

descended into the dark valley of the shadows, and has revealed what he has seen, in verse which has no parallel in these later days. I am quite convinced that the mood is not deliberately assumed for artistic purposes. Some day when Bliss Carman's biography comes to be written there may be revealed some particular and poignant reason for "Behind the Arras." I am going to quote a few stanzas for you to judge the poet's strange mood:

"There at the window many a time of year,
 "Strange faces peer.
 Solemn, though not unkind,
 "Their wits in search of something left behind
 "Time out of mind.

"As if they once had lived here, and stole back
 "To the window crack,
 "For a peep which seems to say:
 "Good fortune, brother, in your house of clay;
 "And then good day!

"I hear their footsteps on the gravel walk,
 "Their scraps of talk,
 "And hurrying after, reach
 "Only the crazy sea-drone of the beach
 "In endless speech.

* * * * *

"Degraded shapes and splendid seraph forms,
 "And teeming swarms
 "Of creatures gauzy dim,
 "That cloud the dusk, and painted fish that swim
 "As the weaver's whim;

"And wonderful birds that wheel and hang in the air;
 "And beings with hair,
 "And moving eyes in the face,
 "And white bone teeth and hideous grins, who race
 "From place to place.

"They build great temples to their John-a-Nod,
 "And fume and plod,
 "To deck themselves with gold,
 "And paint themselves like chattles to be sold,
 "And turn to mold.

* * * * *

"With the fall of the leaf comes the wolf, wolf, wolf,
 "The old red wolf at my door;
 "And my hateful yellow dwarf, with his hideous crooked
 laugh,
 "Cries, 'wolf, wolf, wolf' at my door.

* * * * *

"I curse him and he leers; I kick him and he whines;
 "But he never leaves the stone at my door.
 "Peep of day or set of sun, his croakings never done
 "Of the red wolf of despair at my door.

* * * * *

"I cannot guess nor tell; only it comes and comes,
 "As from a vaster world beyond my door,
 "From centuries of eld, the death of freedom knelled
 "A host of mortal fears at my door.

"Then I wake; and joy and youth and fame and love
 and bliss,

"And all the good that ever passed my door,
 "Grow dim, and faint and fade, with the whole world
 unmade,

"To perish as the summer at my door.

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