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NEW VERSE

*An anthology of poems
which have appeared in
the first thirty numbers
of 'New Verse'*

NEW VERSE

*an anthology
compiled by*

GEOFFREY GRIGSON

London

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To
HENRY MOORE

If that does not quench the appetite they can try NEW VERSE which erupts at six-pence a time every two months from a nicely chosen address in Keats Grove, Hampstead ('Where Keats heard the nightingale, you know')

Ivor Brown: 'I Commit to the Flames'.

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PREFACE

It is a fact that both an epic and a limerick are poems. You cannot suppose a divine or an inspired origin for one against a secular or a rational origin for the other. You can only distinguish in them differences of effect and quality.

It is this fact which is accepted by the best of those poets who have written for *New Verse*. It gives them certain advantages. It prevents them from that poetic inflation, which follows when a poet mistakes the product of the conflicts in himself for the gift, inspired in him, mysteriously, by some outside agent. It prevents them from too much vagueness and subjectivity of illustration in their poems, and encourages them to write in terms and images commonly understood. It drives them outward on to natural facts and forms. It encourages them to observe well, and—it is Auden's terminology—to be good reporters.

It is a very good thing for writers to be subjecting themselves in this way to a discipline of objects, and events. They deal once more with an explicable, if not with a calculable and an orderly, universe; it makes it possible for them—if they have the abilities they need, that is to say, if they are good artists and good observers—to combine in their work at one time or another all the things which make it profitable either to write or to read a poem. *On the whole, yes, on the whole, I think we agree with Byron,*

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'Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden, and Pope. Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey.'

That is Auden. He does not set up, for example, either Pure Poetry or Surrealism; and by having a material philosophy and a knowledge of previous errors to go by as well, we are, as Auden suggests, in a still better position than the Augustan poets ever were. They were watched over by a calculable God. They squared out the universe in good order by causality and put a firm fence around their low-power mysteries; and so left room for their reason, their intellectual faculties, to get to work. 'If the Augustans had the defects of their qualities, so had the Romantics. If the former sometimes came down, according to the late Professor Housman, to "singing hymns in the prison chapel"', the latter sometimes went off into extempore prayers in the county asylums.'

No doubt Augustan principles in their decay, working through mediocrity, are every bit as bad in results as Romantic principle, or absence of principles, in the same state. But I can easily show how very much better off poets are now than they were, say, twenty-five years ago, by quoting from one famous poet who was not without skill. In May 1913, when he was 25, Rupert Brooke wrote, 'I want to walk 1,000 miles, and write 1,000 plays, and sing 1,000 poems, and drink 1,000 pots of beer, and kiss 1,000 girls, and, oh, a million things.' In March 1914 (age 26) he wrote, 'All I want is life in a cottage, and leisure to write supreme poems or plays.' In April 1914, he said, 'I want to live in a hut by a river and pretend I'm Polynesian.' Then

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there were signs of a disturbance—there were signs of a war: 'I'm so uneasy—subconsciously. All the vague perils of the time—the world seems so dark—and I'm vaguely frightened' (July 1914). Finally at Christmas 1914 (age 27) he complained: 'But there's a ghastly sort of apathy over half the country. And I really think large numbers of male people don't want to die. Which is odd. I've been praying for a German raid.'

Over the two years his poems match on the whole the triviality of these sentiments. Now Brooke was not only talented: he was well thought of. He was considered, with some reason, an intellectual. It is true that he swallowed Rugby, and liked the taste; but at Cambridge, he at least paddled in mild Fabian socialism (even if to bathe he went off to the South Seas). But my object is not at all to poke fun at Rupert Brooke. No one can blame him. We can be sure that most of us would have acted in the same way, had we been brought up in the same environment, blown upon from the 'period of latency' by the same warm deceptive wind (which was really coming down off the ice ahead, like the pressure-heated föhn of Greenland).

Rupert Brooke was unlucky in his time, just as, for example, Mr. Stephen Spender (whom some one called the 'Rupert Brooke of the Depression') has been lucky, decidedly lucky, in the present time. In ability, I doubt if there is so very much between Stephen Spender and Rupert Brooke. Brooke was an optimist turned outwards (not a Blake, but a Dryden, argued his friend de la Mare:

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'his was the intellectual imagination in a rare degree'. But schoolgirls do not read Dryden). Stephen Spender on the other hand, is an agile, fluid, obviously more sensitive man, turned inwards. Had he been born like Brooke in 1887, what superlative horrors of silliness he might have committed! He would have handed himself over, no doubt, to Inspiration, to diffused religious or cosmic 'influences', or, like Yeats, to a search, via Blavatsky and the Golden Dawn, for esoteric knowledge and the Secret of the Universe. But now materialism prevents him from hunting too many chimeras of too much extravagance, it concentrates his feeling, dispatches him to the analyst, and helps him, if not to be a very skilful poet, to struggle at least towards objectivity. So if their talent is in some ways about equal, the value of Brooke to humanity is much less than the value of Stephen Spender.

If Spender had been born about 1890, nothing, I repeat, could ever have saved him. He would have frittered himself away into vagueness and reaction. Had he been born still earlier, of course, he might have been converted into a tidy enough religious world-view. Catholic poets are among the best poets of the second half of the nineteenth century, since Catholicism also put a neat fence around its very powerful mystery, and concentrated it, and allowed the interested, unbemused reason to get to work (cf. Hopkins to Bridges: 'You do not mean by mystery what a Catholic does. You mean an interesting uncertainty: the uncertainty ceasing, interest ceases also. This happens in some things; to you in religion. But a Catholic

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by mystery means an incomprehensible certainty: without certainty, without formulation there is no interest . . . the clearer the formulation the greater the interest.'). But by 1913, when Brooke was growing up, it would already have been too late for a poet to succeed through Catholicism. Conversion would have meant reaction, hysterics, and irrational fervour (cf. the poems and now *The Flowering Rifle* of Mr. Roy Campbell).

.

As far as it is possible to judge now, I should say that there were no better poets in England, after Yeats and Eliot, than Auden and Louis MacNeice. Both have this exact, material view. Both are champions of common sense. Both make familiar use of objects, though I do not think that their simple power of vision, touching, hearing, etc., is as great and as wide as would be ideal at the present moment.

Auden makes an exceedingly clever and tactful selection of facts, or events, such as a hen scratching for food or men escaping in public bars from the narrowness of their lives into expansive moments. MacNeice is aware of gleam and colour, and can make emotive use of a car brushing the cow-parsley in a lane or of the return to the delights of childhood in the first months of marriage; but MacNeice's vision, not in a bad sense, is generally superficial; and Auden's power to present an object, or a detail of shape, colour, etc., rather than an event, is limited; and these limitations also limit their power. Their relation to

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each other is something like the relationship of Dryden to Pope—Auden a dramatic poet, able to penetrate to much deeper feeling, MacNeice a quickly entertaining poet, mining much nearer the surface. Both should be called Social Realists (i.e. moral realists), but they are distinguished because their realism is much more the realism of Swift, or Dryden, or Pope, than the realism without imagination of a novelist like James Hanley, or, in another art, of a painter like William Coldstream. To be an imaginative poet, of the best kind, you need to see objects as themselves and as symbols, all at once (e.g. like Eliot, in spite of his pedantic establishment of a culture universe in which a quotation is much an object as a chair:

*A broken spring in a factory yard,
Rust that clings to the form that the strength has left
Hard and curled and ready to snap).*

You need to be able to impart ideas through objects (c.f. the apophthegm that we know no mind but an embodied mind); and, through association and rhythm, to enforce your ideas by that psychological and physiological effect of poetry, which is to make one feel most fully human, generous, selfless, and 'efficient'. Auden, in particular, is able to get these 'imaginative', or 'magic', results; but being as far as he needs to be a scientist (or an alchemist?) and knowing that the best magic and the best doggerel are *substantially* the same thing, he can expect something of the wide audience that went to Swift, Dryden, and Pope.

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His work can vary between *Gulliver's Travels* and the squib; and it is due only to the ability of Swift as a writer, that *Gulliver's Travels* are known to more people for their first, than for their double meaning.

This scientific knowledge saves Auden from fatally debasing his most profound illuminations so that they are simple, and easy, and falsified for as wide an audience as possible. His best poems appeal on two levels: you can of course take the one and leave the other; and certainly, believing, with common sense, that a poet is not a high poet all the time and the reader not a high reader all the time with his soul in view, Auden is prepared to write, or recommend, poems which fit all of one's more trivial and casual moods.

It is the poet least bent by his own nature to look at poems with common sense and most inclined by nature to be private and inflationary—Mr. Stephen Spender, in other words—who most runs down this double-barrelled way of writing. It is Mr. Spender who is most sceptical about the influence of Auden's encouragement of light verse and, I suppose, about MacNeice's contention that all language which is not scientific, that is, purely definitive without overtones (such language hardly exists, of course), is poetic language meaning more than exactly what it says. We know enough now, at any rate to be sure, or to feel sure, that this scientific, or common-sense view of poetry is the only possible one by which reason is not abused. We know that if a poem (or a mind) is more than the sum of its details and constituents, that extra something is

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explicable in material terms (or would be if we knew enough), and not in magic terms. That view is the one which governs *New Verse*; and my conception of what a poet, at his best, should be now, is some one with a moral sense who is more than ever careful to convey the inner by the outer shape of things. I agree with Louis MacNeice: 'I would have a poet able-bodied, fond of talking, a reader of the newspapers, capable of pity and laughter, informed in economics, appreciative of women, involved in personal relationships, actively interested in politics, susceptible to physical impressions.'

.

New Verse is now six years old. The anything but novel conception of poetry which I have described has gradually been elaborated and made clear during that time. I think it is possible to trace in the poems as they came out in *New Verse* this gradual emergence of a criterion, formed by an amalgam of science (in scraps), Freudian theory (in scraps), Marxist thought (in scraps), the political and economic situation in the world, the practice and precept and perspicacity of Mr. Auden (and Mr. MacNeice and Mr. Spender) and the load of reaction and attraction which the time I belong to has inherited. My own fault as the editor of *New Verse* has been the intellectual and perceptive fault of not joining up symptoms into a pattern as early and as understandingly as others; my virtue, or at least my intention, has been to reject mannerism, esotericism, electicism, and fraud;* and to print what I believed to be the

PREFACE

genuine new poetry in which were implicit the values and definitions I now find so obvious.

But I have chosen these poems from the first six years of *New Verse* for the sake of the poems, and not for the sake of anything else, or any abstraction, or for the sake of the poets: I do not wish at all to exhibit such things as the 'aims', 'variety', or 'virtuosity' of *New Verse*, or to offer my idea, by means of the poems, of what the 'tendencies' of poetry now are. If you worry in an abstract way about 'tendencies', you are being pedantic, and you are forgetting to bother about the substance of poetry.

In substance these poems do strike me as being for the most part genuine: something actual has happened to the writers, something has been sensed, imagined, understood, and the poems present the commotion set up in that way. Illuminations cannot be faked; and, as I have declared, the excellence of a genuine lyric or long poem does not degrade the different excellence for a different purpose, of a successful, and really funny limerick. It follows that this is not a collection of the highest consistent flights or the deepest consistent depths. No: if any one goes for this book, it is not a bit of good saying *really does Mr. Grigson think this is poetry or does Mr. Grigson remember his Keats, his Tennyson, his Shakespeare?* I answer, don't confuse the kinds of poetry. *Orpheus, Eurydice, Hermes, and Miss Twye* are for different occasions, or different

* I don't say there is no mannerism, eclecticism, etc. in any of these poems. Something genuine embedded in a stew of literature (e.g. Prokosch) is better than the pure bogus modernism, e.g., of so much American poetry.

PREFACE

states of mind, not different readers. The time is 1939, and over for arguing that one *is* poetry and the other is not.

And whatever may be the quality of our best poems now in the highest kind of poetry, I am sure of one thing: we know with more exactitude, with more health, and less pretentiousness and priggishness how poems come about and how poets should be related to people. We know what a variety of different things some one who can write is free to write. I always judge poetry, first, by its relation to current speech, the language in which one is angry about Spain or in which one is pleasant or unpleasant to one's wife. I judge every poem written now, by poets under forty, by the degree to which it takes notice, for ends not purely individual, of the universe of objects and events.

GEOFFREY GRIGSON

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CECIL DAY LEWIS

THE CONFLICT

I sang as one
Who on the tilting deck sings
To keep their courage up, though the wave hangs
That shall cut off their sun.

And as the storm-cocks sing
Flinging their natural answer in the wind's teeth,
And care not if it is waste of breath
Or birth-carol of spring.

As the ocean-flyer clings
To height, to the last drop of spirit driving on,
While yet ahead is land to be won
And work for wings.

Singing I was at peace,
Above the clouds, outside the ring;
For sorrow finds a swift release in song
And pride its poise.

Yet living here,
As one between two massing powers I live
Whom neutrality cannot save
Nor occupation cheer.

CECIL DAY LEWIS

None such shall be left alive:
The innocent wing is soon shot down
And private stars fade in the blood-red dawn
Where two worlds strive.

The red advance, of life
Contracts pride, calls out the common blood,
Beats song into a single blade,
Makes a depth-charge of grief.

Move then with new desires,
For where we used to build and love
Is no man's land, and only ghosts can live
Between two fires.

E. V. SWART

CASEY JONES

Casey Jones has left today,
The decision was made in a desperate way,
Short as a wire and quick as a plane
And he isn't going to see any of you again.
There was no kind of good in staying on
When the delight was gone.

His hand at the welding was unsteady for months,
And the boss came very near sacking him once.
No rain for weeks; the old mower in pawn,
It was an impossible pastime cutting the lawn.
There was no kind of good in staying on
When the delight was gone.

Cries in the head were making him light,
He found it difficult sleeping at night,
The warmth of the women was a shocking reward,
And their unfortunate wishes were growing weird.
There was no kind of good in staying on
When the delight was gone.

O where did he head for? The wind in the wood,
And the goat on the tether was coughing up blood,
The clock on the church was pointing at ten
As he passed by the women and he left the men.
There was no kind of good in staying on
When the delight was gone.

O where was he going? He didn't quite know,
For vague as a bandage the infected go,
And the mind must follow the deceived decision
Of the night before and the dream's incision.
There was no kind of good in staying on
When the delight was gone.

BERNARD SPENCER

ALLOTMENTS: APRIL

Cobbled with rough stone which rings my tread
The path twists through the squared allotments.
Blinking to glimpse the lark in the warming sun,
In what sense am I joining in
Such a hallooing, rousing April day,
Now that the hedges are so gracious and
Stick out at me moist buds, small hands, their opening
scrolls and fans?

Lost to some of us the festival joy
At the bursting of the tomb, the seasonal mystery,
God walking again who lay all winter
As if in those long barrows built in the fields
To keep the root-crops warm. On squires' lawns
The booted dancers twirl. But what I hear
Is spade slice in pebbled earth, swinging the nigger-
coloured loam.

And the love-songs, the medieval grace,
The fluting lyrics, 'The only pretty ring-time',
These have stopped singing. For love detonates like sap
Up into the limbs of men and bears all the seasons
And the starving and the cutting and hunts terribly
through lives
To find its peace. But April comes as
Beast-smell flung from the fields, the hammers, the loud-
speaking weir.

BERNARD SPENCER

The rough voices of boys playing by the hedge,
As manly as possible, their laughter, the big veins
Sprawled over the beet-leaf, light-red fires
Of flower pots heaped by the huts; they make a pause in
The wireless voice repeating pacts, persecutions,
And imprisonments and deaths and heaped violent deaths,
Impersonal now as figures in the city news.

Behind me, the town curves. Its parapeted edge,
With its burnt look, guards towards the river.
The worry about money, the eyeless work
Of those who do not believe, real poverty,
The sour doorways of the poor; April which
Delights the trees and fills the roads to the South,
Does not deny or conceal. Rather it adds

What more I am; excites the deep glands
And warms my animal bones as I go walking
Past the allotments and the singing water-meadows
Where hooves of cattle have plodded and cratered, and
Watch to-day go up like a single breath
Holding in its applause at masts of height
Two elms and their balanced attitude like dancers, their
arms like dancers.

POEM

The old man bearded with illness weakens upstairs.
My sister who is great with child
Speaks of our early long days
In the house with the fig-tree in the garden;
We speak of what the nurses taught
And the schools that teach our class,
Of what friends we had,
Of theatres, difference that money made.
My sister great with child, and the old man dying upstairs.

Across our stroke-by-stroke built-up picture
And, since, our eating with new friends
And turning upon new living-ways
As if exploring a turning stream,
Our laughing, travelling at different times;
Memory of gross South and North,
Making big slash and score
With asleep, hurting, and death and birth
Scrawls in comment which way the master-winds wear.

