

THE DAY IS LONG.

BY WALT. A. RATCLIFFE.

THE day is long.
 Its burdened hours in fetters creep
 Adown to that unmeasured deep
 Men name the Past :
 No cloud o'ercast
 Outspreads a friendly wing to ward
 The sun's free fervent glow outpour'd,
 From beaded brows and bent,
 So we are well-nigh spent
 When sunset comes.

When sunset comes,
 And slow the bandit shadows creep
 From gloomy glen, from steep to steep ;
 And with the Night
 Push back the light
 Behind the hill-land's topmost trees,
 How sweet the soft, sad twilight breeze,
 And ev'ry sound of mead and brake,
 Half inarticulate, like songs
 That reach us when we're half awake.

The day is long,
 The way is rough, its shelter spare ;
 Like vagrants bound we know not where,
 We wander on
 Till, noontide gone,
 We view the zig-zag path we've trod—
 Mistakes for guide-posts, rod on rod,
 With heaving, aching breast
 We sigh, " We'll rest, we'll rest
 When sunset comes."

When sunset comes,
 And pulseless darkness covers all,
 No wand'ring sea-birds landward call
 From waves that make no moan ;
 When Earth reclaims her own,
 Then bear me, grudging not the while,
 And lay me down, her weary one,
 Where purpling sunset's parting smile
 Last lingers where the day is done.

Listowel, Ont.