  
Sounds louder than imagination's tune  
Of the world's bells that rang to festal fires.

These midget galleons on blue airs that burn,  
These peacock butterflies in dazzling arcs  
Outsplendour in their real live concern  
Venetian Navies salvo'd by Saint Mark's.

Down the long ocean-murmur of the leaves  
Float form and colour, rumours of old glories;  
In cloud-dim dreams the summer's bosom heaves,  
Confusing present deeds and ancient stories.

A rook goes over, a black-eyelash wink  
On a still face asleep, that might awake  
And drown in peals of laughter what we think  
Is great and small . . . but it sleeps on, still shake

The nettle-spires with bee-bells, butterflies  
Harbour, an æon hence, in nooks like these,  
And admirals new, and pilots of the skies  
Are legends darkly whispered by the trees.



## CHARLES MADGE

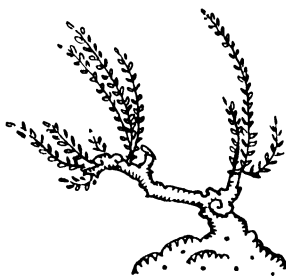
### THE ORACLE

'I CANNOT see those mountains, no, I cannot,  
Nor hear the gulf, the sound, no, no, I cannot.'  
Man built a house and planted vines. The climate  
Favoured his new colonial enterprise.

'The infantile illusion of the mountain  
Still holds, I carry in my eye the mountain.  
Blood in the air between us is pulsating:  
The mountain does not quiver, but the eyes.

'Along a beam of light I run, I travel,  
As to an oracle the heralds travel.  
My messengers have gone, the light is piercing  
The misty folded mountain where she lies.'

A lengthened shadow touches the remote  
Gorges. Man casts a shadow in remote  
Gorges. The rifts let out a piercing voice,  
The wave of sound ascends before it dies.



H. B. MALLALIEU

POEM

**I**N the grim valley the iron festering and  
The veiled silence and the derelict hand  
Muste'r the ghosts of the unaccountably lost  
To gather in this valley where I am host.

In dual ambushade of eye and tongue  
The moments hang nowhere and for long  
The smudged words cannot touch these cripples:  
The trees reach out for their fallen apples.

If it were only any winter but in this  
When wonder's antics in the skull may miss  
The magical seven or the three of love,  
Miss what it means for me to live.

A shadow army from wise Crete's long sand,  
They file this watery morning where the wind  
Through skeleton walls moans their march  
And the eye, seeing stones, imagines much:

Sees on the snow the warrior's salute,  
The ragged army and those we must shoot:  
But in this valley Spring will never come:  
Only this ruin which we call home

Raises its gaunt hands in attitude of prayer  
Remembering summer's embrace. Despair  
Beyond the easy solution waits ahead  
Still to flourish when I and those are dead.

WILLIAM SOUTAR

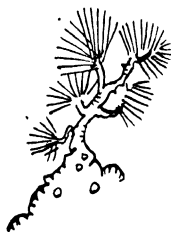
'NATION SHALL SPEAK PEACE . . .'

THERE are no frontiers in the air;  
Alien music, alien song,  
Alien words are everywhere  
On the silence borne along.

By the lifting of a hand  
Voices from the sky come down;  
Songs we cannot understand  
Yet would cherish as our own.

And these unknown hands which play;  
Unknown voices which can bless;  
Shall we at some blind hour slay  
And forget their loveliness?

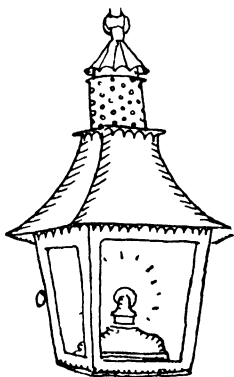
Overhead an iron bird  
Churns the air with channering noise;  
But the music is unstirred  
And unstirred the singing voice.



## DYLAN THOMAS

### POEM

WHEN all my five and country senses see,  
The fingers will forget green thumbs and mar  
How through the half-moon's vegetable eye  
In the ten planted towers of their stalk  
Love in the frost is pared and wintered by,  
The whispering ears will watch love drumme  
away  
Down wind and shall to a discordant beach,  
And lashed to syllables, the lynx tongue cry  
How her sweet wounds are mended bitterly.  
My nostrils see her breath burn like a bush.  
My one and noble heart has witnesses  
In all love's countries, that will watch awake;  
And when blind sleep drops on the spying senses  
The heart is sensual, though five eyes break.



# JAMES E. WARREN

## LETTER TO MANY

COMPANIONS, in this verse of little music  
I write to you as I could never write  
And seal and thrust into a box, content  
That you should know the weather here was  
cloudy;  
Or that I liked this town, disliked another;  
Or how I climbed up Skiddaw (as John Keats  
Had done); or what I heard of babbling pipes  
Deep in the Trossachs — the expected things,  
The all-conventional.

Now I shall say  
Britain is what you dream and something more;  
It is a land piled high of story books;  
Green meadows and white sheep; tumultuous bells  
That chime in sermons; towers that must have  
made  
Imprisonment glorious; rivers of great name;  
And rusty heather turning to purple now;  
Bookstalls in crooked streets; and curious maps  
Behind a dingy glass; abbeys that crumbled  
To rosy stone like some forgotten monks  
Fallen to sleep upon their weary knees  
Because their prayers had been too long; and walls  
Crested with flowers in centuries of sand  
The wind had lifted there for gardens brighter  
Than Van Gogh could have painted. Things more  
real:  
Bacon and marmalade and toast and tea;  
And red-cheeked English boys with cricket bats;  
The sunshine flooding over Soutra Hill;

And buttered scones; and Edinburgh at night . . .  
Till you might think I had a mind washed bare  
Of my old self and everything I knew.

But these, as I have said, are only books  
Wherein I read. And I, the reader, must  
Turn all their fairy pages with my fingers  
Still warm from yours, feel with a heart recalling  
Another list — and a more lovely one —  
Of things I shall not name. You know them, too.

And here in England I am only part  
Of that One City, see and tremble with Her.  
And here I am as calm as small brown houses  
That slumber in West End among old trees;  
Gay as the flowered yards in Morningside;  
And sad as the first yellowed leaves of autumn  
Blown lingeringly down the roads in Druid Hills.



C. DAY LEWIS

ADDRESSES TO DEATH

I

**F**ORGIVE us, that we ever thought  
You could with innocence be bought,  
Or, puffed with queasy power, have tried  
Your register to override.

Such diamond-faced and equal laws  
Allow no chink or saving clause:  
Besotted may-fly, bobbish wren  
Count in your looks as much as men.

No North-West Passage can be found  
To sail those freezing capes around,  
Nor no smooth by-pass ever laid  
Shall that metropolis evade.

The tampering hand, the jealous eye  
That overlooked our infancy —  
Forgiven soon, they sank their trust  
And our reproach into the dust.

We also, whom a bawdry spring  
Tempted to order everything,  
Shall shrink beneath your first caress  
Into a modest nothingness.

The meshes of the imperious blood,  
The wind-flown tower, the poet's word  
Can catch no more than a weak sigh  
And ghost of immortality.

O lord of leisure, since we know  
Your image we shall ne'er outgrow,  
Teach us the value of our stay  
Lest we insult the living clay.

This clay that binds the roots of man  
And firmly foots his flying span—  
Only this clay can voice, invest,  
Measure and frame our mortal best.

O lord of night, bid us beware  
The wistful ghost that speaks us fair:  
Once let him in— he clots the veins  
And makes a still-birth of our pains.

Now we at last have crossed the line  
Where earth's exuberant fields begin,  
That green illusion in the sky  
Born of our desert years may die.

No longer let predestined need  
Cramp our design, or hunger breed  
Its windy dreams, or life distil  
Rare personal good from common ill.

Lord of us all, now it is true  
That we are lords of all but you,  
Teach us the order of our day  
Lest we deface the honoured clay.

## II

The sun came out in April,  
The hawthorn in May:  
We thought the year, like other years,  
Would go the Christmas way.

In June we picked the clover,  
And sea-shells in July:  
There was no silence at the door,  
No word from the sky.

A hand came out of August  
And flicked his life away:  
We had no time to bargain, mope,  
Moralise or pray.

Where he had been, was only  
An effigy on a bed  
To ask us searching questions or  
Hear what we'd left unsaid.

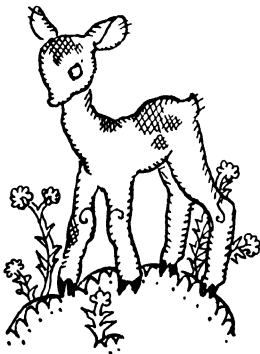
Only that stained parchment  
Set out what he had been —  
A face we might have learned better,  
And now must read unseen.

Thus he resigned his interest  
And claims, all in a breath,  
Leaving us the long office work  
And winding-up of death:

The ordinary anguish,  
The stairs, the awkward turn,  
The bearers' hats like black mushrooms  
Placed upon the lawn.

As a migrant remembers  
The sting and warmth of home,  
As the fruit bears out the blossom's word,  
We remember him.

He loved the sun in April,  
The hawthorn in May:  
Our tree will not light up for him  
Another Christmas Day.



# GLENN WARD DRESBACH

## HONEY IN THE WALL

SINCE no one claims the old house any more,  
The goldenrod goes marching to the door  
And it swings wide and golden light is spread  
Like magic carpet on the dusty floor.

The shutters clap their loudest when the trees  
Strike up again their harvest symphonies,  
And in the wall, where paint hangs by a shred,  
Is loud carousal of convivial bees.

The sliding sags a little here and there  
As if it wished the inner house to share  
The only sweetness that will not have fled  
With wings that glint along the gold-flecked air.

Worse things than this could easily befall  
An old house left alone; you may recall  
Some finer places on the road ahead  
That wish they had some honey in the wall.



RALPH FRIEDRICH

OF BEAUTY'S TRANSIENCE

WHEREFORE shall I lament  
The sorry destiny  
Of every lovely thing  
That wears mortality?

If this must be the way  
Of beauty on the earth,  
Let me have done with death:  
The miracle of birth

Is more than ample fare  
For wonder and delight.  
Nor must the golden day  
Reflect the coming night.

Let me forget the doom  
Implicit in the rose,  
Perceiving there alone  
The excellence that glows

Upon the potent stem:  
This beauty will recur  
A thousand times again.  
The memory of her

Must not corrupt my joy  
In later loveliness.  
This thing I must believe.  
This truth I must profess

Against all future grief  
At beauty's perishing,  
Contriving so to make  
Of death a foreign thing.



## GRAHAM CHERRY

### SEPARATION

**P**RISON the winds with fingers; say of the sea  
‘Soft synonyms of silence’; dare to call  
The Poles ‘dear twins’; build infamous ironies,  
As, ‘nadir and zenith are identical’;  
Sing to the lion ‘he shall lie with the lamb’;  
Inform the meteor of his tortoise gait;  
Title Homeric thunder ‘an epigram’;—  
But breathe not ‘love’ about this whirl of hate!

For ours was interplanetary conjunction—  
Neighbours in body, minds that jumped apart  
Swift to resume the interrupted function  
Of orbits, crossing; O parable the heart  
With the anticlimax and truth of our long lie!  
Understand— you are you, and I am I!