EVASIONS

How many times have you smiled a reckoning smile
Either when there was some question of money
Or to humour one of the dead who live around?
—Oh, but that's been going on since the world began.

How many times face to face with your lover
Have you housed apart contracted with fear and cunning
Hidden from the body and that violent weather?
—Oh, but that's been going on since the fall of man.

How many times smelling the smell of poverty
Have you tired and turned for good to your cornfield and
 garden
(And cornfield and garden grew foul pods and rotted)?
Oh, but that's been going on since the world began.

A COLD NIGHT

Thick wool is muslin to-night, and the wire
Wind scorches stone-cold colder. Boys
Tremble at counters of shops. The world
Gets lopped at the radius of my fire.

Only for a moment I think of those
Whom the weather leans on under the sky;
Newsmen with placards by the river's skirt,
Stamping, or with their crouching pose,

The whores; the soldiery who lie
Round wounded Madrid; those of less hurt
Who cross that bridge I crossed to-day
Where the waves snap white as broken plates

And the criss-cross girders hammer a grill
Through which, instead of flames, wind hates.

I turn back to my fire. Which I must.
I am not God or a crazed woman.
And one needs time too to sit in peace
Opposite one's girl, with food, fire, light,

And do the work one's own blood heats,
Or talk, and forget about the winter
—This season, this century—and not be always
Opening one's doors on the pitiful streets

BERNARD SPENCER

Of Europe, not always think of winter, winter, like a
hammering rhyme

For then everything is drowned by the rising wind, every-
thing is done against Time.

PART OF PLENTY

When she carries food to the table and stoops down
—Doing this out of love—and lays soup with its good
Tickling smell, or fry winking from the fire
And I look up, perhaps from a book I am reading
Or other work: there is an importance of beauty
Which can't be accounted for by there and then,
And attacks me, but not separately from the welcome
Of the food, or the grace of her arms.

When she puts a sheaf of tulips in a jug
And pours in water and presses to one side
The upright stems and leaves that you hear creak,
Or loosens them, or holds them up to show me,
So that I see the tangle of their necks and cups
With the curls of her hair, and the body they are held
Against, and the stalk of the small waist rising
And flowering in the shape of breasts;
Whether in the bringing of the flowers or the food
She offers plenty, and is part of plenty,
And whether I see her stooping, or leaning with the
flowers,
What she does is ages old, and she is not simply,
No, but lovely in that way.

A THOUSAND KILLED

I read of a thousand killed.
And am glad because the scrounging imperial paw
Was there so bitten:
As a man at elections is thrilled
When the results pour in, and the North goes with him
And the West breaks in the thaw.

(That fighting was a long way off.)

Forgetting therefore an election
Being fought with votes and lies and catch-cries
And orator's frowns and flowers and posters' noise,
Is paid for with cheques and toys:
Wars the most glorious
Victory-winged and steeple-uproarious
. . . With the lives, burned-off,
Of young men and boys.

WAITING

To sit in the heavily curtained, old ladyish, waiting-room
While upstairs the gloved surgeon operates on a loved
 one,
Imagined as candle-still and unlike life, in the brilliant
Gas-sweet theatre. To listen to the clock's 'Doubt, doubt',
 and to hear
The metal of the knives made ready; and not to know any
 news;
 That helpless fear.

Is it like that bad dream of knives, our counting the years
Our listening to rumours until the guns begin and our
 volted
Delight in creating, our love, our famous words, and the
 personal
Order of our lives is devoured when our streets become a
 furnace?
I think so in times of despair, and the good in our random
 culture
 Woundable as a man is.

Yet know that from our crisis leads no white stair to a shut
Door and the deftness of another's hands. What sickness
 threatens
Our freedom to lounge In the green world, to be happy
 beneath the

BERNARD SPENCER

Clocks of its cities we largely know. If we live we have the
pride

To be capable of action, to speak out plainly. The wise and
passionate

Are on our side.

PHILIP O'CONNOR

POEMS

1

1780 a.d. in the street they flung foam about and a young
funny gentleman poured the juices of a ton of blood oranges
down upon the people

the iron cockerel on St. Dunstan's spun round after hens
of the air and worried the frosty smoke with his dark alar-
ums

they rushed down the lane without breaking glass or dig-
ging mounds then thundered into the midst of the newly
unleashed Sunday Express very red after a long night jour-
ney and crowded with gesticulating poetesses

2

1066 a.d. the saxon put his foot upon the ground the five
women fell upon him but he put his foot upon the ground
Norman William put his boats upon the sea to take him to
England where he put his foot upon the ground once landed
and his multitudinous strong and skilled men shew suffi-
cient to take Britain which they did

3

the high man faced the London crowd from the plinth of
Nelson's Column wagged his mighty finger at six hundred
thousand white faces grouped in a posy of living humanity

I am he howled
you are they whispered like the knocking of clouds
handsome Nelson swayed in the gale and the cold pigeons
rested upon his shoulder

4

gravely the assembled chimney-stacks walked into the high
street where the various wombs were displaying unborn
children in Midnight Market

5

Captain Busby put his beard in his mouth and sucked it,
then took it out and spat on it then put it in and sucked it
then walked on down the street thinking hard.
Suddenly he put his wedding-ring in his trilby hat and put
the hat on a passing kitten. Then he carefully calculated
the width of the pavement with a pair of adjustable sugar-
tongs. This done he knitted his brows. Then he walked on
thinking hard

6

Captain Busted Busby frowned hard at a passing ceiling
and fixed his eye upon a pair of stationary taxis. Suddenly
he went up to one of them and addressed himself to the
driver. He discharged his socks and continued whistling.
The taxi saluted but he put up with it, and puckered a re-
signed mouth and knitted a pair of thoughtful eyebrows.

7

M. looking out of his window with purple curtains saw Captain Busby thoughtfully chewing a less impatient portion of his walking-stick unostentatiously against a lamp-post. The road was blue but Captain Busby seemed a very dark green with ivory face (for it was night time). He frowned. He looked up to the top of the rapidly emptying street. He cut his hair slowly. He looked at the bottom of the street. He made rapid measurements with a pair of adjustable sugar-tongs. These he afterwards secreted in his trousers. He then flew into his friend's apartment through the willingly opened window.

8

Marcella waited for her lover outside a public house known to both of them. Immediately Captain Busby appeared holding a woman in his arms. This wasn't true thought Marcella carefully, and was relieved to see that God had thrown a lamp-post at the Captain, temporarily disabling him.

9

He arranged himself in sugar and put himself in his bath and prepared to breathe his last

his four bottles lay grouped around him

do your duty in this world and gather dividends from the
dog thrown at you

goodbye my children

and he died and they huskily nailed down his coffin
and put it in ten feet of sod
and grouped around him reading the will

for indeed and forever would he be
to them
just dad

10

Mother lay crying in the withdrawing room
bitterly bewailing cruel fate who with a flick of his pen
had so completely shattered the even tenour of her ways

sobbed upon the brick platform shaking her fist at every
porter who passed
declaring cruel fate who with a flick of his pen
had so cruelly broken
the even tenour of her ways

11

she considered the porter with the cap on the side of his
head fitfully
who had squandered his sweet-peas upon her
who had ridden every train and blown all whistles
to feast his evil frontal eyes on her to break the even tenour
of her ways

she shunted her back to him
she put on her large black hat with insolent vulgarity
and deliberately smirked into his face

he was busy
he was doing his duty
he rattled the cans
he gave out composed answers to the backchat following
his curt commands
he went on with his duty forgetting
that he had broken the even tenour of her ways

She walked thoughtfully upon a sugar-box
and would there and then have harangued the station officials
to compel the attention of the porter

but he did not
but he could not
but he did not
and could not should as he had broken the even tenour of
her ways
she thrust a carrot into his face
he gravely took it and handed it without moving a muscle
of his face
to the dominant personality of the station
the station master himself

events moved indefatigably to their long-awaited climax
the station master seized the carrot and conveyed it to a
drawer

PHILIP O'CONNOR

reserved for matters of importance
and seizing a document asserting his credentials and au-
thority
motored along the platform and alighted at the lady

madam he said coldly
your carrot is in the drawer
pray come for it or suitable measures will be taken to en-
force
the union of yourself and the personality
who broke the even tenour of your ways

lightning juggled above the station portraying its grim
battlements
thunder crashed upon the assembled people
she threw three flashes of self-possessed rays
at him from her large radiant eyes
she ran to the drawer refusing the automobile
she snatched abruptly at the carrot
scenting with inexorable female intuition the precise posi-
tion afforded it by reason of its pre-eminent signifi-
cance
she ran from the room like a bitten wounded thing
and fell laughing upon the station master who had broken
the even
tenour of her ways

POEM

The clock ticks on; the wild-fingered hand
of a dark wet evening strokes the face
and combs the hair out-of-doors,
and traffic and expressions are woof and warp
of a cruelly-clear understanding. The people drag a train of
ancient monsters,
cumbrous shadows with banners
of factory hours and weekly wage. Sirens of contempt
whistle in the incidental phrase
and the metre of a force prepared to impel a change
gives words the white outline of chairs seen in fainting,
here we have a room of drastic furniture waiting the re-
mover's approach
(and he comes solemn as two girders
in a bridge, intent as the dead timber floating under it).

No foaming running cloud of the night
can disengage hysteria locked in the pounding heart
slowly rejoining the serene wide-open eye.

LOUIS MACNEICE

TRAIN TO DUBLIN

Our half-thought thoughts divide in sifted wisps
Against the basic facts repatterned without pause,
I can no more gather my mind up in my fist
Than the shadow of the smoke of this train upon the grass—
This is the way that animals' lives pass.

The train's rhythm never relents, the telephone posts
Go striding backwards like the legs of time to where
In a Georgian house you turn at the carpet's edge
Turning a sentence while, outside my window here,
The smoke makes broken queries in the air.

The train keeps moving and the rain holds off,
I count the buttons on the seat, I hear a shell
Held hollow to the ear, the mere
Reiteration of integers, the bell
That tolls and tolls, the monotony of fear.

At times we are doctrinaire, at times we are frivolous
Plastering over the cracks, a gesture making good
But the strength of us does not come out of us,
It is we, I think, are the idols and it is God
Has set us up as men who are painted wood.

And the trains carry us about. But not consistently so
For during a tiny portion of our lives we are not in trains

LOUIS MACNEICE

The idol living for a moment, not muscle-bound
But walking freely through the slanting rain
Its ankles wet, its grimace relaxed again.

All over the world people are toasting the King
Red lozenges of light as each one lifts his glass
But I will not give you any idol or idea, creed or king,
I give you the incidental things which pass
Outwards through space exactly as each was.

I give you the disproportion between labour spent
And joy at random; the laughter of the Galway sea
Juggling with spars and bones irresponsibly,
I give you the toy Liffey and the vast gulls
I give you fuchsia hedges and whitewashed walls.

I give you the smell of Norman stone, the squelch
Of bog beneath your boots, the red bog-grass,
The vivid chequer of the Antrim hills, the trough of
dark
Golden water for the carthorses, the brass
Belt of serene sun upon the lough.

And I give you the faces, not the permanent masks
But the faces balanced in the toppling wave—
His glint of joy in cunning as the farmer asks
Twenty per cent too much, or a girl's, forgetting to be
suave,
A tiro choosing stuffs, preferring mauve.

LOUIS MACNEICE

And I give you the sea and yet again the sea's
Tumultuous marble.

With Thor's thunder or taking his ease akimbo
Lumbering torso, but finger-tips a marvel
Of surgeon's accuracy.

I would like to give you more but I cannot hold
This stuff within my hands and the train goes on—
I know that there are subtler syntheses to which,
As you have perhaps, people at last attain
And find that they are rich and breathing gold.

POEM

(Even so it is not so easy to be dead)

As those who are not athletic at breakfast day by day
Employ and enjoy the sinews of others vicariously,
Shielded by the upheld journal from their dream-punctur-
ing wives
And finding in the printed word a multiplication of their
lives,
So we whose senses give us things misfelt and misheard
Turn also, for our adjustment, to the pretentious word
Which stabilizes the light on the sun-fondled trees
And, by photographing our ghosts, claims to put us at our
ease;
Yet even so, no matter how solid and staid we contrive
Our reconstructions, even a still life is alive
And in your Chardin the appalling unrest of the soul
Exudes from the dried fish and the brown jug and the
bowl.

AUGUST A LA POUSSIN

The shutter of time darkening ceaselessly
Has whisked away the foam of may and elder
And I realize how now, as every year before,
Once again the gay months have eluded me.

For the mind, by nature stagy, welds its frame
Tomb-like around each little world of a day;
We jump from picture to picture and cannot follow
The living curve that is breathlessly the same.

While the lawn-mower sings moving up and down
Spiriting its little fountain of vivid green,
I, like Poussin, make a still-bound fête of us
Suspending every noise, of insect or machine.

Garlands at a set angle that do not slip
Theatrically (and as if for ever) grace
You and me and the stone god in the garden
And Time who also is shown with a stone face.

But all this is a dilettante's lie.
Time's face is not stone nor still his wings,
Our mind, being dead, wishes to have time die
For we being ghosts cannot catch hold of things.

POEM

Among these turf-stacks graze no iron horses
Such as stalk such as champ in towns and the soul of
crowds,
Here is no mass-production of neat thoughts
No canvas shrouds for the mind nor any black hearses:
The peasant shambles on his boots like hooves
Without thinking at all or wanting to run in grooves.

But those who lack the peasant's conspirators
The tawny mountain, the unregarded buttress,
Will feel the need of a fortress against ideas and against the
Shuddering insidious shock of the theory-vendors
The little sardine men crammed in a monster toy
Who tilt their aggregate beast against our crumbling
Troy.

For we are obsolete who like the lesser things,
Who play in corners with looking-glasses and beads;
It is better we should go quickly, go into Asia
Or any other tunnel where the world recedes,
Or turn blind wantons like the gulls who scream
And rip the edge off any ideal or dream.

WOLVES

I do not want to be reflective any more
Envyng and despising unreflective things
Finding pathos in dogs and undeveloped handwriting
And young girls doing their hair and all the castles of sand
Flushed, by the children's bedtime, level with the shore.

The tide comes in and goes out again, I do not want
To be always stressing either its flux or its permanence,
I do not want to be a tragic or philosophic chorus
But to keep my eye only on the nearer future
And after that let the sea flow over us.

Come then all of you, come closer, form a circle
Join hands and make believe that joined
Hands will keep away the wolves of water
Who howl along our coast. And be it assumed
That no one hears them among the talk and laughter.

POEM

Shall we remember the jingles of the morning,
The pipers, the pedlars and the brass farthings,
The buds of music, the imagined darlings?
No, we shall *not* remember.

Shall we remember the games with puffball and plantain,
Searching for the lost handle to the silent fountain,
Hiding in the shrubbery, shutting our eyes and counting?

Shall we remember the marigolds parading,
Smell of grass and noise of the corncrake railing
And the fun of dragging a stick along the paling?

And after that shall we remember the races,
The broken tape, the clamour of companions' voices,
The schoolboy's callow joys in smut and curses?

And shall we remember our early adult pleasure,
The dive in love's lagoon of brilliant azure,
The gay martyrdom, the brave fantasia?

Shall we remember the kick of inspired religion,
The visions in drink, the feel of the homing pigeon,
Drawn by a magnet to an intuited region?

LOUIS MACNEICE

Shall we remember the noise of the moving nations
Or shall we remember the gusty sun's creations,
The night and the never-to-be-climbed-to constellations?
No, we shall *not* remember.

AN ECLOGUE FOR CHRISTMAS

A: I meet you in an evil time.

B: The evil bells

Put out of our heads, I think, the thought of everything
else.

A: The jaded calendar revolves

Its nuts need oil, carbon chokes the valves,

The excess sugar of a diabetic culture

Rotting the nerve of life and literature;

Therefore when we bring out the old tinsel and frills

To announce that Christ is born among the barbarous
hills

I turn to you whom a morose routine

Saves from the mad vertigo of being what has been.

B: Analogue of me, you are wrong to turn to me,

My country will not yield you any sanctuary,

There is no pinpoint in any of the ordnance maps

To save you when your towns and town-bred thoughts
collapse,

It is better to die in situ as I shall,

One place is as bad as another. Go back where your
instincts call

And listen to the crying of the town-cats and the taxis
again

Or wind your gramophone and eavesdrop on great men.

