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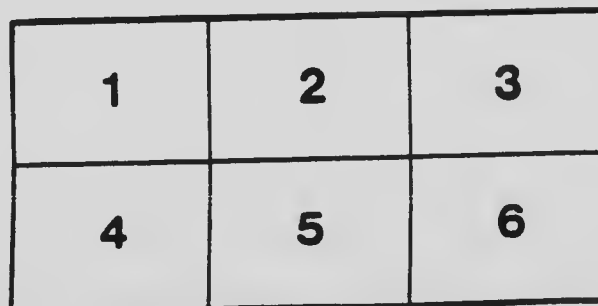
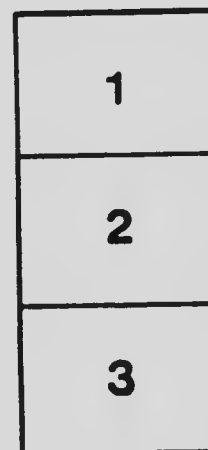
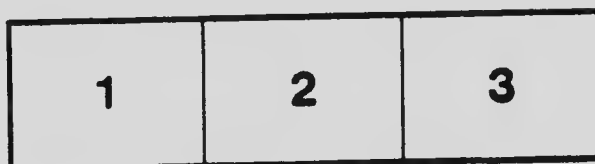
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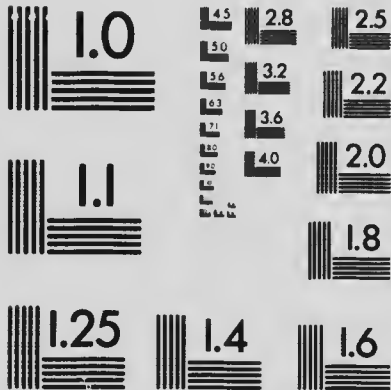
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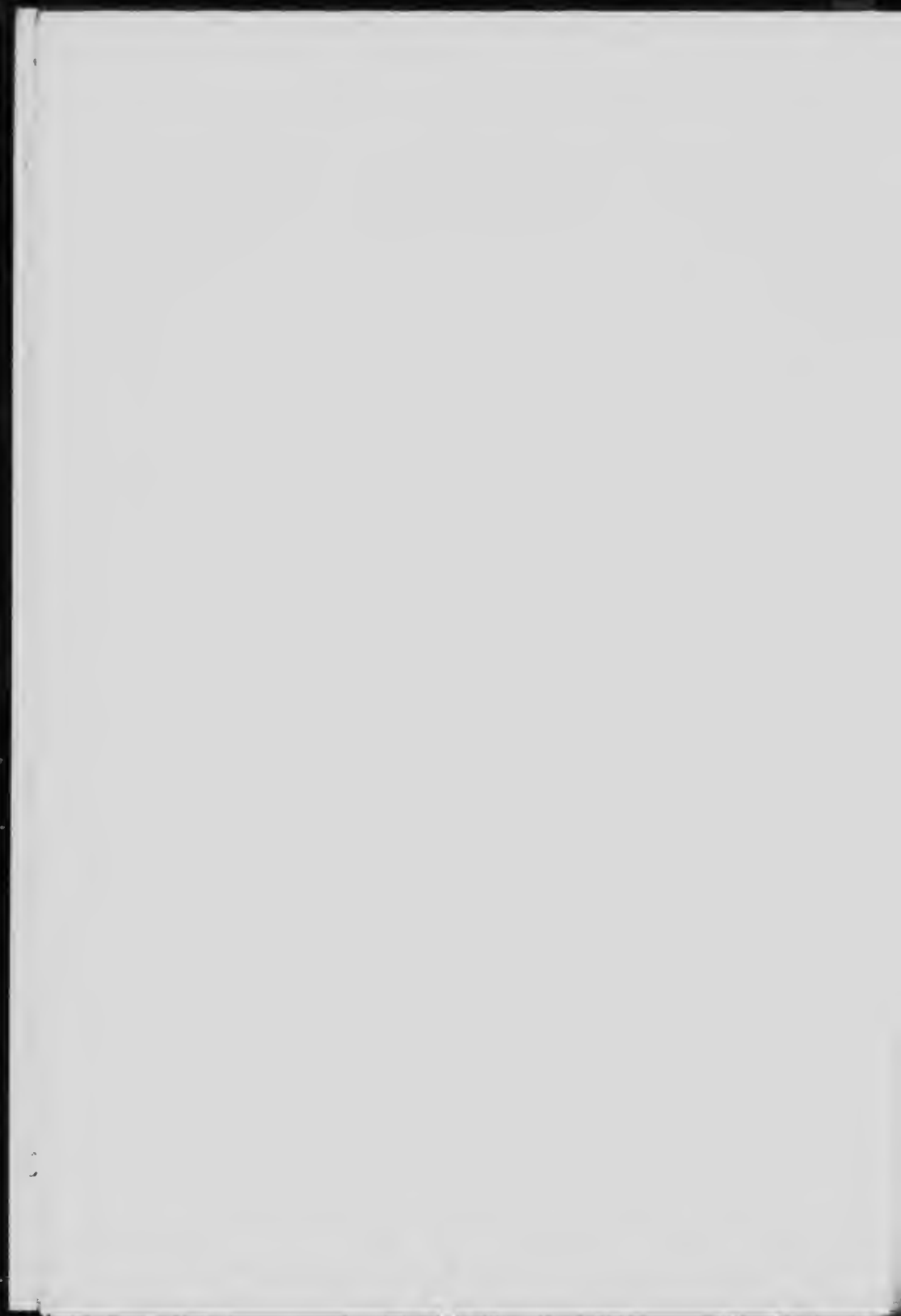
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# POEMS

