

IF ONE MIGHT LIVE

If one might live ten years among the leaves,
Ten—only ten—of all a life's long day,
Who would not choose a childhood 'neath the
eaves,

Low-sloping to some slender footpath way?

With the young grass about his childish feet,
And the young lambs within his ungrown arms,
And every streamlet side a pleasure seat
Within the wide day's treasure-house of charms.

To learn to speak while young birds learned to
sing,

To learn to run e'en as they learned to fly;
With unworn heart against the breast of spring,
To watch the moments smile as they went by.

Enroofed with apple buds afar to roam,
Or clover-cradled on the murmurous sod,
To drowse within the blessed fields of home,
So near to earth—so very near to God.

How could it matter—all the after strife,
The heat, the haste, the inward hurt, the strain,
When the young loveliness and sweet of life
Came flood-like back again and yet again?

When best begins it liveth through the worst;
O happy soul, beloved of Memory,
Whose youth was joined to beauty, as at first,
The morning stars were wed to harmony.