

AT THE END OF A BOOK

When that old Vendor, to whose hand
The loveliest volumes come at last,
Shall thumb you for a trace of good
Enduring though your day be past,

Be not abashed at your small worth ;
His sense is keen ; and there may cling
About your yellowing pages still
Some freshness of the Northern Spring ;

Some echo of the whitethroat's song
From lonely valleys blue with rain,
Ringing across the April dusk
Joy and unfathomable pain ;

Some glamor of the darling land
Of purple hill and scarlet tree,
Of tidal rivers and tall ships
And green diked orchards by the sea ;

A sweep of elm-treed interval
And gravelly floors where herons wade ;
A sigh of wind through old gray barns
With eeriest music ever made.

And will no hint of this outweigh
The faulty aim, the faultier skill,