J. P. BYRNE

MARRIAGE

THERE burned more marriage in that kiss you  
dared,  
Sealing renunciation, than in chill  
And measured rites that church and state  
applaud;  
Because my love asked naught but that you gave  
Freely, and we were never yoked nor driven  
In common rut, passion remains yet strong.  
Love, though he find such abstinence hard fare,  
Being aloof, austere, can never slip  
Into familiar custom's slattern gossip:  
Apart, I am yet closer so, uncaring  
Aught of the flesh so that I cling in spirit,  
Nor stale that love to daily bread, cheap  
bought.  
I knew all marriage in that kiss we shared.



# KENNETH FEARING

## AMERICAN RHAPSODY

**T**O-MORROW, yes, to-morrow  
there will suddenly be new success, like  
Easter clothes,  
and a strange and different fate  
and bona fide life will arrive at last, stepping  
from a nonstop plane with silver wings and  
chromium doors and a straight, white, starlight  
light.

There will be the sound of silvery thunder again  
to drown the insane silence  
a new, tremendous sound will shatter the first  
unspoken question and stifle the last, most  
terrible reply  
rockets, rockets, Roman candles, flares will  
burst in every corner of the night, to vibrate  
with snakes of silvery fire the nothingness  
that waits and waits  
there will be a bright, shimmering, silver  
veil stretched everywhere, tight, to hide  
the terrible, terrible end of the world  
where people fall who are alone, or dead.

Sick or alone  
alone or poor  
weak, or mad, or doomed, or alone.

To-morrow, yes, to-morrow, surely we begin at  
last to live with lots and lots of laughter  
solid silver laughter

laughter, with a few simple instructions and  
a bona fide guarantee.

★           ★           ★

## S O S

It is posted in the clubrooms  
it is announced in bright electric lights on all  
the principal streets, it is rumoured, proclaimed,  
and radio'd out to sea S O S, S O S  
that her hair is all dark and her eyes are all blue

On the buses, at the beaches, in the parks  
total strangers are saying, as though they really  
knew  
that she prefers cork tips, likes a rather  
dry sherry, does not really care for tea.

## S O S, S O S

that her hats, that her gowns, that her wraps,  
that her shoes, that her gloves, that her flowers  
and her past, and her present, and her future,  
and even her maiden aunts,  
the way she walks, the things she says and  
does.

Are all about right  
all dead right and dead against the law  
But her eyes are blue, blue for miles and miles  
and miles S O S, S O S  
blue across the country and away across the  
sea.

R. N. CURREY

FAUST TO HELEN

A PART even from the mouths of fire  
That grin at me from each path's end,  
Have I not bought you far too dear  
For palpable air and solid ground?

Was this the face? And was the face  
That launched the ships a legend too,  
A poet's song; so that I choose  
The shadow of a shadow now?

I hold you in my arms so close  
That mingle, mingle, O, we must;  
But what's behind your empty eyes,  
Where does your virgin heart keep tryst?

Solidity, the old man's friend,  
Will take his blessing from my chair,  
My hand, my glass; and I shall find  
Contact with nothing except fire.



## HUMBERT WOLFE

### RIOUPÉROUX REVISITED

IT was before Elkin Matthews published 'The Bridge of Fire' that we talked in your rooms beside the river, Flecker, in Oxford, when you were writing, 'Riou-péroux.' There was white Curacoa on the table, ink and bent wire, an etching (first state) of Heidelberg and the Neckar crumpled but worth (you asserted) a pound or two.

And reams of paper for unwritten masterpieces, and eager pencils, most of them with the points broken, and books from Blackwell's, notably Ramal (Walter)

'When slim Miranda' as the dark increases, I hear you speak it again, as it was spoken with the slow husky drawl that the years cannot alter.

You thought that Masefield had some slight distasteful power, that Phillips was a charlatan, but felt that Yeats might, if he studied Baudelaire, still count. 'It is my faith,' you cried, 'that one black flower dropped from the Frenchman's hand will out-perfume the Fates, and with dark glory rekindle the pale Pierian fount.'

I will walk,' you murmured, 'in Graiasvaudan's  
vale.

I will see the mountains that brood above the  
river,  
whose snow-filled flood is like the soul of  
France —  
cold as the ice it draws from, but with its current  
flail  
smashing the tangled undergrowth of lies that  
shiver  
at the swift terror in the waters of Romance.

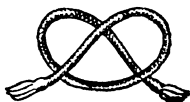
Flow out of the mountains into the stolid plain,  
out of the hills of song into the lowlands of  
prose,  
That is your mission, and mine,' you chanted,  
'Land  
of the trouveur, of youth, of wine, of the stain  
of blood spilt at the barricades — the rose,  
whose bitter scent the gods of freedom  
planned.

Yes, I will go to France again and tramp the valley  
through.'  
Meanwhile the great laburnum with its golden  
bees  
swarming in the green hive glimmered in the  
quiet Cher,  
and the evening gathered and deepened before we  
knew  
that the dark was upon us, and the silences,  
where each dim blossom matched and marked  
a star.

'Before we knew that the dark was upon us.'  
Yesterday,  
after the thousand years of which you wrote, I  
stood  
under the rain beside the river, and the mill.  
I have forgotten what it is ghosts say,  
or by what signal a stricken spirit could  
win back to speech from the dark where all is  
still.

I heard your dangerous dim voice, so sweet  
that had I answered, and made my voice to carry  
beyond the slow forgetful flood in the hush,  
it would have sewn the crocus at your feet  
among the asphodel, and where no song-birds  
tarry  
have starred the dome of Hell with the notes  
of the thrush.

I did not speak, Flecker, I could only linger  
with helpless hands outstretched in a midsummer  
cold as the darkest of December eves.  
But as I stood, I heard a later singer  
speak for us both, and thought, 'Salute, new-  
comer,'  
and heard an echo through a world of leaves.



## IRENE WILDE

### WINGED VICTORY

THE eagle's brother, fledged upon this nest  
Of level earth, took off on windy dunes  
To brave the absolute at last, to test  
His metal pinions on the whirling moons  
Of space and build on ampler boughs of air.  
Above wing-ridden winds his instinct runs  
To find the freedom of the last frontier,  
And send his song beyond the farthest suns.

The air is furrowed with his regal flight;  
He leaps the welter'd wind with bold intent,  
And tilting silver wings against the light,  
Goes singing up the sky in brave ascent.

Forever starward bound his daring spirit  
Will soar above traditions of the flesh,  
Reshape his nature unto systems near it,  
As he has done before, emerge afresh  
On fields where pylons torched with planets blaze,  
Refuel from the sun, ascending higher,  
Until he flashes up the starry ways  
On wings that feathered from his strong desire.



F. R. HIGGINS

THE RING MAKER

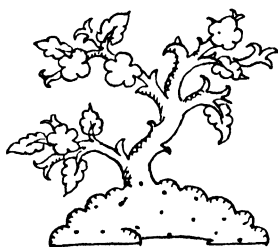
THROUGH you, whose hands have wrought the  
airy gold  
Of crosses and cold elemental cups  
For those whose lips kiss God, the stars this night  
Draw near; O may they bless your forge, your  
fire,  
Your flashing anvil and may they light upon  
That morsel of raw metal you weld to song.

White smith, in all your living life you need  
The blessing of the heavens most to-night  
That limber finger, supple wrist may beat  
All Ireland's graces to an inch of light  
In chaste design, purer than any hymn  
Inscribed by angel quills on pastured skin.

So mould the shank; for that broad circuit take  
The cold intensity of mountain lakes  
Once graced by saints or country kings; and place  
Two white wee snakes whirlpooling here and  
there;  
Then to adorn between them, by hell you'll grip  
One heart drop from a hill of fiery thorn.

O 'Echan Mor, chief jeweller to the courts  
Of God, you'll never do a better stroke  
Than shaping this grey circuit, O so chaste  
Beneath its mound that holds the demon past;  
Bring it to shadowed stillness; listen, it screams  
Cooling itself in rushes cradling a dream.

My thanks! For unto her — who yearns with heart  
All reverence for our hushed holy land, —  
Whose mind is gentle, passionate and wise  
Deeply in things that share earth's darkest hints —  
For her this ring: to keep the artist mind,  
The stamina of Ireland, upon her hand.



NATHANIEL A. BENSON

ELEGY IN SPRING

YOU, my friend, who are dead and will never  
awaken  
Blind to this wave of wonder that is spring  
I will keep watch for you who have forsaken  
This lovely earth — give me your songs to sing!

For I will sing of your raptures, and voice your  
gladness  
That winter is gone and the bitter April days,  
And sorrow put by for a season and stilled is  
sadness,  
And the glory of heaven has come to the blossoming  
sprays.

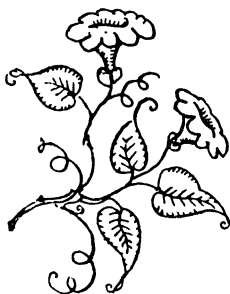
Green of the grass, soft air, and a haze of light,  
All that is lovely in life come round again,  
And the warmth of Avalon blessing the noon and  
night  
And even a gentle glory in the rain.

Now in this moment immortal with beauty  
awaking, —  
Beauty, the phoenix who mounts from the season's  
pyre  
When young leaf buds and a world of blossoms are  
breaking  
Forth into sight in a fragrant and matchless fire.

Now that I live and look back with a heart of  
wonder

On a score and a half of springs that have come and  
gone —  
Behind the floating cloud rolls ghostly thunder  
And the shadow of years falls on the sunniest lawn.

So I shall sing of the earth and her bridal of spring,  
Of beauty the blossom born in the human heart,  
For man, the alien, and the unenduring  
Who plays in this lovely scene the exile, the  
stranger's part.



## MARGUERITE JOHANSEN

### CLOISTER REVERIE

THE men who wrought this fluted span,  
Who set these panes ablaze with fire,  
Who ranged each noble plinth to plan  
And Hope transfigured in a spire—  
Oh! were they men as men are now,  
Instinct with every fierce desire,  
And herein did they sometimes bow  
To private gods of greed and ire?

Or, haply — with the last shell spent,  
The last incendiary bomb — might we  
For other ages' wonderment  
Bequeath as fair a legacy,  
Like these proud arches to outstay  
The piteous errors of a day?



ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

MEN IN THE MOON

THE full and yellow moon has just come over  
The side of the world and is tangled in bare trees,  
It is larger than the houses it has darkened,  
It is closer than the lamplight at their panes.  
The men are going home, their words and laughter  
Stay after them and melt into the moon.  
Two men have bent their heads and joined their  
breathing  
Into a single aureole of frost.  
One man, unsteady on his legs, has printed  
The full moons at his back upon the snow,  
The others shout and beat his dusty trousers,  
They talk of women waiting in the houses  
And laugh and throw their legs about and nod,  
They walk, heads down, into the doorway of the  
moon.

What can the women do who set the plates out  
Under the lesser moons of lamps to keep  
Their menfolk steady fathers of good sons?  
Women live always in small, narrow houses,  
Keep themselves warm and wary, counting things.  
But he-ones whom the women have created,  
Because the moon made tides and women so,  
Are cold and wide and multitudinous things.  
They go in and out of day and night-time,  
Blow hot and cold, walk like the sons of seraphs  
And spring on life like bullocks in the pen.  
Waste their substance as the thistle wastes its  
seedlings,  
And snow-white strength and wonder on the world,  
They go in the silver doorway of the moon.