A: Jazz-weary of years of drums and Hawaiian guitar

Pivoting on the parquet I seem to have moved far

LOUIS MACNEICE

From bombs and mud and gas have stuttered on my feet
Clinched to the streamlined and butter-smooth trulls
of the élite

The lights irritating and gyrating and rotating in
gauze—

Pomade-dazzle, a slick beauty of gewgaws—

I who was Harlequin in the childhood of the century

Posed by Picasso beside an endless opaque sea

Have seen myself sifted and splintered in broken facets

Tentative pencillings, endless liabilities, no assets,

Abstractions scalpelled with a palette-knife

Without reference to this particular life

And so it has gone on, I have not been allowed to be

Myself in flesh or face, but abstracting and dissecting me

They have made of me pure form, a symbol or a pas-
tiche,

Stylized profile, anything but soul and flesh:

And that is why I turn this jaded music on

To forswear thought and become an automaton.

B: There are in the country also of whom I am afraid—

Men who put beer into a belly that is dead

Women in the forties with terrier and setter who
whistle and swank

Over down and plough and Roman road and daisied
bank

Half-conscious that these barriers over which they
stride

Are nothing to the barbed wire that has grown round
their pride.

LOUIS MACNEICE

A: And two there are, as I drive in the city, who suddenly
perturb—

The one sirening me to draw up by the kerb

The other, as I lean back, my right leg stretched creat-
ing speed,

Making me catch and stamp, the brakes shrieking, pull
up dead:

She wears silk stockings taunting the winter wind

He carries a white stick to mark that he is blind.

B: In the country they are still hunting, in the heavy shires
Greyness is on the fields and sunset like a line of pyres
Of barbarous heroes smoulders through the ancient
air

Hazed with factory dust and, orange opposite, the
moon's glare

Goggling yokel-stubborn through the iron trees

Jeers at the end of us, our bland ancestral ease;

We shall go down like palaeolithic man

Before some new Ice Age or Genghiz Khan.

A: It is time for some new coinage, people have got so old
Hacked and handled and shiny from pocketing they
have made bold

To think that each is himself through these accidents,
being blind

To the fact that they are merely the counters of an un-
known Mind.

B: A Mind that does not think, if such a thing can be,
Mechanical Reason, capricious Identity.

That I could be able to face this domination nor flinch—

LOUIS MACNEICE

A: The tin toys of the hawker move on the pavement inch
by inch

Not knowing that they are wound up; it is better to
be so

Than to be, like us, wound up and while running down
to know.

B: But everywhere the pretence of individuality recurs—

A: Old faces frosted with powder and choked in furs

B: The jutlipped farmer gazing over the humpbacked wall

A: The commercial traveller joking in the urinal

B: I think things draw to an end, the soil is stale

A: And over-elaboration will nothing now avail,

The street is up again, gas, electricity or drains,

Ever-changing conveniences, nothing comfortable re-
mains

Un-improved, as flagging Rome improved villa and sewer
(A sound-proof library and a stable temperature)

Our street is up, red lights sullenly mark

The long trench of pipes, iron guts in the dark,

And not till the Goths again come swarming down the
hill

Will cease the clangour of the electric drill.

But yet there is beauty narcotic and deciduous

In this vast organism grown out of us,

On all the traffic-islands stand white globes like moons

The city's haze is clouded amber that purrs and croons

And tilting by the noble curve bus after tall bus comes

With an osculation of yellow light, with a glory like
chrysanthemums.

LOUIS MACNEICE

B: The country gentry cannot change, they will die in their
shoes

From angry circumstance and moral self-abuse
Dying with a paltry fizzle they will prove their lives to
be

An ever-diluted drug, a spiritual tautology.
They cannot live once their idols are turned out
None of them can endure, for how could they, possibly,
without

The flotsam of private property, pekingese and poly-
anthus

The good things which in the end turn to poison and
pus,

Without the bandy chairs and the sugar in the silver
tongs

And the inter-ripple and resonance of years of dinner-
gongs

Or if they could find no more that cumulative proof
In the rain dripping off the conservatory roof?

What will happen when the only sanction the country-
dweller has—

A: What will happen to us, planked and panelled with
jazz?

Who go to the theatre where a black man dances like
an eel

Where pink thighs flash like the spokes of a wheel,
where we feel

That we know in advance all the jogtrot and the cake-
walk jokes

LOUIS MACNEICE

All the bumfun and the gags of the comedians in boaters
and toques

All the tricks of the virtuosos who invert the usual—

B: What will happen to us when the State takes down the
manor wall

When there is no more private shooting or fishing,
when the trees are all cut down

When faces are all dials and cannot smile or frown—

A: What will happen when the sniggering machine-guns in
the hands of the young men

Are trained on every flat and club and beauty parlour
and Father's den?

What will happen when our civilization like a long pent
balloon—

B: What will happen will happen; the whore and the buf-
foon

Will come off best; no dreamers, they cannot lose their
dream

And are at least likely to be reinstated in the new ré-
gime

But one thing is not likely—

A: Do not gloat over yourself

Do not be your own vulture, high on some mountain
shelf

Huddle the pitiless abstractions bald about the neck

Who will descend when you crumple in the plains a
wreck.

Over the randy of the theatre and cinema I hear songs
Unlike anything—

LOUIS MACNEICE

B: The lady of the house poises the silver tongs
And picks a lump of sugar, 'ne plus ultra' she says
'I cannot do otherwise, even to prolong my days'—

A: I cannot do otherwise either, to-night, I will book my
seat—

B: I will walk about the farm-yard which is replete
As with the smell of dung so with memories—

A: I will gorge myself to satiety with the oddities
Of every artiste, official or amateur,
Who has pleased me in my role of hero-worshipper
Who has pleased me in my role of individual man—

B: Let us lie once more, say, 'what we think, we can'
The old Idealist lie—

A: And for me before I die
Let me go the round of the garish glare—

B: And on the bare and high
Places of England, the Wiltshire Downs and the Long
Mynd

Let the balls of my feet bounce on the turf, my face
burn in the wind

My eyelashes stinging in the wind, and the sheep like
grey stones

Humble my human pretensions—

A: Let the saxophones and the xylophones
And the cult of every technical excellence, the miles of
canvas in the galleries

And the canvas of the rich man's yacht snapping and
tacking on the seas

And the perfection of a grilled steak—

LOUIS MACNEICE

B: Let all these so ephemeral things
Be somehow permanent like the swallow's tangent
wings:
Goodbye to you, this day remember is Christmas, this
morn
They say, interpret it your own way, Christ is born.

BAGPIPE MUSIC

It's no go the merry-go-round, It's no go the rickshaw,
All we want is a limousine and a ticket for the peepshow.
Their knickers are made of crêpe-de-chine, their shoes are
made of python,
Their halls are lined with tiger rugs and their walls with
heads of bison.

John MacDonald found a corpse, put it under the sofa,
Waited till it came to life and hit it with a poker,
Sold its eyes for souvenirs, sold its blood for whisky,
Kept its bones for dumb-bells to use when he was fifty.

It's no go the Yogi-Man, it's no go Blavatsky,
All we want is a bank balance and a bit of skirt in a taxi.

Annie MacDougall went to milk, caught her foot in the
heather,
Woke to hear a dance record playing of Old Vienna.
It's no go your maidenheads, it's no go your culture,
All we want is a Dunlop tyre and the devil mend the puncture.

The Laird o' Phelps spent Hogmanay declaring he was
sober,

LOUIS MACNEICE

Counted his feet to prove the fact and found he had one
foot over.

Mrs. Carmichael had her fifth, looked at the job with re-
pulsion,
Said to the midwife 'Take it away; I'm through with over-
production'.

It's no go the gossip column, it's no go the Céilidh,
All we want is a mother's help and a sugar-stick for the
baby.

Willie Murray cut his thumb, couldn't count the damage,
Took the hide of an Ayrshire cow and used it for a ban-
dage.
His brother caught three hundred cran when the seas were
lavish,
Threw the bleeders back in the sea and went upon the
parish.

It's no go the Herring Board, it's no go the Bible,
All we want is a packet of fags when our hands are idle.

It's no go the picture palace, it's no go the stadium,
It's no go the country cot with a pot of pink geraniums.
It's no go the Government grants, it's no go the elections,
Sit on your arse for fifty years and hang your hat on a pen-
sion.

LOUIS MACNEICE

It's no go my honey love, it's no go my poppet;
Work your hands from day to day, the winds will blow the
profit.

The glass is falling hour by hour, the glass will fall for ever,
But if you break the bloody glass you won't hold up the
weather.

GEORGE BARKER

EPISTLE TO D. T.

Meeting a monster of mourning wherever I go
Who crosses me at evening and morning also,
For whom are you miserable I ask and he murmurs
I am miserable for innumerable man: for him
Who wanders through Woolworth's gazing at tin stars;
I mourn the maternal future tense, Time's mother,
Who has him in her lap, and I mourn also her,
Time whose dial face flashes with scars.

I gave the ghost my money and he smiled and said,
Keep it for the eyeballs of the dead instead.
Why here, I asked, why is it here you come
Breaking into the evening line going to another,
Edging your axe between my pencil fingers,
Twisting my word from a comedy to a crime?
I am the face once seen never forgotten
Whose human look your dirty page will smother.

I know what it was, he said, that you were beginning:
The rigmarole of private life's belongings
Birth, boyhood, and the adolescent baloney. So I say
Good go ahead, and see what happens then.
I promise you horror shall stand in your shoes,
And when your register of youth is through
What will it be but about the horror of man?
Try telling about birth and observe the issue.

GEORGE BARKER

Epping Forest where the deer and girls
Mope like lost ones looking for Love's gaols,
Among the dilapidated glades my mother wanders
With me as kid, and sadly we saw
The deer in the rain near the trees, the leaf-hidden shit,
The Sunday papers, and the foliage's falling world;
I not knowing nothing was our possession,
Not knowing Poverty my position.

Epping Forest glugged with the green tree
Grew up again like a sea wood inside me.
I had the deer browsing on my heart
This was my mother; and I had the dirt.
Inside was well with the green well of love,
Outside privation, poverty, all dearth.
Thus like the pearl I came from hurt,
Like the prize pig I came from love.

Now I know what was wanting in my youth,
It was not water or a loving mouth.
It was what makes the apple tree grow big,
The mountain fall, and the minnow die.
It was hard cash I needed at my root.
I now know that how I grew was due
To echoing guts and the empty bag,
My song was out of tune for a few notes.

Oh, my ghost cried, the charming chimes of coincidence!
I was born also there where distress collects the rents!

GEORGE BARKER

Guttersnipe gutless, I was planted in your guts there,
The tear of time my sperm. I rose from
The woe-womb of the poverty-raped mind,
The empty hunger large with air's thunder.
Remember the rags that flattered your frame
Froze hard and formed this skin my rind.

So close over the chapter of my birth
Blessed by distress, baptized by dearth.
How I swung myself from the tree's bough
Demonstrating death in my gay play,
How the germ of the sperm of this ghost like a worm
I caught from the cold comfort of never enough:
How by being miserable for myself I began,
And now am miserable for the mass of man.

ELEGY NO. I

Those occasions involving the veering of axles
When the wheel's bloody spikes like Arabian armaments
Release Passchendaele on us because it is time, bring
Also with blood to the breast the boon to the bosom:
I saw it happen, had near me the gun and the tear.
Those occasions are all elegiac. The wheel and the wish
Turn in a turtle the chaos of life. It is death,
Death like roulette turning our wish to its will.

I see a scene with a smother of snow over Love.
I know Spring shall arise and later the swallow return;
I know, but my torso stands bogged in a load of time,
Like Love lying under the smother of our death and our
Dread. How soon shall the Spring bird arise and the
Summer bells hum with the murmur of our name?

 Soon, soon,
Soon the green room goes blue with the last autumn.

I sip at suicide in bedrooms or dare pessimistic stars,
Keep pigeons with messages or make tame apes
Commemorate in mine the master you who must go:
Or commit crimes of rage or rape to ease the ache:
I promise these cannot precipitate fate. No,
To-morrow it is not, it is not to-day, it is not
Wednesday or Thursday. It is the greatest day.

GEORGE BARKER

That morning not the rose shall rise or dog dance,
Kings with conscience and queens with child sleep long
For duty is useless; the soldier and sailor glance
Down at their guns with a grin, but they are wrong.
The dodo shall rule for a moment and the Thames
Remember: Invalids and paralytics shall sing,
 'No more, no more!'
I shall hear the ceremony of heaven and God's roar.

What awaits is the veer of the lever and wheel
When the hands cross at midnight and noon, and the future
Sweeps on with a sigh—but on this occasion Time
Swells like a wave at a wall and bursts to eternity.
I await when the engine of lilies and lakes and love
Reaching its peak of power blows me sky high, and I
 Come down to rest
On the shape I made in the ground where I used to lie.

O widow, do not weep, do not weep! Or wife
Cry in the corner of the window with a child by,—
Look how Tottenham and the Cotswolds, with
More mass than a man, lie easy under the sky,
Also anticipating change they cannot understand.
'I have heaven a haven in my hand,' say,
 Like the boy
Cornering butterflies or nothing in cupped hands.

The tragedy is Time foreshadowing its climax.
Thus in the stage of time the minor moth is small

GEORGE BARKER

But prophesies the Fokker with marvellous wings
Mottled with my sun's gold and your son's blood.
The crazy anthropoid crawls on time's original
Which casts him, giant, on the contemporary scene:
 That spreadeagled shadow
Havocs with horror the green Abyssinian meadow.

Lovers on Sunday in the rear seats of cinemas
Kiss deep and dark, for is it the last kiss?
Children sailing on swings in municipal parks
Swing high, swing high into the reach of the sky,
Leave, leave the sad star that is about to die.
Laugh, my comedians, who may not laugh again—
 Soon, soon,
Soon Jeremiah Job will be walking among men.

ELEGY NO. 2

But among the broken glasses and the ticking of the
gramophone,
From the divans where sex spreads an odour of late last
night,
Disturbing the collection of fashionable periodicals, yes,
Life like Aphrodite rises
Scattering to-morrows and shattering yesterdays, rises,
Rises from the cushions on which my youth has died,
Promising impossible prizes
She dares me to swear that she is the one who will die.

But I shall take her through the autumnal orchards
Where apples like dried worms dangle from the branches;
Or to the cornfield where the barking tractor has
Shorn off the glory of auburn July: or show her
The waiter magpie yesterday picking up tanners
Now dead on my lawn, a gorgeous mess of feathers.
But she will lift her hand
Defeating funerals with a mere flourish of fingers.

What cyst of poison drips on to my heart that
So soon the mad spectacle of monstrosities in motion
Turns to a carnival, all joy and light, in a moment?
I regard the neutral stars
Now casting their chaplet of light on the Channel,

GEORGE BARKER

Spangling my trees with October's prophecies:

 O pirouetting Pavlovas

Who fill heaven with dying swans of Peace!

Also my Hibernian heart, gone with the winter swallow,

Returns with the first imitation May morning and poises

Improvising too happy rhapsodies upon my shoulders,

 Gulled at Time's feint:

So I spring up in April joy from December,

As over my head I hear the dancers of fata morgana

Clashing their tambourines in anticipation:

 To-morrow is carnivals.

Thus alternate day and dark that when I lie

Like evening Venus naked on the fall of day,

Life is false planes shimmering in shadows

To which I fade when sleep shuts down my shade.

 O bogus fires

Like the gold glow-worm who guides me to dangers

I'll be the moth who finds a phoenix in fire:

 My to be dead desire.

If I could penetrate future with a false alarm,

 Whom should I raise from lazybone tombs

 But those whom I most love and most harm?

No, for I should bring to them other times,

 The remembrance of remoter themes;

 I could not so dazzle with their dreams

 My eternal yearners for other homes.

KATHLEEN RAINE

MATERNAL GRIEF

I am not human,
I am not human,
Nor am I divine.

To whom,
To whom can I cry
'I am thine'?

I have picked my grandsire's corpse to the bone,
I have found no ghost in brisket or chine.

I shed the blood of my female kin,
But they never return to speak again.

I am not human,
I am not human,
How shall I feed my hungry children?

I make the porridge of meal and wine
And pour it out in the troughs for swine.

The ghosts are hungry, the ghosts are divine,
But the pigs eat the meal, the priests drink the wine.

LYRIC

A bird sings on a matin tree
'Once such a bird was I'

The sky's gaze says
'Remember your mother'

Seas, trees and voices cry
'Nature is your nature'

I reply,
'I am what is not what it was'.
Seas, trees, and bird, alas!
Sea, tree and bird was I.

EASTER POEM

The spring shall rouse my buried Lord,
See him evacuate the loam,
Oh man, oh man, how thin you've grown.

The sun shall summon up his own,
His gown is white, his skin is brown,
But man, oh man, how thin you've grown.