BY  
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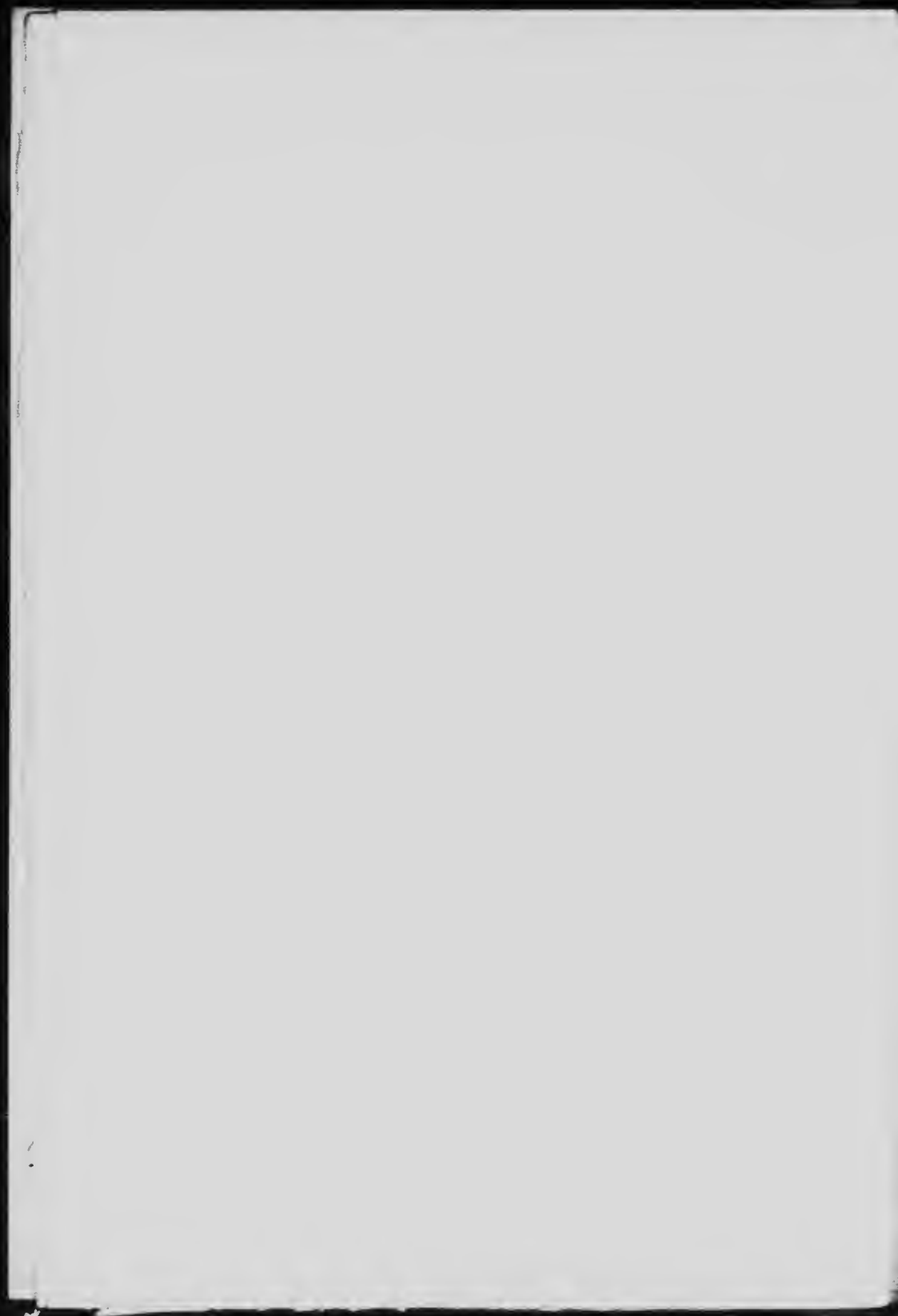
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TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
MY FATHER