## RANDALL SWINGLER

### SUSSEX IN WINTER

**T**HIS is my weakness and my pain alone;  
To long still for the whole scene again  
For the cold hills and the moveless deer,  
The intimate isolation, easy and secure,  
The slow looks across the room and the music  
    flowing,  
Signal of an understanding which was not really  
    there.

This longing for perfection is the snare,  
Which locks out everything but its own desire  
And makes a life of a single mood, forgetting  
Even that love requires no permanent setting.  
Death is the sole perfection, and even then  
Only for the individual that's gone.

'Never' reverberates in the idle brain  
For something gone which will not come again,  
A fiction of the mind which never grew  
And needed isolation to seem true.  
That was not life, but dangerous and the last  
Recrudescence of the seductive past.

Now that which grows wrestles with that which  
    stays  
Untouched by change, the hidden wall  
Hovering about me, always ready to close  
When I retreat defeated by history's ways.  
For lapsing, our lives into early chaos fall  
And the coffin is the last inhibition of all.

I write this in the station waiting-room.  
Slack eyes and bodies in the transitional gloom  
Remind me of the agony of change  
How man draws close, always aware of danger,  
Pinned by his own ideas, and makes  
A revolution with every step he takes.



DAVID DAICHES

SPRING IN NOVEMBER

DO you forget your soul this fine spring morning?  
The horses gallop on the riding track,  
I saw a dog chase rabbits on the Braids,  
And old men think of port in dining-rooms.  
Arrest all movement, let me think it out,  
With the buds new bursting gay on Blackford Hill  
And the brewery chimneys visible from here.  
Ah, but the streets are clean?  
New and old (new for a day, yet old)  
Hard gleaming, striking answers from the sun,  
The bright road runs into the bushes,  
White silver of life, untainted;  
Oh, is it so indeed, are the pavements clean?  
You cannot deceive me so, cannot deceive me,  
We are not infants smiling at the sky.  
Bright and sad (bright to the eye, yet sad)  
The moment comes to seize the world, lit up  
So to deceive us: I am not deceived.

We may not trust our values to our sight;  
Cold sun can cauterise the world  
Deceptively. What, have you lost your soul?  
Black trees against blue sky bring no salvation.  
Pure and much stained (pure to the sight, yet  
stained)  
The world rolls round this morning.  
God, how our values roll themselves together  
Baffling the mind. Farewell to reverie.

A. S. J. TESSIMOND

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

WHEN I was lonely  
Your fingers reached for mine, their touch  
Natural as sunlight's.

When I was hardened  
Your warmth thawed my rock as gently  
As music thought.

When I was angry  
You smiled: 'But this our day is short  
For these long shadows.'

When I was solemn  
You held out laughter, casual as light  
For a cigarette.

When I was troubled  
Your understanding crossed the bounds of  
Words to silence.

When I was frightened  
Your eyes said: 'Fear's a child's dream. I too  
Have dreamed and woken.'



## OSCAR WILLIAMS

### DEFINITIONS OF A MOUNTAIN

A MOUNTAIN is a dying man  
With vast mists wrapped around his head,  
And all the winds are but the moan  
Of one who will not join the dead.

A mountain is a field of light  
Curved to the sense of yonder-hood  
Where grandeur is the common lot  
Of godhead floundering through the blood.

A mountain is the brow of good  
Moving in ramparts through the rains—  
An ingot in the palm of God  
Darkened by thunder from the veins.

A mountain is a sea of hills  
Down which the sails of daylight leap  
Along crossed foils of haggard halls  
In the flushed era of man's sleep.

A mountain is a breast of cloud,  
A mammoth pillow of surmise,  
Where morning in its canyons clad  
Smooths out the talons of its eyes.

O through the savage discontent  
Where butterflies and planets swarm,  
A mountain is a continent  
Closed to a fist against the storm!

## LAURENCE BINYON

### THE NORTH STAR

I WAS contented with the warm silence,  
Sitting by the fire, book on knee;  
And fancy uncentred, afloat and astray,  
Idled from thought to thought,  
Like a child picking flowers and dropping them  
In a meadow at play.

I was contented with the mere silence,  
When there invaded me —  
Not a sound, no, there was no sound,  
But awareness of a menace  
Creeping up round  
The little island of my mind;  
A creeping up of gradual waves out of a sea,  
With storm coming behind;  
Wave on pale wave, inhuman smile on smile,  
Driven on the black force of an alien will  
To drown my world, to be the burial  
Of joy, beauty, and all  
That seemed impossible to kill,  
Even the secret home that hope inherited.  
I sat in an unreal room alone:  
Befriending and familiar shapes were gone;  
And I was seized with dread.

Then I became restless  
As if in bonds that must at any cost be burst.  
The very peace seemed to oppress;  
I was imprisoned and athirst,  
And rose and crossed the floor,  
Craving to front the naked outer night.  
At the opened door  
Stood a thin mist, ghostly and motionless.

Smell of the leaves rotting  
Breathed through a cold vapour  
Bitter to the nostril.  
My feet stumbled:  
In my heart was a cry:  
O for some single point of certitude!  
I lifted up my face; I saw the sky.

There where I stood  
Low mist clung to the earth.  
And above, pale and diminished,  
Only the larger lights pierced the dim air.  
I faced the north.  
And far and faint over a shadowy pine  
That rose out of the mist  
I saw the North Star shine.

I remembered sailors of old  
For whom unclouded night  
Was stretched above the dark Mediterranean,  
A blue tapestry pricked with powdery gold  
Where legendary presences shone bright  
To figure forth a memory and a name;  
And under the luminous maze  
Steering by the North Star  
Ships to their harbour came.

And now through thick silence  
On the stifled, fog-possessed Atlantic  
I was hearing, distant or near,  
Muffled answer of horn to horn  
And rocking clang of the buoy-bell;  
Sound crossing sound, to warn

Steamers that, blinded, still  
Unfaltering over seas invisible  
Hold to a silent clue  
Because with the assurance of that star  
The needle points them true.

There was a voice whispered:  
Ascend, ascend!  
Out of the earthly vapour, out  
Of the invading doubt  
Into deliverance, into bare  
Heights of measureless air!  
Utterly stilled, I stood  
Climbing in dizzying thought  
To that magnetic light,  
To that far affirmation of old certitude;  
And pinnacled above in the vast night  
My thought was there.

Oh, Earth is gone!  
My Earth is lost.  
North Star, North Star,  
Dost thou fail me?  
Thou art no longer what thou wast,  
And what I was is taken from my mind.  
For there is neither path nor direction  
For any thought to find;  
No North, nor South, nor East, nor West,  
But homelessness suspended out of time  
Where I had sought to climb.  
North Star, it is no transient shroud  
Nor overflowing of the sun's glory,  
No sweeping curtain of black cloud,  
But a thought in the mind that deposed thee.

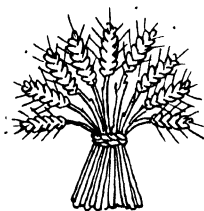
Down, down I sink.  
Earth again holds me.  
Again, North Star, I see thee shine.  
But from the naked night I will not shrink;  
And privately I take  
A courage for thy sake,  
Because thou haſt thy place and I have mine,  
Because I ſtill need thee,  
Because thou need'ſt not me.



ELLEN JANSON

TAKE AWAY BEAUTY

TAKE away beauty from my hair, and let  
My body lose its litheness. Take away  
Love; yes, let love utterly forget  
That I was beautiful, upon a day  
Too distant to remember. Even take  
My singing heart, let all my songs be scattered  
Like foam in caves where dawn will never break;  
Let the sea keep my songs, that have not mattered.  
Take even one who holds in childish hands  
The candle of my joy, and at whose name  
My heart remembers its lost fairylands;  
Take this away . . . and I shall be the same.  
I, to whom youth and love and even death  
Were as the inward-drawing of a breath.



R. C. TREVELYAN

TO A CHILD LISTENING

MARGARET, what are you listening to  
With head bent and face intent?  
Is the wind rustling something new,  
As coming and going it swells and dies  
In the pine-tree tops, now far now near,  
Earnest, wild monotonies,  
Tranquil mirth or whispered fear?

Or are you gazing and listening  
Into some silence of your mind,  
Where child-thoughts dream with unfurled wing,  
Waiting like new-hatched butterflies  
Till the warm sun quickens them to rise  
Flaunting their gay hues on the wind?

Or is it some far voice you hear  
Telling of happiness unknown,  
Richer than ever dreams have shown,  
Some call to the heart from friends more kind  
Than any here, from a land more fair  
Than this place of waiting and hope and care?



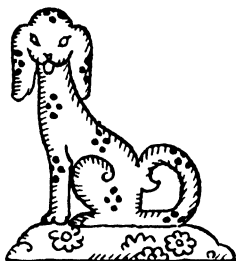
# LOUIS GINSBERG

## LETTER TO HEINE

*The Nazis declare that Heine, Germany's greatest lyric voice, was no poet, because he was a Jew. The Nazis have dragged down his statue and defaced it, and have also banned his poems.*

YOU of the lyric, the ironic brow,  
Heine, we need you now  
To flash the deathless sword of your bright song  
Against the German wrong.  
Help with your tender notes to solace well  
Those fugitives from Hell.  
Let your derision, let your scorn be poured  
On Satan's brown-hued horde.  
Tell them where faded Nineveh and Tyre  
With rites of death and fire —  
Those Pharaohs that once lifted haughty lids  
Beside the Pyramids —  
Tell how the worms were punctual once with these,  
And summed their biographies;  
How vain for men of the hour to flout with crime  
The people of all time;  
Embalm the burning of the books, the sham,  
Within an epigram;  
Impale all creatures that befoul their nest  
Upon your glittering jest;  
Those sadists over victims with their whips,  
Prison in bitter quips;  
All Torquemadas, turning back Time's clocks,  
Trap in a paradox;  
Instruct despoilers with your mocking pen  
How Israel flowers again;

And to all murderers this mockery give:  
How Death makes Israel live.  
Heine, with lyric and ironic brow,  
We need you now.



# WALTER DE LA MARE

POLLIE

POLLIE is a simpleton;  
When she sees a mantling swan —  
Pinions white as April fleece —  
She says, 'I do love geese.'

When a lark is in the sky,  
She'll sit with lips ajar, then sigh  
For rapture; and, the rapture o'er,  
Ask, 'What is music for?'

Every lesson I allot  
As soon as learned is clean forgot;  
'L — O — V . . .?' I say; and she  
Smiles, but there comes no 'E.'

Soon in that small head you'd come  
Maybe to a vacuum;  
How then can all heaven's grace  
Be shining in her face?



# JANET LEWIS

## A LULLABY

LULLEE, lullay,  
LI could not love thee more  
If thou wast Christ the King,  
Now tell me, how did Mary know  
That in her womb would sleep and grow  
The Lord of everything?

Lullee, lullay,  
An angel stood with her  
Who said: 'That which doth stir  
Like summer in thy side  
Shall save the world from sin.  
Then stable, hall and inn  
Shall cherish Christmas-tide.'