Did you suffer life in vain?
Your lips are sealed, your mind is gone,
Oh man, oh man, how thin you've grown.

Rivers have washed away his brain,
His bones are rocks, he feels no pain,
But man, oh Lord, how thin you've grown.

FREDERIC PROKOSCH

THE MASKS

Some sit by ferns and gaze across their valley
Counting the swallows loving on the gravel
Or walk along the rocky beach, recall
A night beside the effigy in the garden,
The desire, the scent, the fall;

Or touch with closet fingers odorous volumes,
Children forever, clogged with solitude
Doze in the greenhouse, tremble at a rose,
Dream of their mothers when the winter darkens,
The wind, the big wind blows.

Yes, in their Austrian houses sit the poets
And suffer at the passing of their heroes
Or in the Greek café beyond the noise
Of cheat and blackmail watch the panther-bellied
Sinister dazzling boys;

Or wild grammarians travelling on the railway
Swift to the yellow cities by the Caspian
Blush, tremble; or the sisters who alone
Shed tears and on the entry of the Countess
Like owls rise and are gone.

Even among the natives those from Italy
Scatter and read their pages of an ancient

FREDERIC PROKOSCH

Epic, a great one, and with sterile hips
Dance; or in Utah strip before a mirror
With sensitive opened lips

Or in the ivied chamber count their syllables,
Stir toward the casement, watch the athletes passing;
Analyse love, as delicate as frost,
Talk to their girls in scholarly whispers, curious
Shift their gray eyes, are lost.

Some grow adroit at turning wheels, big women
Patient and proud deep in the Russian ices;
Or dream of Shelley, wishing he were here,
Nieces of millionaires, the undesired ones,
Year after maddening year

Grow stronger, glimpse at last the longed-for quiet
And talk with artists under April willows,
Find refuge in a masquerade of mind,
A pose, a flight toward dusk, smile like albinos,
And grow remote, grow blind.

The bones melt and the spirit breaks, the opium
Crosses the eastern sea and brings relief; and
Europe grows slim and pale, and we who loved
Her histories walk the city, wait and wonder,
Watch and are moved.

PORT SAID

Do you feel, shivering, the touch of the world's knife?
Look, cross the city, listen to the metal street,
Cross the black bridge and behold the water-haired
women

Grieving on the pebbles below, beating
Their spotted linen, beating
Their loins, listen to these feet

Climbing sadly the shaded path that curves
Over the water; the travellers watching the sands
For omens of war; the spies sloe-eyed and shuddering
Like harlots; the negroes singing
Of trouble, and beside them standing
Those with the long white hands

Not male not female shaping the sign of Hermes:
Below, the expecting gorge: above, their eyes
Like pearls in the shell-white faces, thinking 'Can it
Be hard to die, is death
A gentle lover?' and the girls lying
In twos, whispering lies.

Not pleasant; think of those other cities; the dead ones;
The priests in their stained robes passing the urns, and the
silken
Virgins bearing the frozen nectarines,

FREDERIC PROKOSCH

Those led to the sacrifice, the
Sufferers, the boys with the curling
Tresses and eyes like pearls,

Sick of a dead world, and in the river the oarsmen
Naked and hairless, crying to the shepherds, old
Old men and wise; the divers bleeding, the widows
 Burning, the counsellors warning,
 The poets singing the golden
 Princes, and how they told

Of another age, an age of silver, and that knife
Severing the race, that age of ice like a sheet over
The terrified towers and windowed cliffs and over
 The flowerlike bodies deprived
 Of spirit, gently covering
 Their solitude like a lover.

THE FESTIVAL

The cello sobs, the symphony begins,
The fever flutters in the violins,
A hundred earrings tremble in the dark,
Sleek in their velvet squat the seven sins.

And sauntering down the river you and I
Discern the baffling planets in the sky,
Through the tall branches watch the tell-tale feet
And hear the vices of the summer sigh.

The castle fades, the distant mountains fade,
The silence falters on the misty glade,
The ducal lanterns hover on the hill,
The cathedral moves into the evening shade.

Softly upon you falls the casual light.
Your hair grows golden and your eyes are bright
And through the warm and lucid Austrian air
In love our arms go wandering to-night.

Far to the east extend the ancient seas,
The dear Danubian banks, the archaic trees
Among whose pillars still the restless dead
Dispel their homesick odours on the breeze;

FREDERIC PROKOSCH

Crete blows the night across her wicked floors
And Sicily now locks her little doors,
And up the Adriatic leap the clouds
And hurl a shadow on her sucking shores.

And northward through the benches of the park
Stealthily moves the thin conspiring dark:
The thieves and fairies huddle by the bridge
And hear the sickly hounds of Brussels bark.

In Norway demons dwell among the caves
Whose walls are bitten by the haggard waves
And on the emerald Carpathian slopes
The rancid wolves explore the village graves;

Each hungry orphan climbs into his bed
Afraid to face the usual midnight dread;
Across the cobbles past the pock-marked church
The hags go hustling with their crusts of bread,

The cripples stumble slowly up the stairs
And toss their curses on the stuffy airs,
The cellar-eyed, the sleepers in the ditches
Mutter their simple paranoiac prayers.

Listen, the rhythms of the night begin:
The little lamps are flickering in the inn:
Out through the door into the garden glides
The fretful elegance of the mandolin:

FREDERIC PROKOSCH

The night flies on, the coming tempest flies,
And all our lovely neighbours close their eyes.
Silent the paths of longing and regret
Which all our learning taught us to despise.

And you and I look out upon the stream
And by the lantern's mild and mirrored gleam
The inverted figures on the shore perform
The silly baroque postures of a dream.

O who is there to answer you and me?
The sky, the summer, the prolific sea?
The ground is shaking and we must not wait
Who one more moment feel alone and free

And hear the angels with their wingèd fears
Like serpents hiss their carols in our ears
And rediscover on this festive night
The hatreds of a hundred thousand years.

A. J. YOUNG

WALKING IN MIST

At first the river Noe
Like a snake's belly gleamed below
And then in mist was lost;
The hill too vanished like a ghost
And all the day was gone
Except the damp grey light that round me shone.

From Lose Hill to Mam Tor,
Darkness behind us and before,
I gave the track its head;
But as I followed where it led,
That light went all the way
As though I made and carried my own day.

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

INVOCATION TO THE SOCIAL MUSE

Senora, it is true the Greeks are dead:

It is true also that we here are Americans:
That we use the machines: that a sight of the god is un-
usual:

That more people have more thoughts: that there are

Progress and science and tractors and revolutions and
Marx and the wars more antiseptic and murderous
And music in every home; there is also Hoover:

Does the lady suggest we should write it out In The Word?
Does Madame recall our responsibilities? We are
Whores Fräulein: poets Fräulein are persons of

Known vocation following troops: they must sleep with
Stragglers from either prince and of both views:
The rules permit them to further the business of neither:

It is also strictly forbidden to mix in manœuvres:
Those that infringe are inflated with praise on the plazas—
Their bones are resultantly afterwards found under news-
papers:

Preferring life with the sons to death with the fathers
We also doubt on the record whether the sons
Will still be shouting around with the old huzzas—

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

For we hope Lady to live to lie with the youngest:
There are only a handful of things a man likes
Generations to generation hungry or

Well fed: the earth's one: life's
One: Mister J. P. Morgan is not one:

There is nothing worse for our trade than to be in style:

He that goes naked goes farther at last than another:
Wrap the bard in a flag or a school and they'll jimmy his
Door down and be thick in his bed—for a month:

(Who recalls the address now of the Imagists?)
But the naked man has always his own nakedness:
People remember forever his live limbs:

They may drive him out of the camps but one will take him:
They may stop his tongue on his teeth with a rope's argu-
ment—
He will lie in a house and be warm when they are shaking:

Beside Tovarich how to embrace an army?
How to take to one's chamber a million souls?
How to conceive in the name of a column of marchers?

The things of the poet are done to a man alone
As the things of love are done—or of death when he hears
the
Step withdraw on the stair and the clock tick only:

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

Neither his class nor his kind nor his trade may come near
him

There where he lies on his left arm and will die:
Nor his class nor his kind nor his trade when the blood is
jeering

And his knee's in the soft of the bed where his love lies:

I remind you Barinya the life of the poet is hard—
A hardy life with a boot as quick as a fiver:

Is it just to demand of us also to bear arms?

NORMAN CAMERON

MOUNTAIN MONASTERY

The monks came here at length as colonists
For the spent empire of the centuries
And built stone walls by rocks that owed allegiance
Separately, outside the centuries.

And what unease comes from this spatial trick,
This hard-as-a-stone by senseless juxtaposition!
For mountain or monastery, either or both,
Must seem, when viewed askance from the other's position,

Obdurate though dislodged, as the teeth in fever
Become uncouth in the head, like chapels or rocks,
The elements of a nightmare of stone edges,
A jarring of monks and teeth and monkish rocks.

TO A GREEDY LOVER

What is this recompense you'd have from me?
Melville asked no compassion of the sea.
Roll to and fro, forgotten in my wrack,
Love as you please—I owe you nothing back.

THE COMPASSIONATE FOOL

My enemy had bidden me as guest.
His table all set out with wine and cake,
His ordered chairs, he to beguile me dressed
So neatly, moved my pity for his sake.

I knew it was an ambush, but could not
Leave him to eat his cake up by himself
And put his unused glasses on the shelf.
I made pretence of falling in his plot,

And trembled when in his anxiety
He bared it too absurdly to my view;
And even as he stabbed me through and through
I pitied him for his small strategy.

PUBLIC-HOUSE CONFIDENCE

Well, since you're from the other side of town,
I'll tell you how I hold a soft job down.
In the designing rooms and laboratory
I'm dressed in overalls, and so pretend
To be on business from the factory.
The workmen think I'm from the other end.
The in-betweens and smart commission-men
Believe I must have some pull with the boss.
So, playing off the spanner against the pen
I never let the rumour get across
Of how I am no use at all to either
And draw the pay of both for doing neither.

SHEPHERDESS

All day my sheep have mingled with yours. They strayed
Into your valley seeking a change of ground.
Held and bemused with what they and I have found,
Pastures and wonders, heedlessly I delayed.

Now it is late. The tracks leading home are steep,
The stars and landmarks in your country are strange.
How can I take my sheep back over the range?
Shepherdess, show me now where I can sleep.

BY LEAVE OF LUCK

Once through the gate, the horns and light
And feast and honorific song
So cheered us that it was not long
Before we took them as of right,

Not thinking how we'd merited,
But, giving thanks to Luck, forgot
The land of hardship we had fled
Where Luck was no part of man's lot.

But this complacency was cut short:
The flattering jubilation died
As though it waited for new guide;
A spokesman stood out from our court.

'Sirs, we have feasted. Now relieve
This waiting and announce the end
For which you came.' 'Simply, good friend,
To join your feast.' 'And by whose leave?'

'By leave of Luck.' 'Should Luck, indeed,
Prompt these vast honours to a stranger?
We had supposed you came to read
Some riddle, or dispel a danger.'

NORMAN CAMERON

'Only as common men we came.'

'How dared you, by the heroes' gate?'

'We purposed no heroic claim.'

'But you disown it now too late.'

NOSTALGIA FOR DEATH

Psychologists discovered that Miss B
Suffered from a split personality.
She had B-1, B-2, 3, 4 and 5,
All of them struggling in one body alive.
B-1 got tipsy and B-2 felt ill,
B-3 got pregnant, B-4 paid the bill.
Well, that's enough of that. What about me?
I have, at least, N-1, N-2, N-3.
N-1's a glutton, N-2 is a miser,
N-3 is different, but not much wiser.
Well, that's enough of that. What of N-0?
That is the N I'd really like to know.

STEPHEN SPENDER

ORPHEUS EURYDICE HERMES

That was the singular mine of souls.
Like still silver ores they went
as veins travelling its dark. Between roots
was the source of the blood, that goes forth to men,
and heavy like porphyry it seemed in the dark.
Further, nothing red.

Rocks were there
and unreal woods. Bridges over voids
and yonder huge, gray, blind loch,
that over its far background hung
like rainy skies above a landscape.
And between meadows, of mild and full forbearance,
appeared the pale strip of the single road
laid in like a long pallor.

And on this single road they came.

Foremost the slender man in the blue mantle,
who stared before him, dumb and impatient.
Without chewing his pace devoured the way
in huge bites: his hands hung
heavy and clenched out of the fall of folds.
And nothing more they knew of the light lyre,
which in the left had grown ingrown
like rose-tendrils in the olive tree bough.

And his senses were as if in two:
for whilst his glance ran before him like a dog,
turned round, went back and then away again
and waiting at the next corner stood—
his hearing hung back like an odour.
Sometimes it seemed to him as if it stretched
right to the walking of those other two,
who were to follow this whole climb.
At other times it was his climbing echo
only, and his mantle's draught, that were behind him.
He told himself, however, they'd surely come;
said it aloud and heard his voice die away.
Indeed they'd come, only they were two,
of terribly light going. Were he allowed
but once to turn (was not the looking back
sure dissolution of this entire labour,
now only being completed) he must see them,
the two soft-treading, who silently follow him:

the god of journeys and of far embassy,
with travelling cap over fair eyes,
carrying the slender rod before his body
and with wings fluttering at his ankles;
and given to his left hand—she.
She who was so much loved, that from a lyre
more lament came than from lamenting women;
and from lament a world was born, in which
all was once more there: wood and valley
road, habitation, field and river and beast;

so that around this world of lament, just as
around the other earth a sun
and a star set silent heaven went,
a heaven lamenting with distorted stars:—
this one who was so much loved.

And still she walked, leaning on that god's hand,
her step narrowed by the long winding sheet,
uncertain, mild and without impatience.
She was closed in herself, like one with child,
and thought not of the man, who went before her,
nor of the road, which climbed up into life.
She was shut in herself. Her being dead
filled her like fullness.
Like a fruit with sweetness and the dark
so was she full with her great death,
which still remained so new, that she grasped nothing.

She was in a new maidenhood, and
untouchable; her sex was closed
like a young flower towards the evening,
and now her hands to marriage were
so much estranged, that even the light god's
endlessly gentle guiding touch
offended her like a too great intimacy.

She had already ceased to be that woman,
the blonde who echoed through the poet's songs,
no more was she the great bed's scent and island

STEPHEN SPENDER

and that man's property no more.
She was already loosened like long hair,
abandoned like the fallen rain
and portioned out like hundredfold provision.
She was already root
when precipitately
the god did stop her and with pain in his call
the words spoke: 'He has turned'—
she grasped nothing and whispered softly: 'Who?'

But far off, dark before the light way out,
some one stood, whose countenance
could not be recognized. He stood and saw
how along the strip of meadow path
with mournful glance the god of embassy
silently turned, following the figure,
already walking back on this same road,
her step narrowed by the long winding sheet,
uncertain, mild and without impatience.

(From the German of R. M. Rilke.)

THE UNCREATING CHAOS

I

To the hanging despair of eyes in the street, offer
Your making hands and your guts on skewers of pity.
When the thunder sky is built with clouds like sand, which
 the yellow
Sun trumpets above, respond to that day's shrillness
With a headache. Like a ghost, follow, follow
The young man to the pole, up Everest, to war: by love,
 be shot.

For the uncreating chaos descends
And claims you in marriage: though a man, you were ever
 a bride:
Ever beneath the supple surface of summer muscle,
The evening talk like fountains cupping the summer
 stars,
The friend who chucked back the lock from his brow in
 front of a glass,
You were only anxious that all these loves would last.
Your primal mover anxiety
Was a grave lecher, a globe trotter, one
Whose moods were straws, the winds that puffed them,
 aeroplanes.
'Whatever happens, I shall never be alone,
I shall always have a boy, a railway fare, or a revolution.'

STEPHEN SPENDER

Without your buttressing gesture that yet so leans;
Is glad as a mat
When stamped on; blood that cries to give suck to a bat;
And your heart fretted by winds like rocks at Britain's
 end;
You would stand alone in a silence that never uttered,
And stare in yourself as though on a desolate room.

II

Supposing then you change
Gestures, clamp your mind in irons,
By boxed degrees transform into past history:
Stand on the astringent self-created promontory,
A Greek as simple as a water clock,
And let the traffic creak beneath.
You'd live then in the tricks of dreams, you'd be
Not living, but a walking wish, private and malicious
As my cracked aunt, or if blown, like a banker.

I will confess to you
At night I'm flooded by my conscious future,
The bursting tide of an unharnessed power
That drowns my will of now.
In thoughts where pity is the same as cruelty
I dream of you as water. Whether
What flows and wavers is my self
Or my thoughts streaming over you—or upon all
The town and time—we are the same.
And outside are the speed bikes' hundred mile an hour
Snorting in circles on their plain: the riders lose

STEPHEN SPENDER

All sense of time and place: they're ridden by
Their speed: the men are the machines.

