

AN ODE
ON THE
CANADIAN
SOLDIERS

WHO
FELL NEAR YPRES.
WITH OTHER POEMS.

By
WARNEFORD MOFFATT.



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A Book of Poems
by
The Same Author

2/6 *New Canadian Poems* 2/6

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LA NOUVELLE REVUE, Paris, France.

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ERRATUM

On page 25, first verse, line 3 should read—
No great results, no hopes fulfilled we see,

LONDON: SIMMONS, MARSHALL,
HAMILTON, KENT & CO., LTD.

1916

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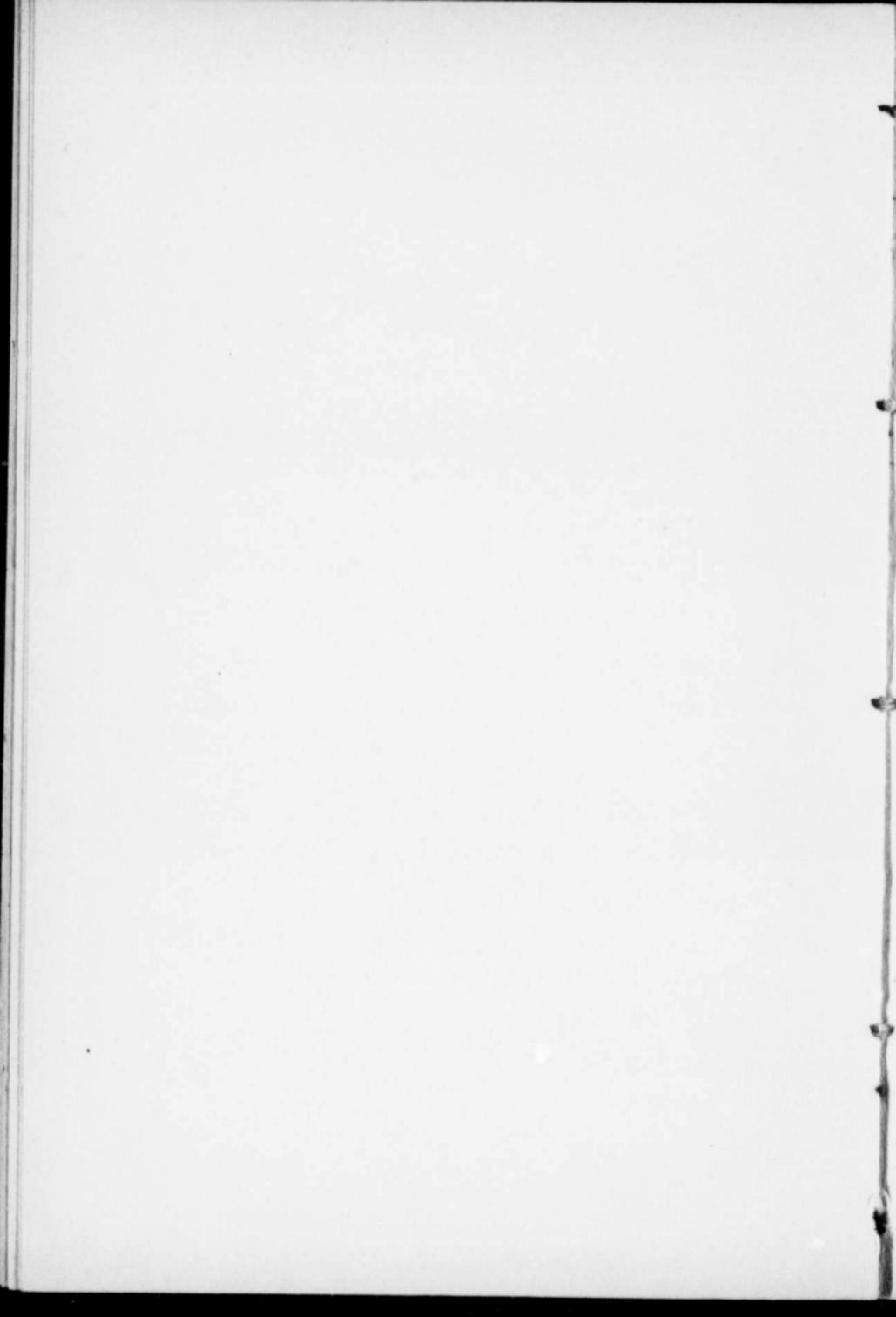
PREFACE

IF any one from the Oversea Dominions were asked why he came into this European War, he would answer "For King and Country." By loyal service he gains a high reward.