Lullee, lullay,  
And so it was that Day.  
And did she love Him more  
Because an angel came  
To prophesy His name?  
Ah no, not so,  
She could not love Him more,  
But loved Him just the same,  
Lullee, lullay.



E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN

LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE

AN intellect acerb, a heart of truth,  
A faith in Beauty's life-ensanguined rose,  
The courage of a climber above snows,  
For stricken womanhood a childlike ruth,  
Fancy alert for images uncouth  
Whereby to humanise immortal woes  
And seize the small shy gentian word that blows  
On precipices unobserved by youth:

Unto how few is fate supremely just!  
This man whose visions were poured forth like  
    wine,  
Before his death was ranged among his peers.  
Sure is his fame, sure as the intrepid gust  
That gave us back the brave Marlovian line,  
Reincarnating loves of mythic years.



# MARYA ZATURENSKA

## CENTURY OF ATHLETES

(For Franz Kafka)

CENTURY of athletes where the young men run  
To action in a noisy wrestling ring,  
All intellectual passion cast away  
In that barbaric ecstasy of hate.  
The suave and beautiful season of the sun  
Dies and love limps with wounded wing,  
And those, by pity moved, who gently stoop  
To calm with tenderness his childish eyes  
And wipe the tears from his appealing face,  
Find themselves lost among an alien race.

Praise for the few, those contemplative minds  
Whom suffering made aloof yet temperate  
Till burdened with the gift of tongues they saw  
The slow approaching of the steeds of war,  
Saw a dark cloud no larger than a hand  
Darken the angry land,  
Heard from prophetic ground the sound of mur-  
muring blood  
Soon to be freely spilt,  
The arming of the secret hordes of guilt  
And one shadow-eaten Jew whose stricken eyes  
saw deep  
That clear reality unreal as sleep,  
Wrote down the fears few understood.

For those that might have heard with vehemence,  
Now had no time for thought,  
But frenzied with the world's foreboding, sought  
Forgetfulness of all intelligence,

Heard secret neighing of the coming horses  
None knew where the sound came, east, south,  
north, west,  
But knew that stars were changing in their courses,  
Felt the abhorred antagonist everywhere,  
Heard but derision in the pastoral song  
In a dark city crazed with hunger and wrong.

Time for the bright, stripped spirits of the young,  
To leave academy and grove,  
Flying the shadow of the laurel tree,  
The eloquent, caressing eyes of love,  
But armed with dialectic fervour prove  
The superiority of strength to love,  
And in an interlocked formation move  
From the hard classic light so clearly burning  
To metaphysical labyrinths where scorn  
Alone confronts the analytic mind,  
That neither lover, friend, nor listener finds  
But like Cassandra marks the unheeded doom.

Unfaithful Time, whose one fidelity  
Is to the laws of change, unchanging, changing,  
The past with the young future in her eyes,  
The future with the past's undying body,  
All shall return, the exile to his home,  
Dictator to his doom, hero to bride,  
The weeping child shall find its mother's side,  
And from their illumed caves the waiting souls  
To peaceful meditation in the sun  
That scholars, saints, and poets shall know again.

And read the revealing books and trace the truth,  
Simple and clear through heart's intensity,

The homeless who are passionate for home,  
The human tear that moves Olympian Gods,  
And that sad backward look beyond recall,  
The secret of the unwelcome guest, the heart,  
Yearning and innocent borne down with guilt  
Because the guilt of others stains the heart,  
Learn why the heroic blood was vainly spilt  
And why the brutal rider lived  
To wear the Cæsar chaplet on his head.

As through gross air, a swift and luminous figure  
Clothed in transparent light  
Brushing the heavy mist with upward beating wings  
Pierces the fog and to the darkness brings  
New light, cold air, keen energy to men  
Whose obscured vision shall grow bright again.  
Peace to the shades, peace to the laurel trees,  
A sound of music in awakening gardens,  
A treasured respite between war and war.  
So Time shall for a little while restore  
Our mother Venus and her little son,  
When the long age of violence is done,  
And each man seeks a lover or a friend.

Remembering the time of isolation  
When each soul found new loneliness in crowds  
Marching together for an abstract end,  
And each man felt denying that he saw  
The inexorable working of the divine law  
On which the central core of fire must turn  
Around the mysterious globe  
In which we live and strive for a divine  
Intelligible wholeness, a deep purity  
To lose ourselves as in some heavenly sea.

KEITH THOMAS

WELL-MUSCLED GUARD

STRONG heart, well-muscled guard  
Of seasons rashly run,  
Beat firmly now toward  
Peace to be won.

We have come here to mend  
Both broken flesh and hours  
Like stems on which depend  
Expected flowers.

The crystal breath, like frost  
Blown down October air,  
Must find, when it accost,  
You guarding there.

When wind beats low the grass  
And leaves go mad along  
The bough, these nights we pass,  
You must be strong.

Heart, you must be the wing,  
The talon and the beak,  
Against this phantom thing  
Of which we speak.

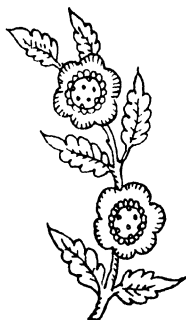
JOHN GAWSWORTH

THE BENT BOUGH

WHERE'ER I walk  
There walkest thou.  
In every silence,  
In every sough  
Of the green spray  
There talkest thou.

If others talk  
I hear not, see  
By night or day  
No one but thee.

Leaf of my leaf,  
Tree of my tree,  
The bent bough of grief  
Thou art to me.



# AXTON CLARK

## AMERICAN PRELUDE

IT was late when I came to you, America.  
In my blood was none of the Cherokee,  
none of the Aztec, none of the Inca.  
I had not felt the seasons wear down the Andes,  
nor watched the forking mouths of the Mississippi  
spew up silt to pave a great valley.  
I sailed westward over a secret sea:  
my father's flesh came out of the Urals  
and the Hindu Kush;  
the feet of my father's memory bathed  
in the flood of the Nile;  
the wings of my father's mind soared  
over the linked lakes of Finland.  
Homer taught me Achilles, to bring with me, and  
Dante, Beatrice;  
Palestrina gave me a wind of music out of heaven,  
and Bach the tremendous swell of an ocean.  
I slighted Scylla and Charybdis, being cautious,  
yet brought a glare of Medusa from the geranium  
hedges of Polermo;  
I wept when I ventured from the forest of Arden,  
and I wept again, seeing Lear on the cliffs of  
Dover.  
But in my blood was none of the Cherokee, none  
of the Aztec, none of the Inca.

I came with my left hand closed on my possessions,  
with my right hand open, to be welcomed.  
I had not felt October bringing out buds under  
the Andes,

nor watched March flood tides giving primeval  
earth

to Arkansas and the Delta:  
yet my body was soil longing to mingle  
with your soil, America.

It is not too late for me to come,  
not too late for me to merge and linger.

When my mother carried me she sang a curious  
song:

Son, she sang, you are a coil of ecstacy,  
and soon you will be a tearing and a pang,  
and afterwards love again, in peace and unpeace.  
But now you are a part of me, and not a part of me:  
between being an ecstacy and a boy  
you are strange and wonderful —

for I am a star in whom atoms are coming to birth;  
I am a world in whom the slimy edge-pools of an  
ocean

bring forth the cellular secret life;  
in whom the salamanders creep;  
in whom the little fishes swim.

Son, she sang, you are a little salamander;  
you are a little fish;  
you are the little hope of a hand, and an eye, and a  
mind.

She did not sing this loud at all,  
she did not sing it with her voice or even, maybe,  
with her mind.

It sang in her blood, in her blood, in her blood,  
and I heard it there.

Yes, I have been a salamander and a gila-monster;  
I am kin to the sahuaro blossom pestered by

buzzing flies, and kin to the cobra plant hooding  
them carnivorously to destruction;  
I am kin to the swift brother, the greyhound, and to  
the little sneaking brother, the coyote;  
in my blood still runs the salt of lost oceans, in my  
warm flesh is still the cooling of star fire.  
Yet I am a man, of many ancestries compounded  
human.

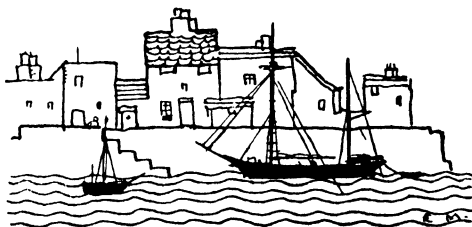
So have I come to you, America, sprung from the  
hot father-stars and the cool mother earth,  
a brother to the apple-tree and the cactus,  
a brother to the coral snake and the cliff swallows,  
a brother to the redskin, and to the yellowskin, and  
to the blackskin.

So I have come to you,  
to be your son; to be your brother; to be your  
father.

Sons, said the mother,  
first-born and late-born:  
you are coils of destiny,  
you are a fury and a labour,  
a healing and a uniting;  
you are a part of me and not a part of me.  
For I am a world in whom comrades are coming  
to birth,  
in whom the edge-pools of new oceans  
bring forth the cellular budded minds,  
in whom unopened to-morrows creep,  
in whom the seedling visions swim.

Sons, said the mother,  
you are prayer and hope of the Ancient Peoples;  
you are drowned seamen never coming back with  
waterlogged news to a drowned Atlantis,

you are Red Leif venturing high-prowed where  
the vine grows,  
and Francis Drake in Nova Albion,  
watching the soft fog drip from the madrona-tree.  
You are seedling visions crossing unseeded oceans,  
you are the unopened to-morrows,  
you are high prows set to cut the foam of the future.  
She did not speak this loud at all,  
she did not speak it in the avalanche or in thunder.  
It sang in her lakes, in her trees, in her caves, and  
I heard it there.



## RUTHVEN TODD

### LEGEND

UP north, somewhere among the dark sea-caves,  
Snatching his living from the battered wrecks,  
A prisoner of the grey water and granite rocks,  
His school friends say the legendary old man lives;  
His eyes, they say, are keen as when he shot  
The marauding buzzards plunging on the moor;  
The crofters are afraid of him and will not dare  
The steep-sided gully or the spread mud-flat.

Exactly why he left them none could tell;  
He was an ill man to cross, the old wives said,  
And there was rumour of a killing on the fell.  
But these tales do not disturb him. He is dead  
And has been so for all these long imaginary years,  
The while his legend grew, fostering their fears.



KEITH DOUGLAS

POEM FROM A SEQUENCE

**F**ORGOTTEN the red leaves painting the temple  
in summer,  
Forgotten my squirrel in his dark chamber,  
The great turtle and the catamaran;  
Rivers, where the mosaic stones are found.

That church, amputated by high explosive,  
Where priests no more lift up their murmurous  
Latin,  
And only the sun, a solitary worshipper,  
Tiptoes towards the altar and rests there.

These and the hazy tropic where I lived  
In tall seas where the bright fish go like footmen  
Down the blue corridors about their business,  
The jewelled skulls are down there. I have forgot,

Almost forgot. How slowly they return  
Like princes into the rooms they once owned.  
How dimly  
I see the imaginary moon, the magic painter  
Of long, deserted acres with splendour and silence.

Once on Monte Nero in the spring  
Some peasant girl fashioned for love and work  
Taught me a smile that I had forgotten,  
It is so hard to speak her language now.