All I can warn to-day—more I shall learn—
Is that our fear makes being migratory.
Shall satisfy your peace into a soldier:
Shall coin you into savage when you flee
The terrible crystal civilization dangles:
Shall make you choose a lover like a mirror
Inventing and reflecting gunmen in you.
You are a ghost amongst the flares of guns,
Less living than
The shattered dead whose veins of mineral
We mine for here.

Alter your life.

III

Dissection of Empires, multiplication of crowns
By secret treaty. But the pigeons scatter
From sunlit pavement at the fatal shot.
Crowns and head bounce like hoops down stone steps.

Meagre men shoot up. Like Very light
A corporal's wagging tongue burns above burning parlia-
ment.

There flows in the tide of killers, the whip masters,
Breeches and gaiters camouflage blood,
Gangsters shooting from hips, pathics with rubber
truncheons,
Spontaneous joy in the padded cell.

STEPHEN SPENDER

Centrifugal movements of a will
Invent these violent patterns.
History rushes. The crowds in towns,
Cerebral boundaries of nations over mountains,
Actors in flesh and death and material nature,
Dance to a gripless private stammer of shouting,
Like thoughts in a minister's dying brain.

Shall I never reach

The field guarded by stones
Precious in the stone mountains,
Where the scytheless wind
Flushes the warm grasses:
Where clouds without rain
Add to the sun
With their lucid sailing shine?
The simple mechanism is here
Clear day, thoughts of the table, the desk,
The hand, symbols of power.
Here the veins may pour
Into the deed, as the field
Into the standing corn.
Meanwhile, where nothing's pious
And life no longer willed
Nor the human will conscious,
Holy is lucidity
And the mind that dare explain.

POEM

If it were not too late!
If I could mould my thought
To the curved form of that woman
With gleaming eyes, raven hair,
Lips drawn too tight like a scar,
Eye sockets shadowed with migraine's
Memory of earlier loves and wars
And her smile learned with being so human.

I imagined her lying naked at night
In warm rain when the breasts are watered
Through darkness by reflecting drops of light,
Which secret light accumulates
In pools on the skin as though on fruit.

Then her light blue dress she unloosed
Till light rose in rose and blue above the trees
Not to expel sad dreams, but to shine
On flesh that overflowed my eyes,
On life locking the senses with closeness,
O dawn of all my certainties!

If it were not too late.
If I could still concentrate
To clench my mind into a husk for love
I'd be too hot and ripe for ghosts,

STEPHEN SPENDER

Winds down side walks with swords of ice,
All betraying lies and lights.

For everything but she leads away
By brambles and along mechanic lines
To the suffering figures under trees
Of heroes who have wrecked happiness
And whose love is accomplished alone
In a spasm on the outer surface of the brain.

GEOFFREY TAYLOR

CRUEL CLEVER CAT

Sally, having swallowed cheese,
Directs down holes the scented breeze,
Enticing thus with baited breath
Nice mice to an untimely death.

GEOFFREY TAYLOR

ENGLISH LIBERAL

'I think' thought Sam Butler,
'Truth ever lies
In mean compromise.'
What could be subtler
Than the thought of Sam Butler?

35A

If they have come to announce a day of End
Let them announce by telephone, or calling
At the front door, the Sidereal System falling.
A motion to pick up, step to descend,
Inclining ear, door opening. Let them announce
To me a person 'Mister Doomsday's here'.
I'll not reproach you, intimate friend, oh dear
Friend—for acquaintance you would think at once
Formal, too formal, not final form enough—
So friend, my dear, my intimate friend, almost,
For jealousy low low, almost my love
You shall become, announced, and I a ghost.
Doomsday's announced, Doomsday Esquire alone
To haunt the doorway and the telephone.

DYLAN THOMAS

POEM

If I was tickled by the rub of love,
A rooking girl who stole me for her side,
Broke through her straws, breaking my bandaged string,
If the red tickle as the cattle calve
Still set to scratch a laughter from my lung,
I would not fear the apple nor the flood
Nor the bad blood of spring.

Shall it be male or female? say the cells,
And drop the plum like fire from the flesh.
If I was tickled by the hatching hair,
The winging bone that sprouted in the heels,
The itch of man upon the baby's thigh,
I would not fear the gallows nor the axe
Nor the crossed sticks of war.

Shall it be male or female? say the fingers
That chalk the walls with green girls and their men.
I would not fear the muscling-in of love
If I was tickled by the urchin hungers
Rehearsing heat upon a raw-edged nerve.
I would not fear the devil in the loin
Nor the outspoken grave.

If I was tickled by the lovers' rub
That wipes away not crow's-foot nor the lock

DYLAN THOMAS

Of sick old manhood on the fallen jaws,
Time and the crabs and the sweethearting crib
Would leave me cold as butter for the flies,
The sea of scums could drown me as it broke
Dead on the sweethearts' toes.

This world is half the devil's and my own,
Daft with the drug that's smoking in a girl
And curling round the bud that forks her eye.
An old man's shank one-marrowed with my bone,
And all the herrings smelling in the sea,
I sit and watch the worm beneath my nail
Wearing the quick away.

And that's the rub, the only rub that tickles.
The knobby ape that swings along his sex
From damp love-darkness and the nurse's twist
Can never raise the midnight of a chuckle,
Nor when he finds a beauty in the breast
Of lover, mother, lovers or his six
Feet in the rubbing dust.

And what's the rub? Death's feather on the nerve?
Your mouth, my love, the thistle in the kiss?
My Jack of Christ born thorny on the tree?
The words of death are drier than his stiff,
My wordy wounds are printed with your hair.
I would be tickled by the rub that is:
Man be my metaphor.

POEM

The hand that signed the paper felled a city;
Five sovreign fingers taxed the breath,
Doubled the globe of dead and halved a country;
These five kings did a king to death.

The mighty hand leads to a sloping shoulder,
The finger-joints are cramped with chalk;
A goose's quill has put an end to murder
That put an end to talk.

The hand that signed the treaty bred a fever,
And famine grew and locusts came;
Great is the hand that holds dominion over
Man by a scribbled name.

The fingers crust the dead but do not soften
The crusted wounds nor pat the brow;
The hand rules pity as a hand rules heaven;
Hands have no tears to flow.

POEM

Should lanterns shine, the holy face,
Caught in an octagon of unaccustomed light,
Would wither up, and any boy of love
Look twice before he fell from grace.
The features in their private dark
Are formed of flesh, but let the false day come
And from her lips the faded pigments fall,
The mummy cloths expose an ancient breast.

I have been told to reason by the heart,
But heart, like head, leads helplessly;
I have been told to reason by the pulse,
And when it quickens alter the action's pace
Till field and roof lie level and the same,
So fast I move, defying time, the quiet gentleman
Whose beard wags in Egyptian wind.

I have heard many years of telling,
And many years should see some change.

The ball I threw when playing in the park
Has not yet reached the ground.

Regard the moon, it hangs above the lawn;
Regard the lawn, it lies beneath the moon.

A. J. M. SMITH

BALLADE UN PEU BANALE

The bellow of good Master Bull
Astoundeth gentil Cow
That standeth in the meadow cool
Where cuckoo singeth now.

She stoppeth in a moony trance
Beneath the timeless trees,
While ebon-bellied shad-flies dance
About her milk-white knees.

He snuffeth her from distant field—
Sly Farmer Pimp approves:
To him the gates and latches yield;
He smiles upon their loves.

Bull boometh from the briary bush,
Advances, tail aloft—
The meadow grass is long and lush,
The oozy turf is soft.

He stampeth with his foremost foot,
His nostrils breathing bale;
Uncouth, unhallowed is his suit;
The vestal turneth tail.

He feinteth with his ivory horn,
 Bites rump, bites flank, bites nape—
Sweet Saviour, of a Virgin born,
 How shall this maid escape!

He chaseth her to pasture wall;
 She maketh stand, poor bird!
He wields his tail like an iron flail.
 Alas! he presseth hard!

I like to think sweet Jesus Christ,
 For His dear Mother's sake,
By some miraculous device,
 Her to Himself did take;

That her preserv'd Virginity
 Flutes holy flats and sharps
In that divine vicinity
 Where Eliot's hippo harps.

RESURRECTION OF ARP

On the third day rose Arp
out of the black sleeve of the tomb;
he could see like a cat in the dark,
but the light left him dumb.

He stood up to testify,
and his tongue wouldn't work
in the old groove; he had to try
other tongues (including the Scandinavian).

The saints were all well pleased;
his periods rattled and rolled;
heresies scattered like ninepins;
all the tickets were sold.

When they turned down the gas
everybody could see there was
a halo of tongues of pale fire
licking the grease off his hair,

and a white bird
fluttered away in the rafters;
people heard
the breaking of a mysterious wind (laughter).

He spoke another language
majestic beautiful wild
holy superlative believable
and undefiled

by any comprehensible
syllable
to provoke dissent
or found a schism.

After the gratifyingly large
number of converts had been given receipts
the meeting adjourned to the social hall
for sexual intercourse (dancing) and eats.

Arp talked to the reporters:
on the whole, was glad to have cheated the tomb,
though the angels had been 'extremely courteous',
and death, after all, was only 'another room'.

THE FACE

The man with the acid face
Under the hammer of glass
Imperils the pure place.
The emotion of the mass,
Inverted, seems to ask
The jack queen king and ace
To do the task.

Wait for a sure thing—
Card into sleeve blown,
Arm out of sling.
Friends posted at phone;
Then when trumps are declared
And partner's strength known
Overpower the guard.

But keep the face mum
Till the right minute come.
Look left and look right:
Whose hand will you bite
With the safest delight?
Whose safe will you crack
With a pat on the back?

Replace the slave state face
With a face of bread:
Each shall choose his place,
Be Dead, or Red.
The cards are no way stacked
And he may live by grace
Who wills to act.

W. H. AUDEN

DOVER

Steep roads, a tunnel through the downs, are the approaches;

A ruined pharos overlooks a constructed bay;
The sea-front is almost elegant; all this show
Has, somewhere inland, a vague and dirty root:
 Nothing is made in this town.

No, the dominant Norman castle floodlit at night
And the trains that fume in the station built on the sea
Testify to the interests of its regular life.
Here live the experts on what the soldiers want,
 And who the travellers are,

Whom the ships carry in and out between the light-houses
That guard for ever the made privacy of this bay
Like twin stone dogs opposed on a gentleman's gate.
Within these breakwaters English is spoken; without
 Is the immense improbable atlas.

The eyes of the departing migrants are fixed on the sea
To conjure their special fates from the impersonal
 water:

'I see an important decision made on a lake,
An illness, a beard, Arabia found in a bed,
 Nanny defeated, money.'

And, filled with the tears of the beaten, or calm with fame,
The eyes of the returning thank the historical cliffs:
'The heart has at last ceased to lie and the clock to accuse.
In the shadow under the yew, at the children's party
Everything will be explained.'

And the old town with its keep and its Georgian houses
Has built its routine on these unusual moments.
The vows, the tears, the slight emotional signals
Are here eternal and unremarkable gestures
Like ploughing or soldiers' songs.

The soldiers swarm in the pubs in their pretty clothes,
As fresh and silly as girls from a high-class academy.
The Lion, the Rose, the Crown will not ask them to die,
Not now, not here. All they are killing is time,
Their pauper civilian future.

Above them, expensive and lovely as a rich child's toy,
The aeroplanes fly in the new European air,
On the edge of that air that makes England of little impor-
tance,
And the tides warn bronzing bathers of a cooling star
With half its history done.

High over France, the full moon, cold and exciting,
Like one of those dangerous flatterers one meets and loves
When one is very unhappy, returns the human stare.
The night has many recruits. For thousands of pilgrims
The Mecca is coldness of heart.

W. H. AUDEN

And the cry of the gulls at dawn is sad like work.
The soldier guards the traveller who pays for the soldier.
Each one prays for himself in the dusk, and neither
Controls the years. Some are temporary heroes.
Some of these people are happy.

FOXTROT FROM A PLAY

Man. The soldier loves his rifle
The scholar loves his books
The farmer loves his horses
The film star loves her looks
There's love the whole world over
Wherever you may be
Some lose their rest for gay Mae West
But you're my cup of tea

Woman. Some talk of Alexander
And some of Fred Astaire
Some like their heroes hairy
Some like them debonair
Some prefer a curate
And some an A.D.C.
Some like a tough to treat 'em rough
But you're my cup of tea

Man. Some are mad on Airedales
And some on Pekinese
On tabby cats or parrots
Or guinea-pigs or geese
There are patients in asylums
Who think that they're a tree
I had an aunt who loved a plant
But you're my cup of tea

Woman. Some have sagging waistlines
And some a bulbous nose
And some a floating kidney
And some have hammer toes
Some have tennis elbow
And some have housemaid's knee
And some I know have got B.O.
But you're my cup of tea

Together. The blackbird loves the earthworm
The adder loves the sun
The polar bear an iceberg
The elephant a bun
The trout enjoys the river
The whale enjoys the sea
And dogs love most an old lamp-post
But you're my cup of tea

POEM

The fruit in which your parents hid you, boy,
Their death, is summer perfect: at its core
You grow already; soon you will not be
One of the young for whom all wish to care.
Having at last the matter for a story,
For you will know what people mean by looking:
Some you will beckon closer and be sorry,
You will not have to guess at what is lacking.

But you are death this summer, we the hurt
For whose profoundest sigh you give no penny
Though, calmer than us all, you move our lives;
Send back the writer howling to his art,
And the mad driver pulling on his gloves
Start in a snowstorm on his deadly journey.

SONG

I have a handsome profile
I've been to a great public school
I've a little money invested
Then why do I feel such a fool
As if I owned a world that had had its day?

You certainly have a good reason
For feeling as you do
No wonder you are anxious
Because it's perfectly true
You own a world that has had its day.

I'll throw my money in the gutter
I'll throw it all away
I'll throw it where the workmen can pick it up
Then nobody can say
I own a world that has had its day.

The workmen will never get it
Though you throw it all over the town
The armament firms will collect it all
And use it for shooting them down
To save a world that has had its day.

I'll get a job in a factory
I'll live with working boys
I'll play them at darts in the public-house
I'll share their sorrows and joys
Not live in a world that has had its day.

They won't tell you their secrets
Though you pay for their drinks in the bar
They'll tell you lies for your money
For they know you for what you are
That you live in a world that has had its day.

I'll book a berth on a liner
I'll sail away out to sea
I'll settle down on an island
Where the natives shall set me free
I'll leave a world that has had its day.

Most of the natives are dying
They've sampled your sort before
It gave them no satisfaction
They're in no mood for more
Who come from a world that has had its day.

I'll hire a furnished attic
A room on the top floor
I'll spend my mornings writing
A book that will cause a furore
About a world that has had its day.

W. H. AUDEN

You may be a little genius
You may be doing your best
To tell us about yours truly
But where is the interest
It's just a world that has had its day.

I'll attend when the parson is preaching
I'll tell all my sins to the priest
I'll do exactly as they ask
I'll go to heaven at least
After this world has had its day.

You may sit down under the pulpit
You may go down on your knees
But you don't believe them any more
And they won't give you any ease
They're of this world that has had its day.

I'll go down to the brothel
Stick a syringe in my arm
I'll go out poaching on my own estate
Then I shall feel perfectly calm
About my world that has had its day.

It's no use turning nasty
It's no use turning good
You're what you are and nothing you do
Will get you out of the wood
Out of a world that has had its day.

W. H. AUDEN

Remember you're no old soldier
Remember that you are afraid
Remember you'd be no use at all
Behind the barricade
You belong to your world that has had its day.

Your son may be a hero
Carry a great big gun
Your son may be a hero
But you will not be one
Go down with your world that has had its day.

FROM THE FILM 'COAL-FACE'

O lurcher-loving collier black as night
Follow your love across the smokeless hill;
Your lamp is out and all your cages still;
Course for her heart and do not miss,
For Sunday soon is passed and Kate, fly not so fast,
For Monday comes when none may kiss—
Be marble to his soot and to his black be white.

BALLAD

- O what is that sound which so thrills the ear
Down in the valley drumming, drumming?
Only the scarlet soldiers, dear,
The soldiers coming.
- O what is that light I see flashing so clear
Over the distance brightly, brightly?
Only the sun on their weapons, dear,
As they step lightly.
- O what are they doing with all that gear;
What are they doing this morning, this morning?
Only the usual manoeuvres, dear,
Or perhaps a warning.
- O why have they left the road down there;
Why are they suddenly wheeling, wheeling?
Perhaps a change in the orders, dear;
Why are you kneeling?
- O haven't they stopped for the doctor's care;
Haven't they reined their horses, their horses?
Why, they are none of them wounded, dear,
None of these forces.