Greater than temples, greater than the song  
Of priest and chorister at their craft and art,  
Are the nice balances of right and wrong  
That swing to mercy, in a good man's heart.



#### NOTE

The author's thanks for permission to reprint certain of the poems included in this collection are due the Editors of *Scribner's Magazine*, *McClure's Magazine* and *The Canadian Magazine*.



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**POEMS**





## CREDO

I BELIEVE in God and Fairies,  
Hell and Heaven, hearts' desire.  
I believe in lovers' fancies,  
Morning star and sunset fire.

I believe in work and leisure,  
Idle wine and bleeding hands.  
I believe in pain and pleasure,  
Mountains of the shifting sands.

I believe in good and evil,  
Secret gift and open ill.  
I believe in truth and cavil,  
Aconite and daffodil.

I believe in woman's honour,  
Be it chaste or otherwise.  
I believe in man's endeavour,  
Though it wing in barren skies.

I believe in soul and spirit,  
Sensitive and gossamer.  
I believe in luck and merit,  
Wage-slave and adventurer.

I believe in peace and conquest,  
Orchard-close and field of strife;  
For, in mocking mood or earnest,  
Have I great belief in life.

## I WOULD NO LORDLY OVER-WEAL

I WOULD no lordly over-weal,  
No hound of chase,  
No costly ring, no kingly seal,  
No maid's embrace.

But I would root in roadside clay  
My singing tree  
That travelers of the Western way  
May come to me

And, resting in the cool release,  
Each pilgrim heart  
Find, in my shaded singing, peace  
E'er he depart.

## SONNET

No! In that thou art fair I love thee not —  
Those eyes that hold the rapture and the gleam  
Of stars in misty summers, eyes that seem  
The havening of each outshadowed thought,  
In all save love and gentleness untaught;  
That hair! The ripple of a midnight stream!  
That face! That body! All that others deem  
Most to be loved — I hold them less than  
naught!

For thy true spirit is as far above  
The templed beauty as the star of love  
Set in immortal skies. The soul's design  
Of courage and compassion is so fine  
In undissolved allegiance, that I hold  
Thy mortal loveliness as dross to gold.

## GREY SISTERS

SHE stood upon her life's tumultuous brink  
And all the happy seasons ran to meet  
Her girlhood, and to gather at her feet  
The flowers of youth, the blossoms white and  
pink.

All deeds were hers, all thoughts, to do and  
think,

All the unfashioned, all the endless sweet  
Of love and life — these wove about her feet  
Their chain of years untarnished, link on link.

And as she stood, still hesitant, a child  
Unventured, unrevealed, the stainless vow  
Of youth upon her young lips undefiled,  
From the great outer emptiness there sped  
Three passionless grey sisters of the dead  
That kissed her on the eyes and lips and brow.

## IN THE ORCHARD

I SEE God in my orchard every hour,  
And in the downward pulses of the sun  
I feel His heart beat, and I feel the power  
Of pregnancy in every passing shower;  
And still I find His infinite spirit spun  
In bud and blossom, and His bidding done  
By amber bees, and many a pollened flower  
With mating song and silent orison.