Almost forgot. How slowly they return  
Like princes into the halls they once owned.

## ANDERSON M. SCRUGGS

### MAGNOLIA TREE

**T**HIS is the tree that holds within its leaves  
Eternal summer. Though the sun grow pale,  
And winds whet sharp against the naked eaves,  
Though sleety rains and snows of winter trail  
The paths of last year's flowers, it will keep  
The lingering breath of summer in its shade,  
As men grown old retrieve in dreams and sleep  
The glow that once their youth and laughter made.

And that is why magnolias lure the sparrows  
To wake late sleepers in December dawns  
With noisy riot, and when sunset narrows  
To wintry evening down still, city lawns,  
They crowd their branches, flashing upon the mind  
Lost June that other birds flew south to find.



## WILLIAM JUSTEMA

### THE TWILIGHT OF THE YOUNG MEN

NOW is the hour of young men on front porches  
in shirtsleeves vacantly they stand. Their  
mothers  
are washing the supper dishes their fathers  
are reading the evening paper their kid brothers  
out on the lawn are sailing model aeroplanes  
and everywhere shut in pink bedrooms young girls  
flirt with their mirrors. Now is the hour of young  
men.

Vacantly they stand. They do not hear the birds  
clothing the trees with their small round bodies  
going noisily to sleep. Full of the air these cries  
but the young men seem no more concerned with  
them  
than the young girls shut everywhere in bedrooms.  
The young men have worked hard a long day at  
nothing —  
a job. Now they do not fly toys nor can they read  
the newspapers in carpet slippers seriously.  
Now they must stand on wooden porches.

Their hair has been wet and combed for this hour.  
Their trousers are not the ones they wore to work.  
That they have bathed and have shaved  
is shown by their gleaming strong arms  
and the pallor of their set jaws. Not purposely set.  
The young men have no will of their own or if  
they have what does it matter.

(Across the road Dick takes his small son walking.)  
Born to be betrayed — between mother and dad

inside and the kid brother there on the lawn —  
staidly unafraid they stand as quiet and more quiet  
grow the birds arch and more arch the glances  
flashed by the mirrors of those stalking  
their hour and the power of darkness.



MARGUERITE JANVRIN ADAMS

AMERICAN HISTORY

PRISCILLA and John Alden lie at rest,  
Her small hands, folded close against her breast,  
And his, that once were intimate with toil,  
Are still a part of this New England soil.  
God's Acre is an easier field to plough —  
Earth presses on their eyelids gently now.

Across the hills their cottage still remains.  
Dust of the summer, deluge of the rains  
Season its timbers, while the hearth they made  
Is trimly swept, and wooden platters laid  
On sturdy tables, as they were before;  
And all is snug behind the rough-hewn door.

So we are drawn together in that hour.  
We pause a moment, pick a ragged flower  
Creeping across the threshold, lean to trace  
The letters of those names that interlace,  
And nod our heads in salutation, knowing  
Whose steps we hear along the salt wind's blowing!



LEONORA SPEYER

SWAN DYING

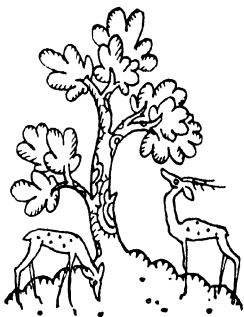
HE lies still beautiful  
Along the water's edge,  
His neck, great skein of whitest wool  
Slipped from the knitter's lap,  
Half-hidden in the sedge.

What restless dream, mishap  
On the dark, placid waters of his pool,  
Impelled the flight,  
Alone and desperate  
And vain,  
Across the sultry night?  
No one shall know.  
Nor why he left his ivory mate,  
Most docile lover,  
To fly, to fall,  
To lie like sifted snow  
(Snow in the summer sun),  
Heaped by the town's flat river.

Down, down he drifted,  
The white, the wounded bird,  
For all to gape upon —  
Running to spread the word,  
Tale garrulous and loud  
Of a wild swan  
Dying!

He hides a listless head,  
Wrapped in his wings as in a shroud  
And lying

Between the shallow water and the sod,  
Proud, spent,  
Magnificent —  
Child of the glittering god!



## ORGILL MACKENZIE

### THE CRUCIFIED TREE

LIKE a dead-leaf hurricane in a street of still air  
The starlings come blackening the round red  
sunset.

The feathery chatter of their wings whisks  
Out from quietness and in again.  
And there the dead leaves are  
Back, budded on the tree  
That was naked as stone.  
Light as a bird is one bird  
And comfortable to the tree,  
But very leaden heavy is the host  
That smites its weight, feather on feather,  
Down like a hammer blow.  
The delicate branches crack,  
Then, click! open the parasols of startled wings  
For the swift budding of a sturdier tree.

Hurricane on hurricane of woes,  
Blacker than starlings that have rainbow necks,  
Pour along the streets of the sky  
Beating out cries with their wings  
Blinding out suns,  
And when they would settle to rest  
They bud with death little trees,  
Piteous-to-wayfarer trees.  
What tree, arms flung like a cross,  
But breaks with so great crucifixion.

Is pity done?  
Has she no sturdier tree  
To make a home withal?

# LILIAN MIDDLETON

## SNOWFALL

AT dead of night they came again  
On tip-toe, without any noise.  
When morning cleared the window-pane  
There stood a row of choir boys,

Tall and lifting to the sky  
In shining vestments wrought of snow.  
I listened half-expectantly  
To hear a Bach adagio.

Your slender beauty, poplar choir,  
Was not more lovely when you stood  
Clothed in the merrier attire  
Of Little John and Robin Hood!



LILIAN BOWES LYON

THIN AIR YOUR PROVIDENCE

HILL'S edge, rock halt above the foundering  
pasture,

Sinewy ground, you give  
The essential rose, the sufferable thorn,  
Your hard seed-pearl to love,

no pliant garland.

Grudging the sacrifice of our superfluity,  
Fruit of the ripe churchyard, the plundered grove,  
We fear to climb to you from an easier lowland;  
Cocks of a dung-hill, mock the crag's adventure,  
Virtue supreme that we have not yet known.  
For love you exalt the sun,

conceive the future;

Joys we sweat to save

You lose to threadbare life, serenely starve  
While fathoms below the valley fills with corn,  
Thin air your Providence, the bee's annuity.

Green's end, oh genesis of equal stone

How copy your incomparable gesture!



## LAURENCE WHISTLER

### A WINDOW TO MOVEMENT

LIFT the lashes of dark eyes  
To the fading scene, my dear,  
Twilight's gentle page of lies;  
The rooks are crossing fabulous snow  
And when you watch them they appear  
To stand, and the fading hills to flow.

For a gap in the hills a train is feeling,  
Drawing its pencil of lights away —  
Remember that in all love's dealing,  
The shy encounter at the pavement's end,  
The lyrical hour, the lovable trait,  
Time has the takings, it's you that spend.

Yet look upon the moving scene,  
Lift your delicate chin to this.  
What should fevered journeys mean,  
Moving bird or moving hill,  
To the favoured where love is  
Sufficient unto itself, and still?



MARTHA BACON

NIGHT IN PARADISE

WHEN God made man to live and breathe,  
He set him in a garden sweet,  
He gave him bay his brows to wreath  
And purple-pelted figs to eat.

And Adam, lord of all that grew,  
Supped and laid him down to rest.  
And God from out his marrow drew  
Eve, with fulfilment in her breast.

But Adam in his virtue slept,  
And Eve saw Eden first alone,  
For fear of Paradise she wept,  
Shuddering for the parent home.

What woman stirs that does not dread  
To watch the scimitar of dark,  
Pearl and poised above her head  
While yet there is no hope of lark.

Ah, weep no more, poor vigilant,  
Cock will crow and dawn will break,  
Too soon must Adam plough and plant,  
Guard his dreaming till he wake.

B. NORTHROP

MY KINGDOM

WHEN kingdoms fall, and all things else beside  
Crumble away as visions seen in sleep,  
A self I have to guide, control, and keep.

When each new day and new horizon bring  
Ruin to troubled state and tottering throne,  
My self is mine, a kingdom all my own.

And there no act of mine shall rouse up war:  
I will be Cæsar or be Cæsar's tool;  
But there my word is law, and there I rule.

Belief and trust may vanish like the wraith  
Of morning mist; but still my creed is this.  
My self stands firm, in disbelief or faith.

Let earth decay, and Chaos come again,  
Untouched by all around, I shall endure;  
My self still stands secure, and there I reign.

Though Death at last shall toll my passing bell,  
Still free, uncowed, my challenge I can fling:  
I am! and so am king, in Heaven or Hell.



## LOUISE CRENSHAW RAY

### REMEMBERING AN ENGLISH GRANDFATHER

#### I

THE hedgerows burned with colouring as old  
As English autumn, and as manifold —  
Village and spinney, down and common lay  
At one with nature's peacefulness — that day  
You bartered Berkshire for uncertainty  
Of young Virginia, far beyond the sea.

#### II

Below the lichened belfry, where I stand,  
Three hundred years have scarcely touched the  
land  
That held your heart's devotion till you died,  
A land your memory always glorified.  
As then, the line of elms where April rook  
Challenged the tenantry of squirrel; the brook  
Spanned by a bridge as ancient as this tower,  
Blend with the landscape, as a leaf with flower.  
The village, thatched of roof; the fields, hedge-  
fenced,  
Merge also, into beauty keenly sensed,  
A mystic, man-carved loveliness. These bells  
Reverberate in spring to citadels  
Of hare and pheasant; coverts where the fox  
Finds refuge for his earth among brown rocks  
And bracken; or the wheatear, flying lowly,  
Rivals the blackbird in her song. Now slowly,  
A flock and shepherd wind across the hill;  
The afternoon grows drowsier, and still.

III

O grandsire, mingled with the Jamestown earth,  
Was any conquest or dominion worth  
The cost? Or did the destiny that made  
You leave this England, keep you unafraid  
The while you faced a wilderness and hewed  
From it a commonwealth? With fortitude  
You served Virginia loyally and rest,  
'By hope of a joyful resurrection,' blessed;  
Yet in your dreaming, if the dead desire,  
Do you not yearn for your ancestral shire?

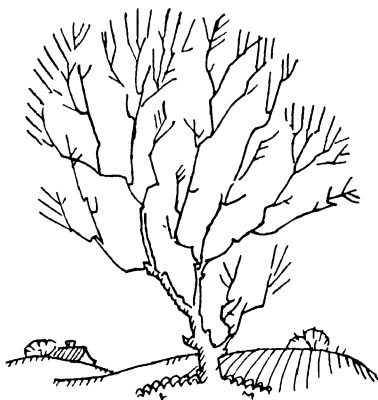
*Alabama,*  
*U.S.A.*



ANDERSON M. SCRUGGS

MAN IS FOREVER LONELY

MAN is forever lonely; there can be  
No time or circumstance in all his days  
To lead him out of loneliness; his ways  
Are those of clouds and tides. Not even he  
Who seeks the crowded solace of the street  
Can find a single comrade there, nor yet  
In secret bonds of love can men forget  
Their heart's own solitude. Though lips may  
meet,  
And hand touch hand in intimate embrace,  
A stranger still abides within the mind  
No word can reach, no vision ever find.  
A lonely God enthroned in lonely space,  
Fashioned us out of silence as we are,—  
As single as a tree, as separate as a star.



