

THE PROPHET OF CHEBAR

Come harken, O my people, to the song
Jehovah taught me to the cadences
Of Chebar where a little lodge still stands
Above the rushes and the cushat dove
Calls in the lotus-laden night of dreams:
A lodge of wattles, roofed with russet reeds
That shelter from the thrusting scimiters
Of fierce, relentless Babylonian noons.
Here have I pondered through the silences
Life's riddle—caught the thin elusive threads
In labyrinthine windings of the words
God writes on stones, twigs, leaves, flowers and grass;
Here have I read the scriptures of the night,
Lettered with stars upon a purple scroll:
Here have I found creation held in awe
Of some great secret which it dare not tell,
And yet is ever on the brink of telling.
I yield to form and colour of the sky,
The majesty of mountains on their thrones—
The ridges through the valleys. I rejoice
Before the iridescence of a pool,
And pray within the solitude of trees.
The flowers are my most familiar friends.
The thistle and the bramble and the thorn
Offer their odours freely when I pass.
I understand the sounds of night and day:
Whisper of roads; call of far caravans;
Twitter of mother-moments on the bough;