W. H. AUDEN

O is it the parson they want, with white hair;
Is it the parson, is it, is it?
No, they are passing his gateway, dear,
Without a visit.

O it must be the farmer who lives so near,
It must be the farmer, so cunning, cunning;
They have passed the farm already, dear,
And now they are running.

O where are you going? stay with me here.
Were the vows you swore me deceiving, deceiving?
No, I promised to love you, dear,
But I must be leaving.

O it's broken the lock and splintered the door,
O it's the gate where they're turning, turning;
Their feet are heavy on the floor
And their eyes are burning.

POEM

The earth turns over, our side feels the cold,
And life sinks choking in the wells of trees;
The ticking heart comes to a standstill, killed,
The icing on the pond waits for its boys.
Among the holly and the gifts I move,
The carols on the piano, the glowing hearth,
All our traditional sympathy with birth,
Put by your challenge to the shifts of love.

Your portrait hangs before me on the wall;
And there what view I wish for, I shall find,
The wooded or the stony, though not all
The painter's gifts can make its flatness round—
Through the blue irises the heaven of failures,
The mirror world where logic is reversed,
When age becomes the handsome child at last,
The glass sea parted for the country sailors.

Where move the enormous comics, drawn from life;
My father as an Airedale and a gardener,
My mother chasing letters with a knife:
You are not present as a character—
Only the family have speaking parts.
You are a valley or a river bend,
The one an Aunt refers to as a friend,
The tree from which the weazel racing starts.

W. H. AUDEN

False; but no falser than the world it matches,
Love's daytime kingdom which I say you rule,
The total state where all must wear your badges,
Keep order perfect as a naval school:
Noble emotions organized and massed
Line the straight flood-lit tracks of memory
To cheer your image as it flashes by;
All lust at once informed on and suppressed.

Yours is the only name expressive there,
And family affection the one in cypher;
Lay-out of hospital and street and square
That comfort to the homesick children offer,
As I, their author, stand between these dreams,
Son of a nurse and doctor, loaned a room,
Your would-be lover who has never come
In the great bed at midnight to your arms.

Such dreams are amorous; they are indeed:
But no one but myself is loved in these,
And time flies on above the dreamer's head,
Flies on, flies on, and with your beauty flies.
All things he takes and loses but conceit;
This Alec still can buy the life within
License no liberty except his own,
Order the fireworks after the defeat.

Language of moderation cannot hide
My sea is empty and the waves are rough:

Gone from the map the shore where childhood played
Tight-fisted as a peasant, eating love;
Lost in my wake my archipelago,
Islands of self through which I sailed all day,
Planting a pirate's flag, a generous bay;
And lost the way to action and to you.

Lost if I steer. Gale of desire may blow
Sailor and ship past the illusive reef,
And I yet land to celebrate with you
Birth of a natural order and of love;
With you enjoy the untransfigured scene,
My father down the garden in his gaiters,
My mother at her bureau writing letters,
Free to our favours, all our titles gone.

THE ECONOMIC MAN

And the age ended, and the last deliverer died
In bed, grown idle and unhappy; they were safe:
The sudden shadow of the giant's enormous calf
Would fall no longer now across the lawn outside.

No, not again. In marshes here and there, no doubt,
A sterile dragon lingered to a natural death;
But in a year the spoor had vanished from the heath:
The kobbold's knocking in the mountain petered out.

Only the sculptors and musicians were half-sad,
And the pert retinue at the magician's house
Grumbled and went elsewhere: The vanquished powers
were glad

To be invisible and free; without remorse
Struck down the son, indifferent to the mother's curse,
And ravished the daughters, and drove the fathers mad.

TO A WRITER ON HIS BIRTHDAY

August for the people and their favourite islands.
Daily the steamers sidle up to meet
The effusive welcome of the pier, and soon
The luxuriant life of the steep stone valleys
The sallow oval faces of the city
Begot in passion or good-natured habit
Are caught by waiting coaches, or laid bare
Beside the indiscriminating sea.

Lulled by the light they live their dreams of freedom,
May climb the old road twisting to the moors,
Play leapfrog, enter cafés, wear
The tigerish blazer and the dove-like shoe.
The yachts upon the little lake are theirs,
The gulls ask for them, and to them the band
Makes its tremendous statements; they control
The complicated apparatus of amusement.

All types that can intrigue the writer's fancy
Or sensuality approves are here.
And I each meal-time with the families
The animal brother and his serious sister,
Or after breakfast on the urned steps watching
The defeated and disfigured marching by
Have thought of you, Christopher, and wished beside me
Your squat spruce body and enormous head.

Nine years ago upon that southern island
Where the wild Tennyson became a fossil,
Half-boys, we spoke of books, and praised
The acid and austere, behind us only
The stuccoed suburb and expensive school.
Scented our turf, the distant baying
Nice decoration to the artist's wish
Yet fast the deer was flying through the wood.

Our hopes were set still on the spies career,
Prizing the glasses and the old felt hat
And all the secrets we discovered were
Extraordinary and false; for this one coughed
And it was gasworks coke, and that one laughed
And it was snow in bedrooms; many wore wigs
The coastguard signalled messages of love,
The enemy were sighted from the norman tower.

Five summers pass and now we watch
The Baltic from a balcony: the word is love.
Surely one fearless kiss would cure
The million fevers, a stroking brush
The insensitive refuse from the burning core
Was there a dragon who had closed the works
While the starved city fed it with the Jews?
Then love would tame it with his trainer's look.

Pardon the studied taste that could refuse
The golf-house quick one and the rector's tea;

Pardon the nerves the thrushes could not soothe,
Yet answered promptly the no-subtler lure
To private joking in a panelled room.
The solitary vitality of tramps and madmen,
Believed the whisper in the double bed,
Pardon for these and every flabby fancy.

For now the moulding images of growth
That made our interest and us, are gone
Louder to-day the wireless roars
Its warnings and its lies, and it's impossible
Among the well-shaped cosily to flit,
Or longer to desire about our lives
The beautiful loneliness of the banks, or find
The stores and resignations of the frozen plains.

The close-set eyes of mother's boy
Saw nothing to be done; we look again
See scandal praying with her sharp knees up
And virtue stood at Weeping Cross
And Courage to his leaking ship appointed
Slim Truth dismissed without a character
And gaga Falsehood highly recommended
The green thumb to the ledger knuckled down.

Greed showing shamelessly her naked money
And all love's wandering eloquence debased
To a collector's slang. Smartness in furs
And Beauty scratching miserably for food.

Honour self-sacrificed for Calculation
And reason stoned by mediocrity.
Freedom by power shamefully maltreated
And Justice exiled till Saint Geoffrey's Day

So in this hour of crisis and dismay
What better than your strict and adult pen
Can warn us from the colours and the consolations,
The showy arid works, reveal
The squalid shadow of academy and garden,
Make action urgent and its nature clear?
Who give us nearer insight to resist
The expanding fear, the savaging disaster.

This then my birthday wish for you, as now
From the narrow window of my fourth floor room
I smoke into the night, and watch reflections.
Stretch in the harbour. In the houses
The little pianos are closed, and a clock strikes.
And all sway forward on the dangerous flood
Of history that never sleeps or dies,
And, held one moment, burns the hand.

THE DREAM

Dear, though the night is gone,
The dream still haunts to-day,
That brought us to a room,
Cavernous, lofty as
A railway terminus;
And crowded in that gloom
Were beds, and we in one
In a far corner lay.

Our whisper woke no clocks,
We kissed, and I was glad
At everything you did,
Indifferent to those
Who sat with hostile eyes
In pairs on every bed,
Arms round each other's necks,
Inert and vaguely sad.

O but what worm of guilt
Or what malignant doubt
Am I the victim of?
That you then, unabashed,
Did what I never wished,
Confessed another love,
And I, submissive, felt
Unwanted and went out.

PABLO NERUDA

WALKING AROUND

Sometimes I get tired of being a man—
when I go into the cinemas, the tailors' shops,
heavy and faded like a flannel swan
sailing a sea of beginnings and ashes.

And the smell of the hairdresser's makes me cry with
anguish;
all that I want is to lie down like wool, or like stones,
all that I want is to see no buildings,
no gardens, no elevators and no shop-windows.

Sometimes I get tired of my feet and my nails,
my skin and my shadow.
Sometimes I get tired of being a man.

And yet it would be delicious
to threaten a lawyer with an arum lily,
to do in an abbess with a box on the ears.
It would be fine
to go ranging the streets with a bright green knife
uttering howls until one died of the cold.

For I don't want to continue a root in the darkness,
hesitating, stretched out, shivering in a dream
—till the end below in the earth's dark entrails—
absorbing, thinking, eating every day.

I don't want as far as I'm concerned,
I don't want such humiliations;

PABLO NERUDA

I don't want to go on as a root, or a grave,
or underground alone a cellar with the dead,
stiffened, numbed, rotting with misery.

And that is why Monday flares like petrol
when it sees me advancing with my prison face,
and screams in its passage like a wounded wheel,
leaving at nightfall warm blood in its footsteps.

And I am pushed into corners, into damp houses,
into hospitals where bones fly out of windows,
certain shoe-shops that reek of vinegar
and streets terrible as abysses.

Birds of sulphur-colour, horrible intestines
hang from the doors of the houses that I hate;
dentures are lying forgotten in a coffee-pot;
and mirrors,
there are mirrors that must have wept with shame and
with terror;
all around are umbrellas and poisons and navels.

I pass by calmly; with eyes; with shoes; raging; or for-
getting.

I wander through offices and shops with surgical appli-
ances,
and courtyards where the clothes hang from the line,
and where with their slow and dirty tears
shirts, drawers, and petticoats are weeping.

(English version by A. C. and Andrew Boyd.)

GEOFFREY GRIGSON

IN MUNICH, CITY OF ART

In Munich, City of Art, it is true that the cherry trees
are not attentive: the buds still populate
the black branches.

But in Munich, City of Art, is a street where the Hand
shoots out (under penalty), where sentries and lamps
sanctify hatred

And in Munich the growl of soft Adolf comes
in heated thunder from the pure mountains
of the foolish peasantry

(Odd that in Munich the bolts of rain which follow
and flush the streets hit even the frequent and
important Nazis)

And in Munich, City of Art, Matisse and Delacroix
and Constable have left the Pinakothek for painters
the thunder approves

And in Munich, City of Art and Opera and so on, Rubens
is remaindered with his broad landscapes and ladies; and
Mein Kampf is for sale,

And in Munich, City of Art, etc., Adolf, Adolf on
a billion p.c.'s, smiles like a female, and pats
the nordic *Backfisch*.

GEOFFREY GRIGSON

In Munich, City of Art, in the Botanic Gardens, I
was, I must say, surprised: round the Poison Ivy is still a
fence,
And a placard,

And in the Deutsches Museum the hand can be held
any way in the drip of goatly rosewater, in the scented
room, for nothing.

SEVERAL OBSERVATIONS

The hours of the public place:
In the morning hour the old
Man with his nurse meets
The child with her nurse, between

The rosebed and the violas,
At three the students with
Their theodolites and red
And white and black poles

Measure the known heights,
And the scarlet and the green
Footballers pattern their knees
In the wind, by the black wood

Where the caterpillars spin.
And the evening hour, when
The purple mallards are
Saying ach ach on the pond,

When the man dressed in ochre
Spikes the silver paper, and
The heated lover squirms
Under the lime tree.

MEETING BY THE GJULIKA MEADOW

He had in his hand a red plant
Picked near the snow under
The suspicious frontier, when we met
By the Gjulika meadow.

And he spoke slowly in English,
And the black thunder bucked about
And the hard rain decidedly hit
Round the broken hut,

And he made a fire, the Slovene
With the off-white face,
Where it was still dry under
The pines; and he took

Out a black and bent copper
Coffee-pot, and sugar, and
Some bread, with garlic. The rain-drops
Fried in the fire

And we were warm and wet,
And sipped at the very hot
Coffee (the Slovene learnt his
English at Boston)

And talked under the thunder
About Europe, about dealing
In furs, about thunder, about rain
And the invisible trout

In the silk-blue Sava, and
About Europe again, and frontiers.
His Zagreb boots were thin; and
He was taking the plant

Picked by the snow under the
Nervous frontier to his lovely
Daughter underneath in the farm
Who was crippled

By her mother's sin (what sin?),
He said. We talked of Europe,
Europe; and the immature frogs
Slipped in the wet grass.

The thunder was sneering, and
In the lower woods we enjoyed
The lemon sun again, and the scent
And magenta of cyclamens.

A QUEER COUNTRY

If you would like to know, it is a great land of love and especially of hate. No tree from end to end of it grows up to a thigh, and fieldfares (bird like the common thrush, but red under the wings, and their eggs are like blackbirds') build in the birch roots, and sing a very weak song from the top branches.

Even the volcanoes (between eruptions) are covered over with ice. When they explode, they roll their lava down into the icefields which lock them in, and ice-bergs crash down the flooded white rivers (who ever heard of ice-bergs in a river?) and break the marigolds in the small meadows and snap the telegraph poles (for there are a few men in this country). There are midges, but not mosquitoes. The language is fully inflected. The geyser goes off when fed with a stillborn infant or with soap. A few trolls live behind waterfalls, which provide electricity for the capital.

In quiet times, it is true, foreign ornithologists come to observe the red-necked phalaropes which play on the rivers, and they send Harlequin clutches by fast monoplane to Croydon, to be hatched out under hens in Cumberland castles. It is true that mute swans and icebergs—a glacier calves at the northern end—may be observed swimming together in the same lake. Tomatoes are raised by natural steam under glass. Rhubarb grows wild; so does angelica, and dirty linen is washed in the thermal springs. Sulphur is exported. The death-rate much exceeds the

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birth-rate, and they have rechristened contraceptives *Russian Letters*. The people are often theosophists and careful editors of ancient texts, having no army, no navy, and no air-force, in spite of a very large public debt. They drink Spanish red wine and have very fine blonde hair.

It is curious that this queer country, which is dark all the winter (except for the capital) and lit only by the scarlet flare of the volcanoes, is very seldom visited by the moon. *Laki* is the name of the principal Volcano. Fortunately, it has been inactive now for one hundred and thirty-seven years.

MEDITERRANEAN

Complete the natural history of this view:
The cypress tree is black, and it divides
The dowdy steamship swimming through the bay.

The olive tree is grey and corresponds
Either to happiness or grief: the clock hands
Stay, as if the heat were permanent, at two.

The wild gladiolus has magenta flowers
And grows in the dry grass at the olive root;
The flowers are somewhat bent to-day
By oddments landed from the steamship in the bay.

UCCELLO ON THE HEATH

Watch, please, this painted ballet of the fed:
The rubbish boxes on the green are red,
The sniffing dogs approach, side-step, retreat,
Homburgs and fur coats enter from the street.

Given one picture-gallery glance,
They plait a formal and a harmless dance,
Go up, and go across, and down,
Into these black trees touched with brown:

And yet analysis reveals the actual set,
The umbrella changing to the bayonet,
The simple time splitting to rallying cries
The Grunts, Greeds, Fears and Enmities.

Gross winds now roaring in their ears
These Coats and Homburgs, Enmities and Fears,
These brown, these red, these black upon the green
Stab to the guts in a rich battle-scene.

HUGH CHISHOLM

POEM

(For Marc Antony)

Come out from your expensive feasts and lusts,
Come out from the Sphinx's shadow, the easy silence.
These are the days of the crazy men and the crusts
Of bread on the bench, when the Babylonian talents
Confound the tribes from the plains and the mountain
saints,

When Babel tickles the lame ascetic's foot,
And patience and the humorous complaints
Waste in the face of shirts and the salute.

Come out with your camels that understand the thirst,
Come out from the land you know, knowing the woman,
And watch us dying, dying, and the worst,
Not death but living with the death, the omen.

Or, from your Egyptian ditch, send word
Of love's identity with worm and sword.

KENNETH ALLOTT

LAMENT FOR A CRICKET ELEVEN

Beyond the edge of the sepia
Rises the weak photographer
With the moist moustaches and the made-up tie.
He looked with his mechanical eye,
And the upshot was that they had to die.

Portrait of the Eleven nineteen-o-five
To show when these missing persons were last alive.
Two sit in Threadneedle Street like gnomes.
One is a careless schoolmaster
Busy with carved desks, honour and lines.
He is eaten by a wicked cancer.
They have detectives to watch their homes.