RALPH FRIEDRICH

EVEN ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS

ONCE upon a night like this,  
Over Tyre and Babylon,  
Over tranced Endymion,  
Over dark Semiramis,

Over temples blooming white  
From the shadowed hills of night,  
Tides of moonlight poured and swept.  
Cities shimmered as they slept  
Sunken in a gulf of light.

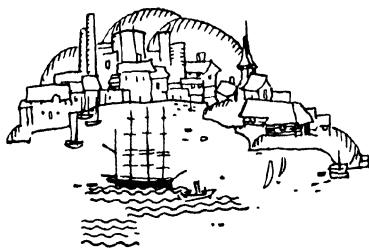
Even on a night like this  
Time was diligent, and grief.  
Death, like any petty thief,  
Coveted Diana's kiss.  
In the rustle of a leaf

Menace spoke, and over Tyre,  
Like foreshadowings of fire,  
Moonbeams rippled. Babylon,  
Moving eastward into dawn,  
Mourned to know the night so brief.

Babylon is dust, and Tyre.  
With a name, Semiramis  
Combats death. Endymion  
Wakes to no regretted dawn.  
But upon a night like this

In the province of desire  
Moon and shadow-play conspire,

And they glimmer, far and lost,  
And the moonlight like a frost  
Lies upon them. In a brief  
Soundless moment they have crossed  
Centuries to find their grief  
Spoken by a trembling leaf.



# MAXWELL BODENHEIM

## ONE GENERATION

O VOLATILE, distrustful, angry breast  
Confronted now by vultures long unseen!  
We strolled in mysticism's Sunday best,  
Threadbare beneath, but subtle, radiant, lean.

We swept Main Street of shams and bric-a-bracs,  
And slew vulgarities — tin-sword crusades —  
And proud within our isolations, lacks,  
We sniffed at smugness and its prancing trades.

We were not happy, peace was never gained  
Without surrender — flimsy, gorgeous fare —  
And when the crumbs were scattered and it rained,  
We sat with sophistries, played solitaire.

O volatile, distrustful angry breast!  
O sentimental tryst with irony!  
O pessimistic chorus, pagan quest,  
Trapped by the words that could not set us free.

We held you in the hallway room, the porch  
With honeysuckles, and the bright terrasse,  
Sipping *pernods*, waxing profane to scorch  
Futilities and boasts in Montparnasse.

When you receded, you were but a dream  
Of massed equalities far from the crest —  
Carl Sandburg, shouting, tall, behind a team  
Of horses, ploughing thought with bold unrest.

And now they tell us — suave, empowered men  
Jerking the strings from walls we could not see —  
To break no lance against the veiled thieves-den,  
To walk alone, skim clouds of majesty.

This majesty, finding the mattress hard,  
But dipping sorrows in a subtle ink:  
Drugged, happy, holding the admission-card  
To patronising dinner, tea-cup clink.

O Beauty, subtlety, reflective grace,  
You sat one day upon a floor of stone,  
And as you watched each undernourished face,  
You cried out, gasped — the faces were your own.



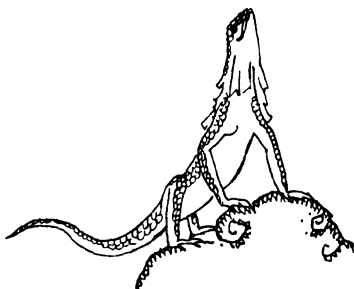
## ANDREW YOUNG

### THE STONE EAGLES

PURPLE and gold and wet  
To Toller Fratrum, Wynward Eagle,  
Both roads in the sunset  
Shone with a light so rich and regal,  
Which choose without regret?

Chance led me by the one  
Where two lean-headed eagles perched  
Rain-pitted to the bone  
And the last dregs of daylight searched  
With their blind eyes of stone.

What were they watching for?  
Wild eagles that again would fly  
Over a waste land or  
Scything wide circles in the sky  
Mechanic birds of war?



EISDELL TUCKER

SPRING SOWING

BEHOLD the ponderous, melancholy rook,  
Blessing with ragged glove  
and pious look  
the field he means to plunder.  
See how responsibly the jackdaws move  
from row to row  
with pauses for reflection,  
like sidesmen taking up a good collection.

But sparrow chatter cannot be kept under,  
and starlings, wrangling, advertise it so  
that half the hill must know  
their tale of treasure-trove.  
And near above  
a gun gets their direction.  
Sharp snaps the double shot and — little wonder! —  
two of the talkative are brought to book,  
the field's forsook,  
and all the echoes laughing at their blunder.



WITTER BYNNER

SWEET CHARIOT

COME, folks, come folks  
Listen to the fun,  
Listen to the thing  
That we all have done.  
*Jews are on the sideline,*  
*Jews are on the sideline,*  
*Watching the thing*  
*That we all have done.*  
We've been killing gods,  
And we can't go back,  
And we've killed your gods,  
And you've killed ours,  
Black and white  
And white and black.  
There are long-toothed hornets  
In the flowers,  
There's a sabre-toothed tiger  
In the white god's back,  
*Jews are on the sideline,*  
*Jews are on the sideline,*  
And a nightgown on the black god,  
Hanging slack.  
Hit up the drums  
For a white god's pleasure,  
Serve a communion  
To a black god's measure.  
The cathedral is in Harlem,  
The jungle's down-town;  
There's a white-faced Ape  
And a Virgin gone brown,  
And we can't go back,

We can't go back.  
We can look into the easy chairs  
Up at Belle's,  
A white face in this one,  
In that one a black,  
A nothing-doing moment,  
King, Queen, Jack,  
A nothing-doing heaven  
And fifty-seven hells —  
Go up at eleven  
And look in at Belle's.  
We can speed our gods along  
On an iron track,  
But they can't come back,  
They can't come back.  
We can prophesy the weather  
With newspaper and drum,  
We can bootleg, we can slather,  
Till kingdom come —  
But our gods are gone,  
Our gods are gone  
Together down an alley  
Into kingdom come.  
The black god, the white god,  
Are no gods at all,  
They're the jungle and the manger  
In a Broadway stall.  
Good night, Mumbo Jumbo,  
Jehovah, good night,  
White is black now,  
Black is white,  
Jesus is crying  
On an old mammy's breast,  
And the Park Avenue crocodile

Is sneaking to rest,  
*And Jews are on the sideline,*  
*Jews are on the sideline.*  
Where are the gods gone?  
What has got 'em?  
Black and white together,  
They're dancing a black bottom  
On a cross on the altar  
Of St. John the Divine,  
A crucified god  
Who used to be mine,  
A black-lacquered god  
Who used to shine,  
An alligator-god  
Eating bread and wine.  
So black gods, white gods,  
Both good-bye,  
Go round to your place  
In an aeroplane sky,  
Wall Street and Harlem  
And the goddess Nellie Bly.  
On a trip around the world—  
Colonel Lindbergh and I,  
Teddy Roosevelt and I,  
Abe Lincoln and I,  
George Washington and I,  
Mr. Bonaparte and I,  
Mr. Cæsar and I,  
Mr. Jesus and I,  
Mr. I!

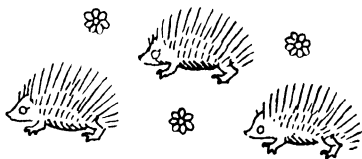
## RUTH HEDGER

### LANDSCAPE FOR A MOOD

THIS country of my mind is colourless,  
Unvaried, flat, the slow streams choked with  
sedge,

Sea undiscernible at horizon's edge—  
A meeting-place that's too remote to guess.  
No hill to crown a climbing thought's surmise  
With a new vista from its top displayed—  
Never a friendly wood with trees for shade  
If ever sun should part these heavy skies.

O sun, redeem this land's monotony;  
Pattern it, wind, with shadow-clouds that blow  
Cheat me to hope again, though well I know  
At heart, that no surprise, no mystery,  
No bright romance hides in this hollow view,  
These level roads that lead to nothing new.



D. S. SAVAGE

LIFE OF LORD TENNYSON

LORD TENNYSON walked pensively from the  
green plush sitting-room  
To pat the head of the mastiff on the lawn.  
The pampas-grass grew round the Crystal Palace  
Whose splendour put the Palace of Art to scorn.

The grimy buffers of industry had shunted his  
carriage  
Down a dead siding where even the air was  
dead.  
He had taken a look out of the sooty window.  
'Trespassers will be prosecuted,' the notice read.

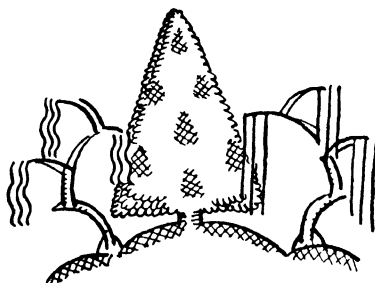
Lord Tennyson walked in the musty book-walled  
library  
And a statue of Wordsworth looked down at him  
from a shelf.  
He raised his hands to his brow in mute supplica-  
tion,  
But the statue said coldly, 'Work it out for your-  
self.'

Lord Tennyson started out to write 'In Memo-  
riam,'  
He got some pretty good phrases in it too.  
He presented it to the Queen in a gilt-edged  
binding,  
The Queen said 'Thank you, Tennyson. How do  
you do?'

He died. They entombed his remains in Westminster Abbey.

Solemn black borders framed *The Times* that day. Mendelssohn was played on the drawing-room piano

Below a picture of Landseer's 'The Stag at Bay.'

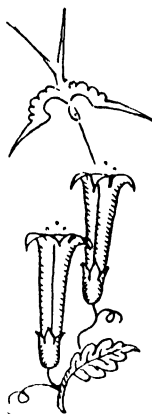


# JAMES WALKER

## MOOD AT DUSK

**G**ENTLY the trees give up the coloured ghost,  
Release their shadows, mother them no more;  
Light, that has been all day earth's lovely guest,  
Now loathe to go, grows lovelier than before,  
Takes every coloured remnant earth disowns,  
And for a pleading, fanciful farewell  
Waves them above the western citadel,  
Leaving an earth stripped naked to the bones.

Heaven becomes a void where beauty dwelt;  
Frost grips a soil that still remembers dew;  
Wisdom has lost her wonder, pride her power;  
Love is the brittle, dried stalk of a flower:  
An aching for a joy it never felt,  
An anguish for a grief it never knew.



## MURIEL RUKEYSER

### ELEGY

THE basque night advances in its clouds,  
Maps strain loose and are lost, the flash-flood  
breaks,  
the lifting moonflame lights this field a moment,  
while death as a skier curves along the snows,  
death as an acrobat swings year to year,  
turns down to us the big face of a nurse.  
Roads open black, and the magicians come.

The aim of magicians is inward pleasure.  
The prophet lives by faith and not by sight.  
Being a visionary, he is divided,  
or Cain, forever shaken by his crime.  
Magnetic ecstasy, a trance of doom  
mean the magician, worshipping a darkness  
with gongs and lurid guns, the colours of force.  
He is against the unity of light.

The Magician has his symbols, brings up his  
children by them:  
the march-step, the staircase at night, the long  
cannon.