And when night hovers over field and grove  
With shadowy plumage, and all creatures sleep,  
Still on the lake the gulls in waters keep  
A lamping vigil with His stars above,  
And in the vast, unventured hills I see  
The awful measure of His mastery.

## THE RIVER

THROUGH the unclanging city, girt and pent  
With walls of granite, the slow river glides,  
A drowsy woman, wrapped in changing tides  
Of starry vesture, torn and sharply rent  
By stabbing spire and shadowy battlement,  
And, drifting 'neath grey bridges, dully chides  
Her bastion-lovers with a weak lament  
And droops to sleep amid her silent tides.

And from the city, one that had no bread  
And one that wept because his love was dead  
Of his own doing, and such others came  
As were life-thwarted in the streets of shame,  
And from their starveling sleep went down to  
dream  
With the unwakeful woman of the stream.

## PRAYER

LET me not live by twilight, Lord, I pray,  
Nor drowse my life out in the empty grey  
Cathedral shadow where the fountains play.

Oh, drench me in the sun's downpouring light  
O: give me starflung passionate delight!  
Only the noon is splendid, and the night.



## THE CABIN ON THE PLAIN

“THE Spring will come! And then, and then,”  
they said,  
Those blue lips babbling ever of the Spring.  
But through the cabin door the windy sting  
Of prairie winter swept the pillowed head.

“The Spring will come!” Life’s stealthy  
afterglow  
Brightened the worn young face. “With  
flowers of May!”  
But the encircling prairie crept away  
In level wastes of shadowless white snow.

“And when it comes. . .” The hopeful,  
childish breath  
Broke in a shallow whisper, hard and dry.  
The stainless depths of the incurious sky  
Were blue and vacant as the eyes of death.

The Spring wind whispers in the fields of grain,  
The birds sing, and the first faint flowers  
come out,  
Grow bolder, brighter, garland it about. . . .  
The little empty cabin on the plain.

TO \_\_\_\_\_

I LOVE thee for my sorrows; they shall creep  
Into thine eyes and be transfused, and shine  
Like bubbles of a dark, unprisoned wine.  
I love thy laughter for the tears I weep.

And for my sins I love thee; they shall hide  
Their darkness in thy bright, untroubled breast  
And feed thine innocence, as poisonous weeds  
    are blest

In burial to feed the fairest garden-side.

And to the world thy laughter and thy grace  
Shall be more lovely for the gifts I bear;  
For sorrow shall have touched thy shining face,  
And pity, thy quiet breast, with trembling care.

## SARDONYX

THERE lives beside the Tyrrhene sea  
An artisan, who lovingly  
Gives all his days of sun or shade  
In pleasant labour, love-repaid,  
To carving faces, grave or gay  
As sard or as chalcedony.  
And as he works the veinèd stone  
His passing fancies to enthrone,  
So do I write with pen and ink  
The dreams I dream, the things I think.  
And as each careless day destroys  
His cameos (such fragile toys!)  
I dare not hope this verse of mine  
May even live so long a time.  
He labours less with hands than heart  
As I do now, with lesser art,  
But we are equals, man to man,  
In pleasures of the artisan!

CHANSON À DEUX

As unto us is given  
One birth, one death,  
So, under widest heaven,  
One sense, one breath

Of downward winds love-laden  
Is mine, is thine;  
Be joy thy love's hand-maiden,  
As song is mine.

## MY LADY OF THE LIGHT CANOE

If the bent, hurrying god should say,  
"Go, live again thy happiest day!"  
With what a glad, swift-joyous heart  
I'd run, and thrust the boughs apart,  
Stoop to the water's edge, and you,  
My Lady of the light canoe.

Out where the vigorous sunlight pours  
A flood of gold on the tumbled floors,  
Our paddles dip to the running wave—  
Ah! Youth is merry! And Youth is brave,  
And the haven of Youth is the Isle of Charms  
And the wings of Youth are swift, brown arms!

My Lady of the light canoe,  
Go wind and weather well with you?  
And do you still loose down your hair,  
And have you still no heavier care  
Than making tea and toast for two,  
My Lady of the light canoe?

## SPRING

UNDER the frozen sod she lay  
And could not smile or weep;  
But grief was with him all the day  
And grievous was his sleep.