Among the men or women, however, who remain at home, there is also a patriotism which does its duty in active help for the War, or by that exercise of patience which is called out through love's many sacrifices.

To the courageous though sad at heart—wherever such an one is working and enduring, the hope is ventured that these few poems may appeal.

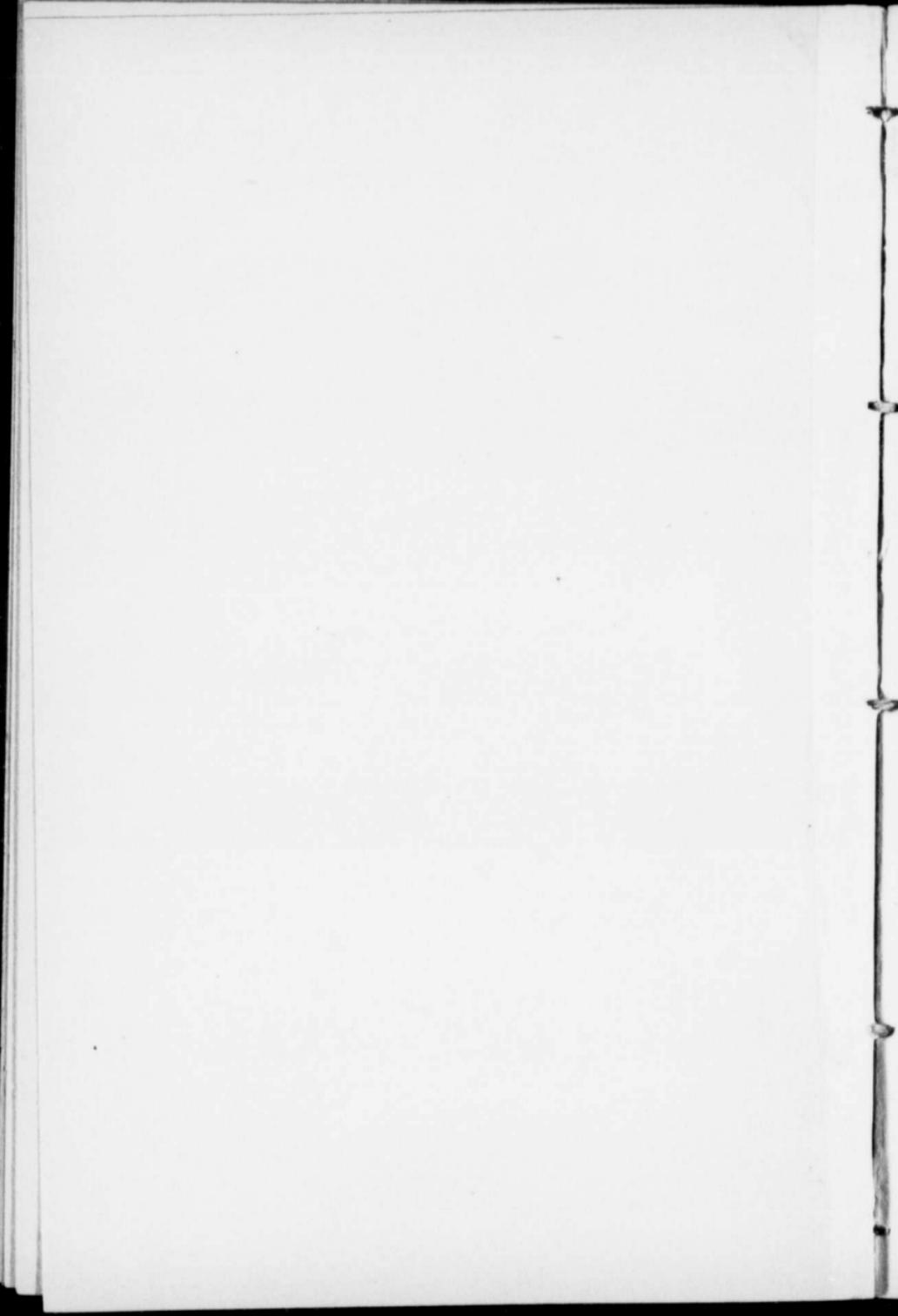
April 1916.