The children grow in authority and become  
Molitor, Dr. Passavant, powerful Dr. Falcon,  
bring their professors, and soon may govern  
the zone, the zodiac, the king on his throne.

'Because the age holds its own dangers,  
Because snow comes with lightnings, omens with  
all seasons.'

(The Prophet covers his face against the wall,

Weeps, fights to think again, to plan to start  
the dragon, the ecliptic, and the heart.)

The Magician lifts himself higher than the world.  
The Prophets were more casual. They endured,  
and in the passive dread of solitude  
heard calls, followed veiled, in midnight humility.  
They claimed no preference; they separated  
unity from blindness  
living from burning  
tribute from tribute.

They have gone under, and do they come again?  
The index of prophecy is light  
and steeped therein  
the world with all its signatures visible.

\*            \*            \*

Does this life permit its living to wear strength?  
Who gives it, protects it. It is food.  
Who refuses it, it eats in time as food.  
It is the world and it eats the world.  
Who knows this, knows. This has been said.

This is the vision in the age of magicians:  
it starts at immense barriers, before mountains:  
'I come to you in the form of a line of men,  
and when you threw down the paper, and when  
you sat at the play,  
and when you killed the spider, and when you saw  
the shadow  
of the fast plane skim fast over your lover's face.  
And when you saw the table of diplomats,  
the newsreel of ministers, the pageant slip,  
the crushed child's head, clean steel, factories,  
the chessmen on the marble of the floor,

each flag a country, each chessman a live man,  
one side advancing southward to the pit,  
one side advancing northward to the lake,  
and when you saw the tree, half bright half burning.  
You never inquired into these meanings.  
If you had done this, you would have been re-  
stored.'

The word is war.

And there is a prediction that you are the avenger.

They cut the people's hands, and their shoulders  
were left,  
they cut their feet off, and their thighs were whole,  
they cut them down to the torse, but the voice  
shouted,  
they cut the head off, but the heart rang out.  
And in the residential districts, where nothing ever  
happens,  
armies of magicians fill the street,  
shouting  
Need! Bread! Blood! Death!

And all this is because of you.

And all this is avenged by you.

Your index light, your voice the voice,  
your tree half green and half burning,  
half dead half bright

your cairns, your beacons, your tree in green and  
flames,

unbending smoke in the sky, planes' noise, the  
darkness,

magic to fight. March to restore, now know. Now  
be

Seen son of Sight, Hearer, of Ear, at last.

J. C. HALL

AND WHAT FOR PRAISE?

AND what for praise? Who names  
A flower embroiled in wind?  
Or who commends the uncorseted frames  
Of trees? Or who the mind?

I say the mind. This praise,  
Too long withheld, I now award.  
Now let this commendation phrase  
One poem, wrought from every word

Of our knowledge and of our poor  
Restriction of things loved, praised  
Each and each, so singly, in our  
Seeing, who are in seeing dazed.

Know all: you may and must.  
Authentic, worthily include  
All beauty, in wombing trust  
Confirm a new completer laud.

This last and ultimate faith  
Is yours; in you I would depend  
Wholly and quite believe  
Your no-deception, your wisdom, Mind.

## CYRIL HUME

### LANDFALL

LET us, Beloved, take ship for the isles of the  
spirit,  
Southward reach in our hearts to the far bright  
beaches,  
The wonderful stars at night, the love of the  
islands.

Surely we feel within us the same wonder,  
The same joy surge on making the new landfall,  
As those dead captains and all their sea-weary  
sailors.

How they came, in their cocked hats and their knee  
breeches,  
Out of their rigorous ships, with their swords  
buckled,  
Their hair in queue, in their mouths clean masculine  
speaking.

And how they freighted ashore their marvellous  
trinkets  
To barter for great strange fruits, insipid tasting,  
For blossom-garlanded breasts, and weeping at  
midnight.

No, never doubt it. They found appeasement in  
weeping,  
Those admirals, in darkness, in coconut-fragrant  
embraces.  
And after a heaven of eyes, phosphorescent with  
passion,

The galaxy's peace, and the sigh, and the long  
musing  
On the future of Man, like a vague stupendous  
horizon —  
The woman singing beside, and the easeful  
nostalgia.

Did they long there for home, for their green rain-  
silvered England?  
Or lay they longing against the present departure  
Break through the surf to the ships and the strut  
of command?

Call of them, Clio, over the waves on your conch-  
shell!  
Where have they gone, ship-leaving, those sail-  
ing-masters;  
Where glided, reefed and lagooned, those excellent  
islands?

Off to the tide! On the long tide off, and forever!  
For so has Man, the implacably wilful, willed it.  
And only echoes shall reach us through Clio's sea-  
conch.

Mankind, being man, now puts away things that  
are childish,  
Knowing, remote, the lovelier isles of the spirit.  
Come, my Beloved, and share with me in that  
landfall.

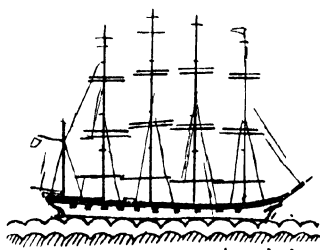
## DAVID GASCOYNE

EX NIHILO

HERE am I now cast down  
Beneath the black glare of a netherworld's  
Dead suns, dust in my heart; among  
Dun tiers no tears refresh am cast  
Down by a lofty hand:

Hand that I love! Lord Light,  
How dark is Thy arm's will and ironlike  
Thy ruler's finger that has sent me here!  
For from thy Face, I nothing understand  
But kiss the Hand that has consigned

Me to this latter world where I must learn  
The revelation of despair and find  
Among the debris of all certainties  
The hardest stone on which to found  
Altar and shelter for Eternity.



W. H. AUDEN

IN MEMORY OF W. B. YEATS

HE disappeared in the dead of winter:  
The brooks were frozen, the airports almost  
deserted,  
And snow disfigured the public statues;  
The mercury sank in the mouth of the dying day.  
O all the instruments agree  
The day of his death was a dark cold day.

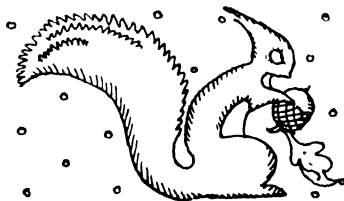
Far from his illness,  
The wolves ran on through the evergreen forests,  
The peasant river was untempted by the  
fashionable quays;  
By mourning tongues  
The death of the poet was kept from his poems.

But for him it was his last afternoon as himself,  
An afternoon of nurses and rumours;  
The provinces of his body revolted,  
The squares of his mind were empty,  
Silence invaded the suburbs,  
The current of his feeling failed; he became his  
admirers.

Now he is scattered among a hundred cities,  
And wholly given over to unfamiliar affections;  
To find his happiness in another kind of wood,  
And be punished under a foreign code of  
conscience:  
The words of a dead man  
Are modified in the guts of the living.

But in the importance and voice of to-morrow,  
When the brokers are roaring like beasts on the  
floor of the Bourse,  
And the poor have the sufferings to which they are  
fairly accustomed,  
And each in the cell of himself is almost convinced  
of his freedom,  
A few thousand will think of this day  
As one thinks of a day when one did something  
slightly unusual.

O all the instruments agree  
The day of his death was a dark cold day.



## DANIEL WHITEHEAD HICKY

### WILD HERON

LIGHTLY now, as lightly as  
LA breath of wind breathes through the grass,  
Softly, softly, quieter  
Than an opening lily's stir,  
The heron, wings of folded white,  
Treads the silence of the night.

Through the waters of the dark  
Flashing with a firefly's spark,  
By the fern-banks sweet and close,  
Palely as a dream he goes,  
Spreads his young wings frail and thin  
To let the starlight drift within,  
Folds them slowly back again,  
Cool with starlight, as with rain.

Softly, softly, through the night  
He wanders, white as snow is white,  
And when the last marsh shadows pass  
To let the sunrise light the grass,  
Dawn will find him, quietly,  
The secret blossom on a tree.



RALPH FRIEDRICH

I GIVE YOU

**E**ARTH, bearing her continents and her oceans  
through her own shadow,  
Now bringing Asia upward into light;  
Now moving Europe nightward, now  
Lifting the Americas through a gulf of twilight  
Into the tide of day.

Earth, tireless and doomed,  
Earth rushing Lyreward on her spiral journey,  
Scarred with the mountains of ancient upheaval,  
and branded  
With perishing records of conquest.

Earth, yearning  
Moonward to-night with the tides of the sea and  
the dry land.

Earth, hiding at last the furious Cains and their  
quarry  
Under one meadow, one desert, one river, one  
mountain,  
Receiving again what she gave: the arrogant dust,  
the unwilling  
Cargo of doom.

Earth, seeking,  
What answer? What solace? What refuge?

O Vega

G. W. STONIER

GOD'S GARGOYLES

COME, take my arm, Chris Smart, and we'll  
depart  
On a visit after your own heart.  
Here in stained windows all things praise  
God giver of ways and days.  
Here animal, insect, bird  
Unite to magnify the Word  
Divine. The elephants parade,  
The spotted deer walks unafraid  
Of tiger staring into night,  
The lion, the eagle and the kite  
Rule each his cage of wire and see  
The lesser breeds in amity.  
The blushing fox eludes his stink  
On legs that delicately slink;  
The parrots curse, the monkeys run  
Over a rockery in the sun.  
The darting mongoose leaves his bed,  
The lovely cirrus overhead  
Delves deep in the mesmeric lake  
Where demoiselle crane and drake  
Stir ringlets; on the high trapeze  
Concolour gibbons take their ease.  
Anteater sniffs opossum;  
The mandrill airs his bum,  
Affrights the visitor. The Diana monkey,  
Pretty and bowlegged as a flunkey,  
With Confucius' face,  
Beards and tufts of yellowy lace,  
Stoops to drink or turn a somersault.  
While marmosets and capuchins vault,

The lion dreams in his own likeness, and  
Cowering on scorched sand  
The peahen tries  
To forget a thousand eyes.  
Sex opens avenues, in Eden barred,  
To the bear, the emu and the leopard.  
No apple-tree of life  
Tempts to centuries of strife,  
Among the tortoises no fable  
Tells of Cain killing Abel,  
And the Esau of the apes  
Valiantly escapes  
With meat and inheritance, too.  
Then, on a visit to the Zoo,  
Besides God, the thing is you.  
What woe is in this camel's scars.  
The ape behind bars  
Answers an ape within.  
When the parrot speaks  
It is a little of yourself that leaks.  
Peacocks enjoy in innocence  
The vanity that blunts our sense.  
You may tickle squirrels' necks  
Without encouraging their sex,  
You may feel your passion go  
Out to the panther, black and slow;  
He doesn't know it,  
Or that you, a poet,  
Are racked by his image forever after.  
The bat clings to the rafter  
Blind to your curiosities,  
The baboon nimbly tries  
In public, unashamed,  
Vices best not named,

And looks you in the eye. You only stare  
At Nature following nature everywhere.  
And you, Chris Smart, poor Bedlamite,  
Were there beasts tempting to the sight  
Among your fellow-sufferers,  
Did your verse  
Find out an innocence in those  
Who escaped sin and guilt in throes  
Of mental illness? Or was all black,  
All lost, all darkened, all thrust back?  
Here is the scene. I set up an easel in the mind,  
Brushes, canvas are to hand,  
And while I wait the memory stirs  
Beyond big beasts to lesser furs:  
Jerboa, jumping mouse of the desert,  
Mud-skipper, moon-fish, wart-  
hog self-transfixed, the seahorse lonely  
A chessman undersea,  
The false water-boatman furiously  
Paddling along a pool,  
The sad, the cruel  
Lives of snakes,  
Eremites of the desert, for whose sakes  
Vermin go on pilgrimages  
To worship, to be devoured by stages:  
All in a vision kept  
By the brain catalept  
Of the fury of the earth's plenty,  
Of creation's mastery,  
A cathedral born and built  
Of divine innocence and human guilt.