Above her grave the shrunken earth  
Was garmented a-new;  
She could not see the greening birth  
Of grasses, edged with dew.

She could not hear the bluebirds sing  
Of matings in the wood;  
But he could sense the yearning spring  
In every straining bud.

And as he walked a midnight street,  
From gaping windows wide  
Came light and lilt of dancing feet  
That would not be denied.

O Earth, be merciful and kind  
To her within thy trust;  
Pray God the dead be deaf and blind,  
Pray God that dust is dust!

## GIVE ME YOUR EYES TO LOVE

GIVE me your eyes to love, daughter of glad-  
ness!

Warm as the ocean by midsummer noon,  
Cool as the ripples that riot their madness  
Down the long river-reaches a-slope from the  
moon!

Give me your eyes to love, daughter of sorrow!  
Soft as rose petals asleep in the rain,  
Sad as the midnight with never a morrow,  
Darker than Death, and his plumage of pain!

Give me your eyes to love, now and hereafter!  
Eyes of the spirit in shadow or light,  
That all the day long I may live with their  
laughter  
And bide with their sorrow the span of the  
night!

## THE CHOSEN

God has designed  
To ride the wind  
A lustful Death  
With icy breath,  
And woe betide  
The builder's pride,  
The poet's youth,  
The dreamer's truth,  
For He has need  
Of urgent deed,  
Of valiant sight,  
Of rhymed delight,  
And never trees  
May shelter these  
From that swift form  
Astride the storm.



## THE GREY ROOM

Oh, this grey room with love is lit  
As room has never been,  
And urgent fire-flung envoys flit  
Between us and between;

And though they speak a stranger tongue,  
Unused beyond our door,  
No sweeter song was ever sung  
In any room before.

## CONTENT

DECEMBER sits a-loft the sky  
And plucks the snow-clouds' wintry fleece;  
I hear his snarling hounds go by,  
    But in my house is peace

The frost is patterned on the pane;  
The shivering storm runs bare above;  
The trees are naked in the lane,  
    But in my house is love.

GOOD TO WALK THE WORLD WITH

Good to walk the world with,  
Such a mate!  
Good to love and live with,  
Soon and late.

Good to take God's sending,  
Though it be  
But a by-path wending  
To the sea.

Good to walk the path with  
Such a friend!  
Good to sail the sea with,  
At the end.

## CARPENTRY

In this belittered room the candle-sprite  
Cuts and is quit of the uneven walls,  
Flickers and dies on chisel, plane and saw,  
But dances ever by the unfinished crib  
As if the unborn tenant, girl or boy,  
Already peered between the latticed chinks  
And loved the play, and laughed with shining  
eyes.

And on that younger face the glory shone  
Of our own Springtime; and the love that fled  
Into our friendlier summer shyly came  
And put his arms about me, wistfully.

## VIGIL

THAT he be true, this pledge of ours,  
We still must hold above  
The cradle of his dawning hours  
The vigil of our love,

And touch those blue, unclouded eyes  
With rays of tempered fire,  
And steer the spirit's frail surmise  
To venture its desire,

Not with the torrent's mad delights,  
But on that inland sea  
Of charted reefs and steady lights  
That is self-mastery.

## TO A CHILD

I CLING to thee, as thou  
To laughter clingest;  
I sing to thee, as thou  
To thy heart singest.

Thou, whom the elves make free  
Of elfin lands —  
Child, are they aught to thee,  
My clinging hands?

Thou fluttering baby-bird  
On fairy wing,  
Sweeter thy songs unheard  
Than those I sing.

Starry my child always  
Hides from the morrow;  
Knows he that age is grey —  
Age that is sorrow?

## JUNE ROSES

SOFT as the leisured sunset  
My roses take the night,  
And some are pale with loving,  
And some with love are bright.

Theirs is the quiet evening,  
The deep and starry breath  
Of skies that know not sorrow,  
Of dew that knows not death.

O roses of St. Eloi,  
That glimmer in the night —  
Why are they pale, thy petals?  
Why are thy petals bright?

O roses of St. Eloi,  
That breathe the battle-breath —  
Pale with the dews of anguish,  
Bright with the blood of death.