From the camera hood he looks at the faces
Like the spectral pose of the praying mantis.
Watch for the dicky-bird. But, oh my dear,
That bird will not migrate this year.
Oh for a parasol, oh for a fan
To hide my weak chin from the little man.

One climbs mountains in a storm of fear,
Begs to be unroped and left alone.
One went mad by a tape-machine.
One laughed for a fortnight and went to sea.
Like a sun one follows the jeunesse dorée.

KENNETH ALLOTT

With his hand on the bulb he looks at them.
The smiles on their faces are upside down.
'I'll turn my head and spoil the plate.'
'Thank you, gentlemen.' Too late. Too late.

One greyhead was beaten in a prison riot.
He needs injections to keep him quiet.
Another was a handsome clergyman,
But mortification has long set in.
One keeps six dogs in an unlit cellar.
The last is a randy bachelor.

The photographer in the norfolk jacket
Sits upstairs in his darkroom attic.
His hand is expert at scissors and pin.
The shadows lengthen, the days draw in,
And the mice come out round the iron stove.
'What I am doing, I am doing for love.
When shall I burn this negative
And hang the receiver up on grief?'

POEM

From this wet Island of birds and chimneys
who can watch suffering Europe and not be angry?
for death can hardly be ridiculous
and the busking hysteria of our rulers,
which seemed so funny to our fathers,
dirties the newsreel for us.

The small boy finds his jerseys small for him:
and we have outgrown our patriotic fauna
with their St. Vitus behaviour,
seeing beyond our noses
a land never to flow with milk and honey,
but winter a stonethrow off and no more roses.

And I imagine sometimes at night emerging
the stunted pasty wonder of the slum,
like a cracked bicycle frame
on which a short vocabulary is hung,
to lift transparent hands to the amazing
sky and blow full-time.

For he is mocked both in and out of season
on this and all the other silly shores,
and for this sin without compassion
the sea shall have our heirs,
and the nebulae climbing nowhere in the dark
know that this rural world is dead like Greek.

OFFERING

I offer you my forests and street-cries
with hands of double patience under the clock
the antiseptic arguments and lies
uttered before the flood, the submerged rock;
the sack of meal pierced by the handsome fencer
the flowers dying for 'a great adventure'.

I offer you the mysterious parable
the mount of reason, the hero's glassy hymn
the disquieting uproar of the obvious
hate in the taproom, murder in the barn
the long, experienced finger of the Gulf Stream
the flying sense of glory in a failure's dream.

I offer you the bubble of free-will
the rarefied agony of forgotten places
the green cadaver stirring to the moon's pull
the cheerful butchery of raw amateur faces
which like the half-blind nags shipped off for food
die, doubtless serving some higher good.

I offer you the Egyptian miracle
the acrobat doing handsprings in the rain
a touched-up photograph in sepia
of the future teasing the fibres of the brain;
I offer you the seven-league army boots he wears
striding down the black funnel of the years.

KENNETH ALLOTT

I offer you a coral growth of cells
a flash of lightning anchored in a carafe.
The withered arm of the last century
cannot provoke a demon to anger us;
the straphanging skeleton of what has been
is out of date for ever like the crinoline.

I offer you clouds of nuisance, fleur de lys
the opening lips of summer where pigeons rest
the exploding office of the vast nebula
the heraldic device under the left breast
the taut string and the scribbler's Roman tread
impinging on the slow shores of the dead.

I offer you the tithes of discontent
the deck-games played with shadows on a cruise
beyond the islands marked on the ancient maps
with the broken altars, markets in disuse
to some 'unspoilt' and blessed hemisphere
where comfort twists the lucid strands of air.

I would offer you so much more if you would turn
before the new whisper in a forgiving hour.
Let all the wild ones who have offended burn
let love dissemble in a golden shower
let not the winds whistle, nor the sea rave
but the treasure be lapped for ever in an unbroken
wave.

KENNETH ALLOTT

There is nothing that I would not offer you
my silken dacoit, my untranslatable
whether in the smug mountains counting the stars
or crossing the gipsy's palm in the Easter fairs
with so much that is so difficult to say
before the frigid unpeculating hours
shall drive this foreign devil to the sea.

ANY POINT ON THE CIRCUMFERENCE

Let the tide lap your feet,
the moon hang upside down in the caves of sleep;
the cool horizon is ringed with hanging eyes,
and white with your immoderate thirst for love
your smoky wishes pour into the grave.

Move to the cloudy coven of the night.
The wistful dead await the commonplace
to kiss them to their feet;
the sea-time engine roars
to leave the miles of weed, drying round our supple
shores.

Cut down the mistletoe,
guess at the cloven foot,
cross swords with the plural world; the rainbow
buries its conjuring root;
the moonlight on the lined hand of the floor
climbs to the milky zenith of the year.

Patience and prayer have done.
The sun is lost in the perfunctory west,
and the false stars come out
to ice the evil of the midnight feast:
so many ways to turn away from heaven
before a new temper burns in the prodigal east.

Acres and temperatures
of formidable flowers,
the golden voice of every ravished season;
the head turns on the handsome neck
and where the wall is weak
hears the proud waters at their crumbling treason.

Between the desert and the classic grove
our mortal seasons waver,
blowing hot or cold for ever;
but the thin river from the side of love
grieves for the faithless weather.

O angel of any fire
warm my slow worm of blood
so that I may forget to brood,
walking the waves of the future as on air
with fair and foul and furious understood.

Let moon and night be kind,
the giant in the wind
hold his prodigious breath;
in the short prism of day
still let the children play;
the smiles breaking as foam on the groaning earth.

HISTORICAL GRIMACE

I sacrifice the flowering centuries
and come to you under a cover of snow
to take the fusillade of poignancy
with such impeccable gestures and sentiment
as the stiff gods of the upper lip allow.

I hear the thunder break on the floor of China
its senile anger and archaic woe.
I hear the ape deafen the peninsula
because his hands will not invent the plough:
yet those poor hands have forced God into you.

O gladiator in this furious time
the toy of luck and mercantile decision
it is no hurt to simplify in lime
escaping from the pedantry of bone
to sleep unaccosted by the midnight vision.

With this dead look I sign away my life
with this foul tongue I trip sincerity
with this hot mouth I fascinate distress
with this green seed I bend posterity.
My heirs must ache in perpetuity.

For now the howling resurrection-men
are fathomed in the evening of the sea,

KENNETH ALLOTT

and through the white profusion of the moon,
which burns this bloodless shire and academy,
the ringing hooves of anno domini
deepen all night towards our death and day.

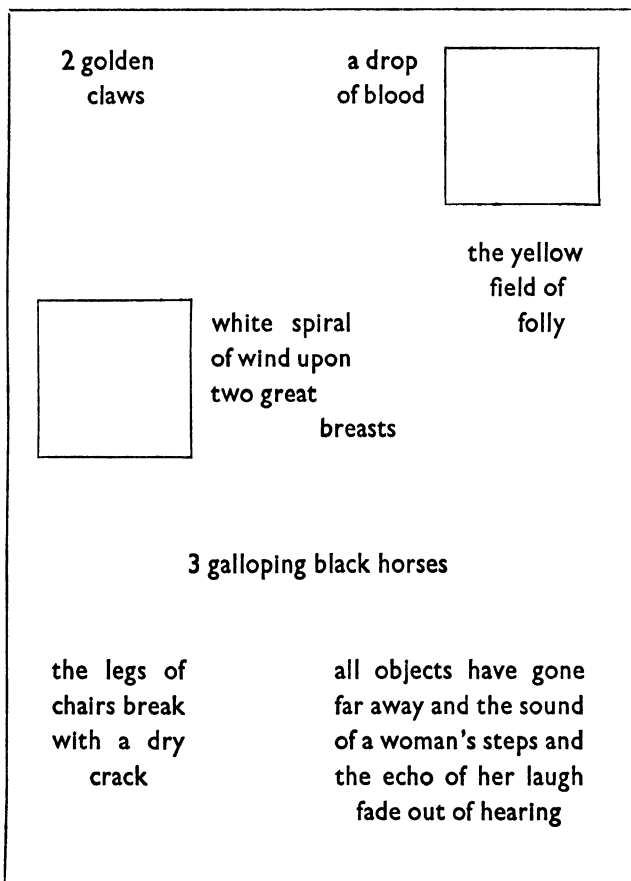
But in this polar night
the gruesome furies lead
to torture the staunch guardsman of the brow;
the whole hill aches with unaccustomed light,
like the Red Sea to left and right
the sulky fair and swart divide
and to their humorous honours and prisons go.

And he who looks behind
sees the dead wolf pad from his shadow of pine,
the tide withdraw its hem;
the l of stilted dream
runs on a rim, discovers in the end
the window of a jelly in the sand.

While the long figures of the years
drum into the vexed ears
their waven certainties:
that trees must fall and waters freeze
and truth seduce all promises,
and men never write home about their fears.

ALBERTO GIACOMETTI

POEM IN SEVEN SPACES



English version by David Gascoyne

PAUL ELUARD

AT PRESENT

For a long time without songs
Flowers cultivated flowers for sale
O beautiful abstract virtues

Washing is in vain one no longer sees oneself
Quietly sleeping in a bed of ashes
Under shelter of all the morrows

There is no way out
No more daylight between the houses
A cockroach sleeps on every sill
Content has taken death for sign

The stunningly charming young
And the old in their stinking chains
How alike they are!
The others awaken in spite of them
Their brows and their bellies are wrinkled
But fire still draws them on

Out of touch with everything save misery
Alert, they would rather not believe
In the immobility of their blood.

(English version by David Gascoyne)

ONE FOR ALL

One or many
The sky lying on the storm
The birds covered with snow
The sounds of fear in the harsh woods

One or many
Ravens are laid in shells of clay
With faded wings and landslide beaks
They have gathered the red fantastic roses of the storm

One or many
The collar of the sun
The sun's immense strawberry
On the bottleneck of a grove

One or many
More sensitive to their childhood
Than to rain or fine weather
Sweeter to know
Than sleep on sweet slopes
Far from ennui

One or many
In whining mirrors
Where their voices are torn in the morning
Like linen

One or many
Made of crumbling stone
And of scattering feather
Made of cloth alcohol froth
Of laughter sobbing negligences ridiculous torments
Made of flesh and of unmistakable eyes

One or many
With all their woman's faults
All their merits

One or many
The face tightly covered with ivy
Tempting as new bread
All the women who rouse me
Dressed in what I have desired
Dressed in calm and freshness
Dressed in salt, water, sunlight
Tenderness audacity and a thousand caprices
In a thousand chains

One or many
In all my dreams
A new woodland flower
Barbaric flower with bundles of pistils
Which open in the burning circle of its deliriums
In the murdered night

One or many

PAUL ELUARD

A youth to die of
A violent unquiet youth saturated with ennui
In which she has taken part with me
Not caring for others.

(English version by David Gascoyne)

BERNARD GUTTERIDGE

WISHES

Stare where the colours
Sit in the splintered curtain
And wide room expands itself from the centre,
Effacing the walls as uncertain,
Unable to climb in the course
Of the convex glass.

And people come in and out and do not wait,
And children sometimes, cry or stay good.
The outside comes past the great
Window though, and stays in the mirror for days.

With head grown enormous and eyes with seeing far
Imagine a finer wood beyond this wood, and even near
A finer still; as seen from clouds or mirrored down
Shaftings of sun as passing with a frown.
Think of our hopes for money, little loves,
Visiting distant friends and health and far longer lives.

Until we must draw the curtain, wait for tea,
Turn on the electric light, the sudden eye:
Now clip all the windows and walk in the lanes,
Finger the wheat, examine the evening sky
Or talk of what our paper well explains.

POEM

Always, travellers among towns,
Walking on these downlands, valleys, see
Between the massive ferns and trees
To ploughland's clutch of their crude sweeps
A fool's touch in the living here,
The necessary subterfuge of ease.

Yesterday, after the brassy fair
With the new moon and turned pennies,
We lay on hairy grass and counted
Churches and copses clear with a high wind,
Talked of the certain features
Searching the landscape keener than the sharp light.

Season of pheasant shooting:
And the moth-coloured partridges
Escaping in coveys across the ankle-
Scraping fields. To-morrow the first frost
Blacken the dahlias and send the old owl
Earlier out at night to hit or miss.

But intensely above all
The conflict new with the century
Between the gaunt impersonal entity
Of country, and the flagging lives
Of those who move across its surface
Their awkward, impermeable loves;

Whom change, quicker than the features
Of an hour, paints slickly pale.
Burdened with love they walk and see
Drowned friends under a dead hour
Living in that congruity pass
Into hills, shadowed at evening like breasts

Sun cradled in the departing light
Whose fingers move against the night
Probing uneasily lovers who lie
In faults of land; alder
Silhouettes high or the dry bent over
Seed flying thistles are the screen.

Like cracks of the unlucky mirror
Birds dive quickly from the night.
After the lovers' word and touch
They find night clapped across their eyes
As thrust out from the ash's roots
And sensuality their mood has tapped.

So then the moon: and to-morrow
Holds over them with the moon's glare
Again the curious probing fingers
Of light that glosses over their world
For an instant its magnetic hand
Lightening their bodies' weights that lie.

BERNARD GUTTERIDGE

But falling suddenly away
The lover under the torn ferns
Catches the remorselessness of a limp glove
That wags above him over the brambles,
Dangles its yokel thumb and fingers
Behind the clouds and woods, to the next village.

HOME REVISITED

Now that I go there as a visitor,
To the end of the thin lane,
And pass the rockery with a stranger
Walk, I can recall his death again.

Birth and death identically change
While the house remains the same;
Grow from a boyhood's sword-sharp lunge
Of fear and love to an imagist's game.

Birth as the red-ribboning of a cot,
An unknown nurse in a rage;
As the seven swallows that sit
Dropping their pellets on the saxifrage

That wags its racket seed pods in the wind
Rotting brownly from the centre;
The doctor's shadow on the blind,
Spring summer autumn or winter.

Death as my walking past this empty shell:
The fixed memory of life
Ceasing like echoes in a well
Beyond the last ripple of short grief.

Death as a circle of nettles where the hut
Turned the patient to the wind.
That wind has taken seeds and set
Dock leaves' tusk roots into the heavy ground.

Or as the untidy nests the starlings build
To for ever leave and enter;
The doctor's shadow on the blind,
Spring summer autumn or winter.

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.

DO YOU BELIEVE IN GEOGRAPHY?

No one now can understand that chart;
The crossed lines that might have stood for gold
Were found to stand for death, the clockwork heart
Failed during exercise, too used to leisure.
And the dug hole was quickly silted up.

It is a long time since the last hermit died
And the last ornithologist walked the marshes
Tracing the rare avocet that always cried
Just ahead until the collector shot it down
Where the stranger bittern sometimes boomed.

These, they say, had known the secret track
Across the fens, between the tall osiers
And the cotton grass and the thick black
Mud that sucked the slipped or reckless foot
And took the testing pebble out of sight.

But these all died before the map was found,
Before the word lay richly in men's mouths,
Leaving no hints; it was their native ground
The paths for them required no detailed plans
So no one now can understand that chart.

GAVIN EWART

AUDENESQUE FOR AN INITIATION

Don't forget the things we taught you by the broken
water-wheel,

Don't forget the middle classes fight much harder going
down hill,

Don't forget that new proscriptions are being posted now
and then,

Dr. Johnson, Dr. Leavis and the other Grand Old Men—

For, although they've often told us that they try to do their
best,

Are they up to the Full Fruit Standard, would they pass
the Spelling Test?

—Because we've got our eyes to keyholes, we know every-
thing they've done,

Lecturing on minor poets. 'Literature is quite good fun.'

And if you should try to fool us, Imitate them, do the
same,

We'll refuse your dummy bullets, we've had time to take
our aim.

We've been drinking stagnant water for some twenty
years or more

While the politicians slowly planned a bigger reservoir

But we've dammed a different river, the water-wheel is
going again.

Now we've stopped designing sweaters and we've started
In to train.

We've given up the Georgian poets, teaching dance bands
how to croon,
Bicycling in coloured goggles underneath a pallid moon.

We've destroyed the rotting signposts, made holes in al
the pleasure-boats;
We'll pull down ancestral castles when we've time to
swim the moats.

When we've practised we shall beat you with our Third o
Fourth Fifteen,
In spite of Royalists on the touchline. 'Oh, well played,
Sir!' 'Keep it clean!'

Our backs are fast as motor-cycles, all our forwards 20-
stone.
Each of them can score unaided, running strongly on his
own.

Every minute scouts give signals, come reporting what
they've seen
'Captain Ferguson is putting.' 'Undermine the 18th
green.'

