

## The Kaiser Abdicates

FROM childhood's early hour, where'er I went,  
Ye made my life one long parade of flags  
And trumpets, tossing crests and jingling steel.  
While on my prancing steed I proudly passed  
Ye cheered, and cannons roared their loud applause.

Ah, verily, ye all are fools and blind,  
And love a god to worship, though of clay;  
But I have proved the vainest fool of all—  
A gaudy puppet for your foolish praise.

THEY taught me I was of superior mould  
With godlike ichor coursing in my veins,  
Not to be soiled by marriage bonds with hands  
Like you, who were but pawns wherewith I played  
Ambition's game, and all should count it gain  
And highest duty, at my beck to die  
In thousands, to exalt my fame or feed  
My pride. What were ten thousand lives like  
yours,  
If I won glory for myself or mine?

YE made me what I am. Too well I learned  
And acted on the stage my strutting part.  
Where was the man among you all that told  
Me I was mortal too, the fool of pride  
And self-conceit? Who taught me that a king  
Should guard, e'en as a shepherd guards his flock,  
Whose every life is precious in his sight?