## IN NO MAN'S LAND

WOUNDED, he prayed for death,  
And silently death came,  
And he was glad.  
He felt the easing of his muscles,  
A sweet throbbing of music in his wounds,  
The dew, cool on his wrists and lips.  
And he was glad,  
Glad when death came, O Mother.



## BEAUTY

GREAT GOD! What blindness of the living eyes  
Was ours that we went knocking at the door  
Of her whose sterile breast and barren thighs  
Are desolation and the mounds of war.  
Now, in the night of terror and surprise,  
We crouch and tremble; Beauty is no more;  
In her sweet bed a cynical foul whore  
Laughs shrilly when the heart of childhood dies.

Oh! Where is Beauty, innocent, enraptured  
Of the new leaf, the song of the birds, the wind,  
Shadows of trees, night and the clear, uncapt-  
tured  
Glory of morning? Shall our children find  
The print of her swift feet, and leap and run  
With her bright limbs against the golden sun?

FROM THE MOUNTAINS



## THE HERMIT OF WHISPERING CREEK

THE people say I've lived so long  
(A thousand year, if I'm not wrong)  
In this old shack, with floor for bed,  
That I've got sawdust in my head.  
We'll call them fools, and let it go;  
They think I'm mad; they are, I know,  
For not a soul of them can hear  
My water-voices, singing clear!  
Their city is a passing lie,  
But these stream-voices shall not die,  
At least — God save me from that fear,  
They've been my friends a thousand year!

Stranger, you know old Siwash Bill,  
Who lives behind the Eight-Mile Hill?  
Don't know old Bill? His son's your guide!  
The half-breed? Yes. Bill lost his pride.  
An Oxford man he says he was.  
Left England for the Big Because —  
No matter that! But Old Bill said,  
And swore it on his father's head,  
That he had heard (and was not drunk,  
And was not dreaming in his bunk)  
That he had heard a preacher say  
This stream was being ditched away!  
He said the pilot had it straight,  
The whole damned project, name, and date,  
To steal my water to reclaim

Dry Valley from its "wasteful shame."  
Dry Valley -- twenty miles away!  
And just to grow their oats and hay,  
They'd take this melted snow of mine  
And coax it down a surveyed line,  
And smooth it gently, like a lake,  
For fear the ditch should wash and break,  
And hamper it with pipe and drain,  
And use it common like the rain,  
A-smearing it across the field  
To give their dust a double yield.  
And they can do it -- that's the worst!  
A fellow doesn't fyle his thirst,  
Record his mate, and God defend  
That I may never brand a friend!  
The stream is mine, in oral fee,  
Because the waters speak to me.  
A thousand year they've called my name --  
Has any man a prior claim?  
Not by the Greater Right! But then,  
I know your courts of lawyer-men,  
Their book-wise wisdom, bound in calf,  
And how the very judge would laugh  
And ask me for the cubic-gauge,  
The signed and sealed recording page --  
No justice there! And that is why  
I fear these mates of mine may die  
And leave their places bare and cold,  
With me beside them sick and old.  
Sometimes (perhaps my hearing's poor,

I hope to God it's nothing more)  
The voices seem to falter out  
And whisper, where they used to shout,  
Seem kind of sad, and weary, too,  
Not laughing like they used to do;  
And then I think of what Bill said,  
And seem to see the stony bed  
A-glaring at me in the sun,  
With all the singing voices dumb!  
And then I watch the water sink  
Below that lower basin brink,  
Go down and down, and how I fret  
And feel to find if it is wet,  
And wonder if the flow will stop,  
If they have stolen every drop,  
And clench my hands, and grit my teeth,  
And curse that irrigation thief —  
Until the bursting clouds bring rain  
That sends it flooding back again!  
That's how we stand — I left the town  
Because the people trod me down;  
I left your love and hate and lies,  
Your city with its peering eyes;  
I called the old life at an end  
And took this stream for wife and friend!  
And now — hush! Listen to the stream  
And tell me, Stranger, does it seem  
Not quite so loud, and is it low,  
Low — lower than a while ago?  
Hush! Hark the voices — bend your ear —

What's that? Speak louder! I can't  
hear —

What's that? No answer! What? Good-  
bye?

You're leaving this old channel dry  
And going round the other way  
To help them grow . . . their oats . . . and  
hay;

You're leaving me . . . you've made the  
start;

Don't like the ditch . . . but friends must  
part.

