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PEACE.

I have known those whose smile was benediction,
Whose voice was dropping balm:
Yet who had passed through storms of great affliction
To find the after-calm.

Perhaps within their hearts some voiceless yearning
Still longed for human love:
Yet did their thoughts, like constant incense burning,
Forever mount above.

Ah me! To learn their holy self-denying,
What bitter pangs it cost,
What nights of tears, what weary days of sighing,
The victory well-nigh lost.

For is there one, ah surely there was never,
Who loving yet could say,
"I will love on, although unloved forever."
And not have wept that day.

They strove in tears, at times almost rebelling
Against the guiding hand,
Sweeter to die of grief than passion quelling,
To follow stern command.

Sweeter to let the heart fulfil its breaking,
And sooner end its grief,
Than to return to patient labor, taking
A wound without relief.

Yet at the last, though without exultation,
Did they victorious rise,
And something that was more than resignation
Shone steadfast in their eyes.