DEDICATED
TO
THOSE WHO MOURN

"The former things are passed away"

REV. XXI. 4

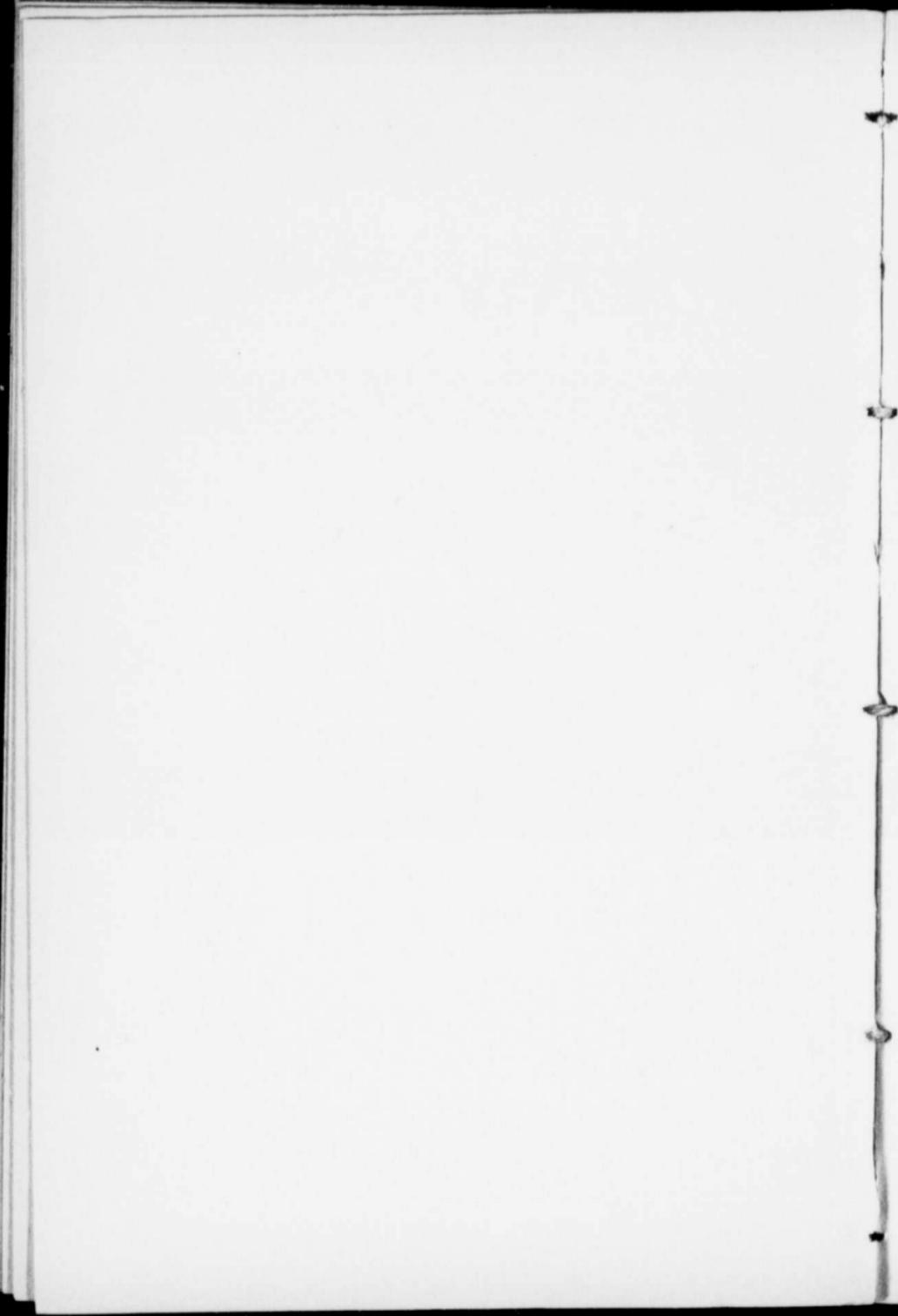


"Our love, our hope, our sorrow is not dead."