Remember you? But, God above!

You know I gave you all my love.

I'll not forget! Christ help me, lad!

They're dying — and I'm going mad!

## THE PIONEER BREED

WE are our mothers' children;  
This is our sires' behest:—  
Lay your back to the burden,  
Turn your face to the West!

Go! Where the stag breaks cover  
And lone coyotes cry,  
Over the uncrossed river,  
Under the smooth-rimmed sky.

Delving your league-long furrow  
Deep in the tufted loam,  
Sleeping against the morrow  
Snug in your wattled home,

Sowing the wheat and the clover,  
Warily understand  
You are the man and the lover,  
She is the virgin land.

What if the land be barren,  
Arid, rotten with rain?  
Know ye the ways of women?  
Go to your bride again!

Hold her against her season,  
Hold, and bid her give birth!  
Love with a blind unreason,  
Lord of the pregnant earth!



## LEGEND

*They drew his corpse from the bleeding thorns.  
(Beware the Buck with the Golden Horns!)*

*Hunter was he and he went astray.  
(The way of the woods is a woman's way.)*

He followed game as a hunter should,  
Until he saw in a lonely wood  
The Buck with the Golden Horns — ah! woe!  
He dropped his arrows and knife and bow,  
He dropped his pouch and his flinty spear,  
To follow after that bounding deer.  
Faster and faster the phantom ran,  
Faster and faster followed the man,  
Into a valley, over a stream,  
Soft as a shadow, swift as a dream!  
Higher and higher! They meet and merge  
On the ragged lip of a chasm's verge —

*Hunter was he and he went astray.  
(The way of the woods is a woman's way.)*

*They drew his corpse from the bleeding thorns.  
(Beware the Buck with the Golden Horns!)*

## WINE OF THE MORNING

WINE of the morning, once, in every vein  
I felt your swiftest rapture; once, I knew  
When the sun rose that I should drink of you,—  
Drink and drink deep, be drunk and drink again.  
Wine of the morning, once there was no pain  
In your shrill, tinkling bells of steely dew,  
No sorrow in the pine-sweet breath of you —  
Wine of the morning, rouse my blood again!

Borne in love's brimming cup by one whose art  
Is to keep pure the childhood of her heart,  
Wine of the morning, come; the dawn wind stirs  
With leafy breath night's shadowy gossamers;  
Child of the morn, be fleet! I, too, would run  
My youth out in the ardours of the sun.

## ABOVE THE TREE-LINE

IMPREGNANT and outworn! Was ever bloom  
Of flower upon these mountains, living fruit  
Ripe for the lips (red lips and reedy flute!)  
Of lovers, by some wavering water-plume?  
Or were they ever old and ever mute,  
Born without youth, in the shut hours of gloom,  
Born without love, in chambers destitute,  
A brooding menace and a nameless doom?

They turn and shoulder from their beds of silt  
In desolate sickness; and the inclement morn  
Looks down upon them with cold eyes of scorn,  
And the green valley shudders at the guilt  
Of those bleak summits, brute and uncreate,  
Whose soul is spent, whose spirit devastate.

## THE SONG OF THE WINDS

ALL the bright day we wandered and were  
proud  
As the free winds, and with them stormed the  
height  
And swayed the thrilling grasses in our flight,  
So swift were we to press against the cloud  
Our happy faces. Riotous and loud  
We roused the lonely mountain with our might  
Until he laughed with us in our delight  
And crest to crest threw back the vows we  
vowed.

Oh, love is of the mountains ; old as they,  
Torn and triumphant as the riven crest  
That fingers to the sky ; the ancient prey  
Of every wind that strikes the open breast.  
Our love is of the mountains, furious, strong,  
And every wind of heaven is our song.

## ASHNOLA

CHILD of the rooted earth,  
Slender Ashnola,  
Fern of the waking woods,  
Dawn winds uphold you.

Deep from the breathing hills  
Animate waters  
Sing to your secret heart  
Songs as mysterious.

Noon, from her flaming height,  
Bends her down vainly ;  
Dark, from his kenneled depth,  
Comes not to vex you.

Child of the rooted earth,  
Slender Ashnola,  
Fern of the waking woods,  
Dawn winds uphold you.