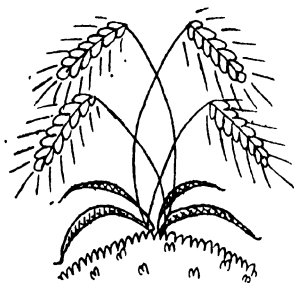
## WILLIAM SOUTAR

### EXPECTANCY

WHERE only light and shadow pass,  
And silence sighs but cannot sing,  
A tree stands like an empty glass  
Waiting the wine of spring:

The moment of the miracle—  
When the clear space begins to glow  
With glimmering greenness that shall fill  
And gently overflow;

And men, by misery unmanned,  
Confirm their courage at this mould  
Of healing bounty which no hand  
In hatred can withhold.



## CLIFFORD GESSLER

### HAWAIIAN BLUES

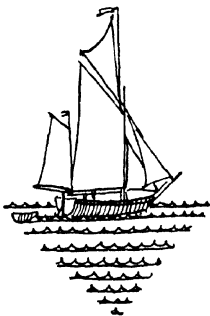
SAN FRANCISCO nights, and the fog coiling  
between the mute walls, soiling  
cold roses that feel no touch of summer wind;  
San Francisco nights, and the hills pinned  
neatly back beneath that cold grey canopy;  
the lights  
wearing blurred haloes San Francisco nights  
lend briefly and spuriously . . .

and through the panoply  
of this strange misty beauty, an old pain  
gnaws at the fog-choked heart, a dull refrain  
beats on the mind—

I've got those Ha-  
waiian,  
steel-guitar cryin',  
homeside and dyin'  
Hilo Hawaiian  
blues!

Somewhere mountains thrust savage and black and  
scarred  
with fire into an unframed, deep-starred  
sky; somewhere the surf chants sea-songs on the  
reef  
that springs from this same sea whose sullen  
grief  
mutters monotonously along this shore—  
and the heart's sad guitars once more  
seem to cry into the chill, fog-blinded night  
out of those lost, bright, haunted islands, sing-  
ing

in a dark mirror down the wet wind, swinging  
into those Ha-  
waiian,  
sea-foam flyin',  
Gauguin, O'Brien  
South Sea Hawaiian  
blues!



JAMES WREFORD

GOES TO THE GRAVE TOO SOON

GOES to the grave too soon  
The frail and fine delight;  
With no complaining moon  
To quarrel with the night,  
No loyal stars to tell  
Of suns beyond this eve  
New days will miracle  
On eyes that dreamless grieve.

To-day is slipt the pin  
On which the world revolved,  
To let the darkness in  
That cannot be dissolved.  
No parliament can right  
This world-encircling wrong  
We have received of night  
That's foiled the high-winged song,  
And fenced the arrow-sight,  
And numbed the firm-clenched fist,  
And filched the fine delight  
From lips before they kissed.

The scientific hour  
Has torn the petals out  
From the fantastic flower,  
But sweet, our dreams would flout;  
And armed with powers too great,  
But with no dream-filled sight,  
In blind and silly hate  
We crucify delight.  
The child we bore in love

In scorn we now deny,  
The Holy Ghost to prove,  
And all such dreams, a lie;  
A lie the poet's grace,  
The singer's muse a lie—  
While starkly in their place  
We raise the cross on high.

In such a world to dream  
Our brave and splendid love  
Could be itself the gleam  
Would fill the skies above  
Indeed were folly now;  
Though not the dream is wrong,  
Love, not our splendid vow,  
But the world hate too strong.

For now the cosmic hope  
In the betrayed heart's grief  
Must take itself a rope  
And hang the heart's belief:  
And the axe is at the head,  
And the blood runs through the night,  
And forever with the dead  
Is graved the frail delight.

## HERBERT PALMER

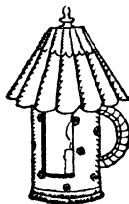
### DAVID AND GOLIATH

LET Goliath have his say,  
David won, and will to-day.  
Let him wave his dreadful spear,  
David lived, and now draws near.

See Goliath, mark his height!  
What turns David on his might?  
Valour lissom as a prayer  
Running tiptoe up God's stair.

Scrip and sling and shepherd crook,  
And five pebbles from the brook  
David sets against his spear,  
Shield and sword and armour gear.

See Goliath, where he lies  
With the night upon his eyes!  
All the winds of vale and hill  
Chant of David and his skill.



## GUSTAV DAVIDSON

### BIRD OF TIME

TRISTAN and Iseult are dead  
These seven centuries and more,  
And yet the burning anguish of  
Their mortal and immortal love  
That never may be comforted  
Is with us still, and at the core  
Of all the living who have known  
Love's flaming instant, glimpsed and flown.

The sea at Cornwall beats upon  
The cliff where Tristan long ago  
For Iseult died. The summer sky  
Still bends o'er lovers passing by  
Tintagel in the shimmering sun;  
And all the wildness and the woe  
Of their last kiss is in this breeze  
Blowing from those far Cornish seas.

O Bird of Time upon the bough!  
Out of what turmoil, what remorse  
Of human passion, human pain  
Does this sad music sound again  
Through all our yesterdays and now?  
And is love's yearning at the source  
Of worlds gone down eternity—  
And worlds unending, yet to be?

# WILFRED ROWLAND CHILDE

## DAWN IN AVALON

THE lady of dawn-light, the star on the wold,  
The babble of leaves when the rain falleth cold,  
The chatter of sparrows that nest in the eaves,  
The last star, the dawn-light, the rain on the  
leaves —

The rumour of hosts in the piling-up clouds,  
The passing of ghosts in their rain-drenched  
shrouds,  
The white spear of morning, the mist creeping  
cold —  
O lady of dawn-light, O star on the wold!

Deep out of dreams' waters she comes glorified,  
The lady of dawn-light, the angel, the bride,  
Whom the cloud armies flee from, the drenched  
ghosts avoid,  
Who to time in his travail brings bliss unalloyed.

Back to Time out of dreams, while the last star  
departs,  
And the rain on the leaves makes a harp of their  
hearts —  
In the dark leaves of ivy the clear raindrops play,  
Birds chirp in the deep eaves — O worship the  
day! . . .

## PAUL TRACY

### GOAT GIRL

THE herd girl watched her milk goats graze  
In ancient unrecorded days.  
She led her herd into the dun  
Beyond Karnak and Babylon.  
Alone she watched, barefoot, shabby,  
Under the reign of Hammurabi.  
The goat girl watched upon a ridge  
While Xerxes' spearmen filled the bridge.  
She saw the looting legions pass  
And leave white dust upon the grass.  
And deaf to Sappho, blind to Phidias,  
She only knew the gaunt and hideous.  
While kingdoms rose and empires fell  
She listened for her lead goat's bell.

Along the Nile, beside the Seine,  
She weathered windstorms and the rain  
To keep her active hard-nosed herd  
From melting in a landscape blurred.

Time cannot kill the graceless goat  
Wearing its mottled, noisome coat;  
Time cannot stay the lass in need  
Who takes the milk goat out to feed.  
So when this Age is done her charge  
Will roam our ruined tombs at large.

ROBERT FRANCIS

NOTHING IS FAR

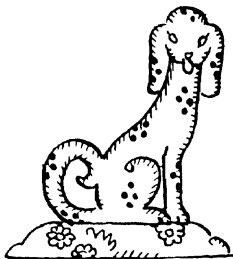
THOUGH I have never caught the word  
Of God from any calling bird,  
I hear all that the ancients heard.

Though I have seen no deity  
Enter or leave a twilit tree,  
I see all that the seers see.

A common stone can still reveal  
Something not stone, not seen, yet real.  
What may a common stone conceal?

Nothing is far that once was near.  
Nothing is hid that once was clear.  
Nothing was God that is not here.

Here is the bird, the tree, the stone.  
Here in the sun I sit alone  
Between the known and the unknown.



## STANTON COBLENTZ

### FOGHORN

DEEP in the woods at noon, where oak and bay  
Merge with sequoia's heaven-ascending grace,  
I sit and while a summer hour away,  
Peering through hanging green at sunlit space.

A dreamer's world! a world of gnat and bird,  
The bluejay's flash, the fluttering stir of leaves!  
But listen! weird and faint, remotely heard,  
Echoes, a slow, deep, forlorn voice that grieves.

The wailing of a foghorn lost at sea  
Over the hills, beyond the woods afar,  
Where vessels pick their way, in jeopardy,  
By vapor-ghosted isle and misty bar.

Like shouts of war to one in paradise,  
It breaks the still trees' reverential reign.  
Even here, in that long drone which sobs and dies,  
mark the pulse-beat of a planet's pain.



## ALFRED NOYES

### THE BUTTERFLY GARDEN

*'By filling a sheltered corner with the flowers and shrubs which butterflies prefer you may have not only the anchored sort of flowers, but — perpetually floating over them in the air — a garden of wingéd flowers that have cut their cables.'*  
*Orchard's Bay.*

HERE, by this crumbling wall,  
We'll spread the feast, then watch what guests it  
brings.

Earth-rooted flowers to flowers of heaven shall call;  
And all the gorgeous air shall wink with wings.

We'll choose what they love most,  
As all men must whose guests are of the sky, —  
Not lavender, of lost gardens the sweet ghost,  
But heliotrope, young Psyche's cherry-pie.

Be sure *she* does not pine  
For any phantom feast, that heavenly maid!  
'Tis we who make a wraith of things divine,  
And think the very soul into a shade.

The Chilian orange-ball,  
First of the shrubs that Tortoise-shells prefer,  
Must hang its honeyed clusters over all  
And tempt the Freckled Blues to hover near.

Its globes of fragrant gold  
Shall lure the Green-veined White from near and  
far;  
While faultless Painted Ladies here unfold  
Their pearly fans, inlaid with moon and star;

Till later Buddleias trail

    Their long racemes of violet and of rose,  
Round which the glorious Admirals dip and sail,  
    And swarthy Peacocks flit, and sip, and doze.

Hedging them closely round,

    Veronica must spread her spikes of blue,  
That sun and flowers may in one sleep be drowned  
    Yet keep her own Fritillaries fluttering too.

Blue is their heart's delight;

    Therefore, though crimson petals also please,  
And soft white wings will sail to bridal white  
    Like yachts with orange tips on flowering seas;

We'll make them doubly blest

    With this,— the deepening blue of children's  
    eyes;  
For wingéd creatures love that colour best  
    Which smiled upon them, once, in Paradise.











