

IV.

Which of the Powers taught them  
They'd better break than bend ;  
That surrender was dishonour  
And suicide a friend ?

Which of their blushing masters  
Gave them laconic speech,  
Which told them how to practise,  
Which told them *not* to preach ?\*

Which of us "taught them manners",  
The modest word to say,  
Was it "fifty years of Europe",  
Or a "Cycle of Cathay" ?

For how they came to conquer  
Has never yet been told,—  
What furnace forged their temper,  
What goddess cast their mould.

They claim it was their ancestors.  
Lord God ! Should they be right !  
Will our children have such ancestors  
When they put forth to fight ?

*The Orient's wed the Occident—  
Who says he heard a laugh ?  
We wait for Armageddon  
To know the better half.*

\*Could it be the Kaiser ?