Before next month we'll storm the clubhouse. Messages
are coming through:

'Darwin, doing cross-word puzzles, tries to find the missing clue.'

The 'Times' Third Leaders are decoded, pigeon-holed for
future use;

Tennyson has been convicted of incessant self-abuse.

We've been sending notes to Priestley, orange pips to
Johnny Squire—

'Don't defend the trench you're holding.' 'Now the fat is
in the fire.'

We've got control of all the railways and the perfume factories,

We're supercharged and have connection with the strongest
batteries.

So if you feel like playing truant, remember that the game
is up

Or you'll find that quite politely you've been sold a nasty
pup.

MISS TWYE

Miss Twye was soaping her breasts in her bath
When she heard behind her a meaning laugh
And to her amazement she discovered
A wicked man in the bathroom cupboard.

CHARLES MADGE

THE LULL

While the world wonders in its latest round
And growing things come to a head and die,
While the armies make the month suspect
And the sea invites the sound of wrack,
While roads are heavy with sad holiday
And lost love treasons to the senseless lock
And dressed up in flowers, peace reposes
And while, for us, hope walking on the sea
Seems a white figure lost under the mountain
And the sound of our voices is far, far away
And time prepares for us his tidal wave
To sweep our harbour clear, and wash the shore
And we surrender to the final pain
While all the shades are dizzy in our eyes,
What shall I say to you, my swan?

DELUSIONS

Where are the dancing girls? They are not here.
Not here? Then back into the night again,
The night of images that disappear
And reappear to mock the tired brain.

We have no home. Our bourgeois home is wrecked.
We seek instead the shadowy consolation
Of glimmering alcohol, and still expect
The unexpected of our own creation.

For we create—proud tyrants of a moment—
Bright visions, born between despair and fear,
And, in possessing them, survive our torment.
Where are the dancing girls? They are not here.

They are not here. They are not in the street.
No corner holds them, and no glass swing door
Admits us to the presence. Still we meet
The blank appearance that we met before:

Glittering spectacle of the lonely bar
And the society which there forgets
Itself, while the routine of things that are
In fantasies that are not, dissipates.

CHARLES MADGE

Behind the glasses and the polished board,
Behind the faces as they change and smile,
Promises of delusion seem assured
And homeless wanderers soothe their long exile.

Beyond the printed words that catch their eyes,
And the chance gleam of some suspended sign
May come the blissful moment of surprise
When the dull bourgeois can become divine.

II

To those who sail the salt quotidian sea
The tempting siren sings across the flood,
But once plunged in, they find her out to be
A desert island with a coast of mud.

Lulled by the waves, no mortal heart resists
The gaudy scenery of the noble bay,
That paradisaal image which persists
In all its brightness to the present day.

Each one is Tantalus to what he dreams,
The waters of illusion lap his chin,
Ready to hand the flattering symbol seems
And Tantalus is always taken in.

Each day he starts, he leaps towards the goal,
Driven along by life's impulsive tide.
His wishes are no more in his control
Than the bright objects which his eyes provide.

Boasting each project absolutely new,
His rising sciences, renascent arts,
All that he frames has one grand aim in view,
One which is not declared but simply starts.

Automaton of fate, led on by time,
He learns no lesson from repeated pain.
Like the old lag, he knows the price of crime
And yet he cannot help but try again.

Till, one fine day, still hoping against hope
In spite of all this once to be exempt
From nature's warrant and the hangman's rope,
The bourgeois perishes in his attempt.

III

Pillage the great unruly crowd invites
To take the bourgeois palaces by storm.
The sheets of glass, the softly shaded lights
Attract, induce the ugly murmuring swarm.

Fingers that grab, and hands that overturn
Obey their prompted nostrils over-wrought
With female scent diffused, and rebels burn
What in their slavery they would once have bought.

Into charred ash high-priced silks disappear,
Up blazes all the furniture of class
And frightened lift-girls fill the shafts with fear
Wounded by splinters of the shivering glass.

CHARLES MADGE

Basement and Mezzanine with turmoil swell,
But look! some little Lenin of the mob
Breaks with harsh reprimand the lustful spell
Raising his voice: 'Our task is not to rob

'Since not to us but to the workers' state
These folded silks, this glittering trash belong.
For us meanwhile more pregnant works await
Than useless vengeance adding wrong to wrong.

'No doubt in time you too such silks shall wear
When luxury shall crown the common toil
And jewels glitter in the shop girl's hair
And gold and silver round her wrists shall coil

'Symbols of love, relating then no more
To the exploited, suffering, human mass,
Incentive to no vast imperial war
But innocent and valueless as glass.

'Then bide your time. That time has not come yet.
Meantime replace the spoil, put out the flames.
At every entrance let a guard be set.'
Thus in his generous anger he exclaims.

The guilty crowd recoils; passion subsides,
Passion that long had known the secret goad
Of property that on men's shoulders rides:
They glimpsed her, bowed beneath the insulting load.

The moment came. She fell into their power.
Her, disinvested, helpless now they saw,
But felt, as they rushed forward to deflower,
The bayonet of proletarian law.

See, as they stumble out upon the kerb,
The brain still glowing with desire undone,
They turn their backs upon the pile superb
And return home, the last illusion gone.

IV

Sometimes at evening travellers have heard
The speaking dunes of ever-shifting sand
Utter a note as shrill as any bird,
While the wind creeps across the cooling land.

Sometimes the sight of gently waving green
Invites the weary traveller's footsteps on
Refracted far across the waste between,
But, one step more, the glancing palms are gone.

The secret of the desert is a stone
Because the stone contains once living things.
The fossil breccia has to marble grown,
Which to new life the chiselling sculptor brings.

Thousands who live in ignorance and pain
Build up the giant pyramid of life.
Their dust, the desert, covers all the plain
Except the uncanny sphinx, their hieroglyph.

TWO FOLK POEMS

CHAIT-PARAB SONG

From Jagdalpūr Tahsil, Bastar State

Woman: I bow to the three worlds, to the sun and the
moon up above,

And to the goddess of the earth Dantēshwarī.

Man: O my sweet rose, I have sprinkled water on the
back

Of our Mother Dantēshwarī, and scattered
parched rice

And put lights in front of her.

Woman: Our Mother Dantēshwarī, shining with bangles
and bracelets,

Sat on her throne. This was her order: Let my be-
loved

Princess, the Bābī Dhānī, swing on her royal
chariot.

Man: Ré, ré, in our Jagdalpūr there are hundreds of
goddesses.

I will offer only one cock to them, I will offer them
flowers

And betel leaves and parched rice.

Woman: O you sweet wreath of flowers of my heart, cop-
per mines

Abound in old Bastar and Jagdalpūr. If a bee en-
tered me,

TWO FOLK POEMS

My body would find it cool and pleasant. My darling,
ling,

You cannot know how sweet the orange is till you taste it.

Man: I have sat by you hopefully, my beloved. I am looking round
For a fruit I can eat before it is ripe. Have I found it in you?

Give it me now, while I still hope to find it,
For I shall never get it at my home.

Woman: O my dear, you have toddy and coco-nut palms in your garden.

I have only grass now in mine. Choose another time when the
Fruit is sweet and ripe.

Man: O my sweetheart, with graceful locks of hair on your head,
A pitcher in your hand, where is your home? I will come

When I have supped. Give me just a little
And I will not try to eat it all.

Woman: Sedges and wild rice grow where water stands,
grass

Grows on the level ground. If you want to eat,
Then come to my home at Kharakghāt.

Man: The coppersmith makes mattocks of bronze, the carpenter
Makes wooden seats. At this moment of hunger and thirst

TWO FOLK POEMS

I have run to you with a tooth-stick in my loin-cloth.

O darling, favour me now I have come. I might not

Find you at night.

Woman: You have made a dam with your spade, but water

Leaks through and escapes. Where would you be off to

From my arms? O my dear, I would beat you if you tried to escape.

Man: I had grown fourteen sweet gourds, and their smell

Was delicious. Sweetheart, there is no sin in a man

Who returns a woman when he's enjoyed her. But I will not lose sight of you, even if I go to kill a rat in that house.

Woman: The tree is as tall as a mountain, but the leaves are tiny. I do not ask money from you, I do not ask

Piles of cowries. I ask only for love. It is only for love

I tangled myself with you. Without your love, I shall have lost my name for nothing.

Man: At a price you would give the rose that's as red as the highway gravel and the basket of green bamboos

To all who want them, but you do not ask a thing

TWO FOLK POEMS

For quenching the thirst of my passion. Certainly
a woman

Finds joy in a man, and they tumble together dur-
ing the night.

Woman: O my dear, you have toddy and coco-nut palms in
your garden.

I have only nuts in mine, which are ripe and falling
fast,

Since no parrot comes to enjoy them. And you,
only wealth

Of my heart, will not enjoy them,
Thinking you must buy them with money.

Man: Sweet and scented flower wreath of my heart,
does not

The breath of the wind shake the leaves and the
rivers?

When he drinks, the parrot with the red head
Dives again and again!

Woman: We store the paddy in the wicker bin, the husker
is kept in the corner. We cannot eat it all by our-
selves,

You come as well, and take all that you need.

*This song is translated from a Halbi original, sung by Mu-
rias and Bhatras in villages around Jagdalpūr, the capital of
the large and little-known Bastar State, in the extreme south-
east of the Central Provinces. Murias and Bhatras are of
Gond affinities. Most Murias still speak a Gondi dialect, but in
the plains around Jagdalpūr, where they are most in contact*

TWO FOLK POEMS

with hinduizing influences, especially that of the palace, Halbi, a mixture of Hindi, Marathi, Uriya, and Gondi, is steadily replacing Gondi, and Hindu ideas are influencing the primitive tribal religions. This song is one sung by dancing parties of youths and girls at the spring festival in the month of Chait, which precedes the sowing of the rice. Like this one, nearly all their songs are erotic. Dantēshwarī (Stanza 1) is tutelary goddess of Bastar. Bābī Dhānī (Stanza 3) was the affectionate name by which the people of Bastar called the late Maharani Prafulla Kumari Devi, of Bastar. At the Chaitrai spring festival or at the Dasehra festival in October the Ruler of Bastar sits in a swing on a processional rath or chariot, which is dragged around a square in front of the palace at Jagdalpār by hundreds of Muria and Maria Gonds.

W. V. Grigson.

THE CUTTY WREN

O, where are you going, says Milder to Malder,
O, I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose,
We're going to the woods, says John the Red Nose,
We're going to the woods, says John the Red Nose.

O, what will you do there, says Milder to Malder,
O, I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose,
We'll shoot the Cutty Wren, says John the Red Nose,
We'll shoot the Cutty Wren, says John the Red Nose.

O, how will you shoot her, says Milder to Malder,
O, I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose,
With arrows and bows, says John the Red Nose,
With arrows and bows, says John the Red Nose.

O, that will not do, says Milder to Malder,
O, what will do then, says Festel to Fose,
Big guns and cannons, says John the Red Nose,
Big guns and cannons, says John the Red Nose.

O, how will you bring her home, says Milder to Malder,
O, I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose,
On four strong men's shoulders, says John the Red
Nose,
On four strong men's shoulders, says John the Red
Nose.

TWO FOLK POEMS

O, that will not do, says Milder to Malder,
O, what will do then, says Festel to Fose,
Big carts and waggons, says John the Red Nose,
Big carts and waggons, says John the Red Nose.

O, what will you cut her up with, says Milder to Malder,
O, I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose,
With knives and with forks, says John the Red Nose,
With knives and with forks, says John the Red Nose.

O, that will not do, says Milder to Malder,
O, what will do then, says Festel to Fose,
Hatchets and cleavers, says John the Red Nose,
Hatchets and cleavers, says John the Red Nose.

O, how will you boil her, says Milder to Malder,
O, I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose,
In pots and in kettles, says John the Red Nose,
In pots and in kettles, says John the Red Nose.

O, that will not do, says Milder to Malder,
O, what will do then, says Festel to Fose,
Brass pans and cauldrons, says John the Red Nose,
Brass pans and cauldrons, says John the Red Nose.

O, who'll have the spare ribs, says Milder to Malder,
O, I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose,
We'll give them to the poor, says John the Red Nose,
We'll give them to the poor, says John the Red Nose.

BIOGRAPHIES

BIOGRAPHIES

KENNETH ALLOT

Born 1912. Beaumont, Durham and Oxford. Ex-Catholic, Journalist and schoolmaster. He has written plays, one novel, one book of poems, one edition of Habington. Now working on a second novel and a life of Jules Verne. Married. Assistant Editor of *New Verse*.

WYSTAN HUGH AUDEN

Born 1907. Gresham's, Holt, and Oxford. The Onlie Begetter. To be detected in crowds, theatres, cinemas, by his loose joints and large albino head. Named after St. Wystan (patron saint of Wistanstow), who planted a stick in the ground which grew into a tree. See J. E. Auden's *Little Guide to Shropshire*.

GEORGE BARKER

Born 1913. Marlborough Road L.C.C. School and Regent Street Polytechnic. Designed his own tomb round about 9 years old, after reading Byron. Expert motor mechanic. Two books of prose, three of verse. Makes many people feel that they *ought* to be like his poems, which appear in most periodicals. Married.

NORMAN CAMERON

Born 1905. Fettes and Oxford. One book of poems. Once an educational official in Africa. Advertising copywriter. Much influenced by Robert Graves and Laura Riding. Married.

HUGH CHISHOLM

Born New York City 1913 (in a lift). Yale and Cambridge. One small pamphlet of verse.

PAUL ELUARD

Born 1895. Many books of verse. Leading French surrealist.

BIOGRAPHIES

GAVIN EWART

Born 1915. Wellington and Cambridge. Traveller in lithographs. One book of poems.

DAVID GASCOYNE

Born 1916. Published his first book of poems (a rare volume with a queer drawing of the author) when sixteen years old. He has published a second book of poems, a book of versions of Holderlin, a novel, and an account of surrealism.

ALBERTO GIACOMETTI

Born 1901. Swiss sculptor. Paris surrealist.

GEOFFREY GRIGSON

Born 1905. Leatherhead and Oxford. Journalist, art critic, broadcaster, publisher's reader. Married. One child, one book of poems, several odds and ends. Editor of *New Verse* since 1933.

B. H. GUTTERIDGE

Born 1916. Educated at Cranleigh. Poems by him have been printed in *The Listener*, *The Year's Poetry* and elsewhere.

C. DAY LEWIS

Born 1904. Sherborne and Oxford, where he edited *Oxford Poetry* with W. H. Auden. Critic, novelist, thriller-writer, communist, Book Society Committee member, etc. Married. Children.

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

Born 1892. American. Yale. Harvard Law School. Lawyer, poet, journalist. Librarian of Congress. Many books of verse.

LOUIS MACNEICE

Born 1907. Marlborough and Oxford. A don (Greek: London University) and a Southern Irishman. Several books of verse, a play, translations, a novel, travel books, etc., and one child.

BIOGRAPHIES

CHARLES MADGE

Born 1912. Winchester and Cambridge. Mass Observation, one book of poems, two children.

PABLO NERUDA

Chilean poet, Consul in Madrid. Supporter of Spanish Republicans. Several books of verse.

PHILIP O'CONNOR

Born 1916. Has lived in France, and Belgium. Educated in a convent and a secondary school.

FREDERIC PROKOSCH

Born 1908. Educated in Austria, Germany, France and at Yale. Two novels, two books of verse. Squash racquets champion of France.

KATHLEEN RAINE

Born 1909. Cambridge. Poems here and there. Two children (she is Mrs. Charles Madge).

A. J. M. SMITH

American poet and don. Pre-Auden vintage.

BERNARD SPENCER

Born 1909. Marlborough and Oxford. Schoolmaster, tutor, advertising copywriter. Once editor of *Oxford Poetry*. Married.

STEPHEN SPENDER

Born 1909. University College School and Oxford. Partly German by descent. Poems, plays, criticism, translations, short stories, leading a literary life. Married.

E. V. SWART

From South Africa. Young. Nothing else known.

BIOGRAPHIES

GEOFFREY TAYLOR

Born 1900. Irish. Soldier, biologist, librarian, factory hand, schoolmaster, printer. Several books of verse under several pseudonyms.

DYLAN THOMAS

Born 1914. Swansea Grammar School. Two books of poems and one child. Distinctly a Welshman.

RUTHVEN TODD

Born 1914. Fettes. Poems in most periodicals and one novel. Once a farm labourer in Mull. Hobby: searching for a job. Married. Distinctly a Scot.

ANDREW YOUNG

Born 1885. Edinburgh University. Presbyterian minister. Several books of verse, none of them so well known as they should be. With Edward Thomas, most observant of the 'Georgian' observer-poets.