SHELLEY

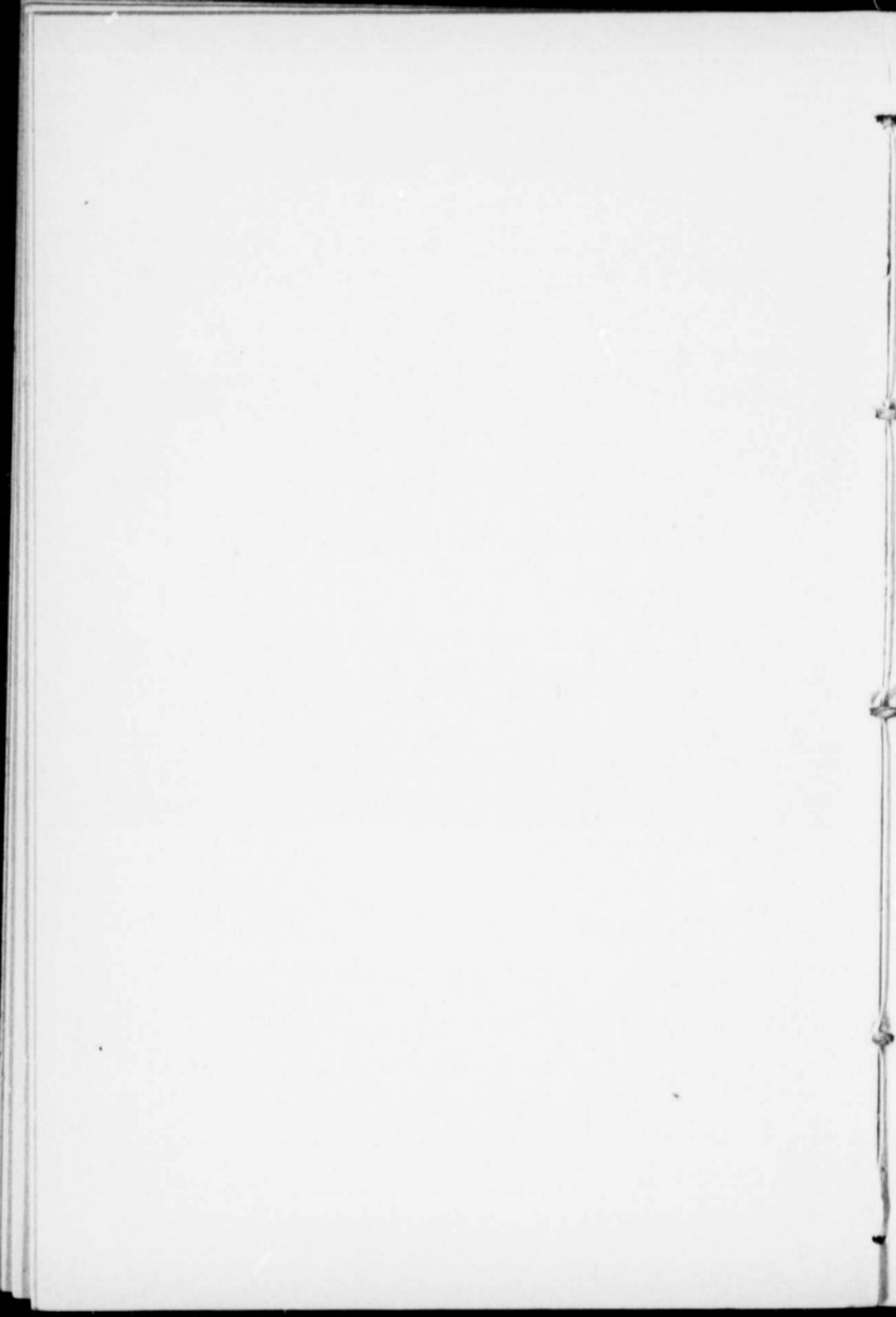
*"We keep your memories well: O in your store
Live not our best joys treasured evermore?"*

ROBERT BRIDGES



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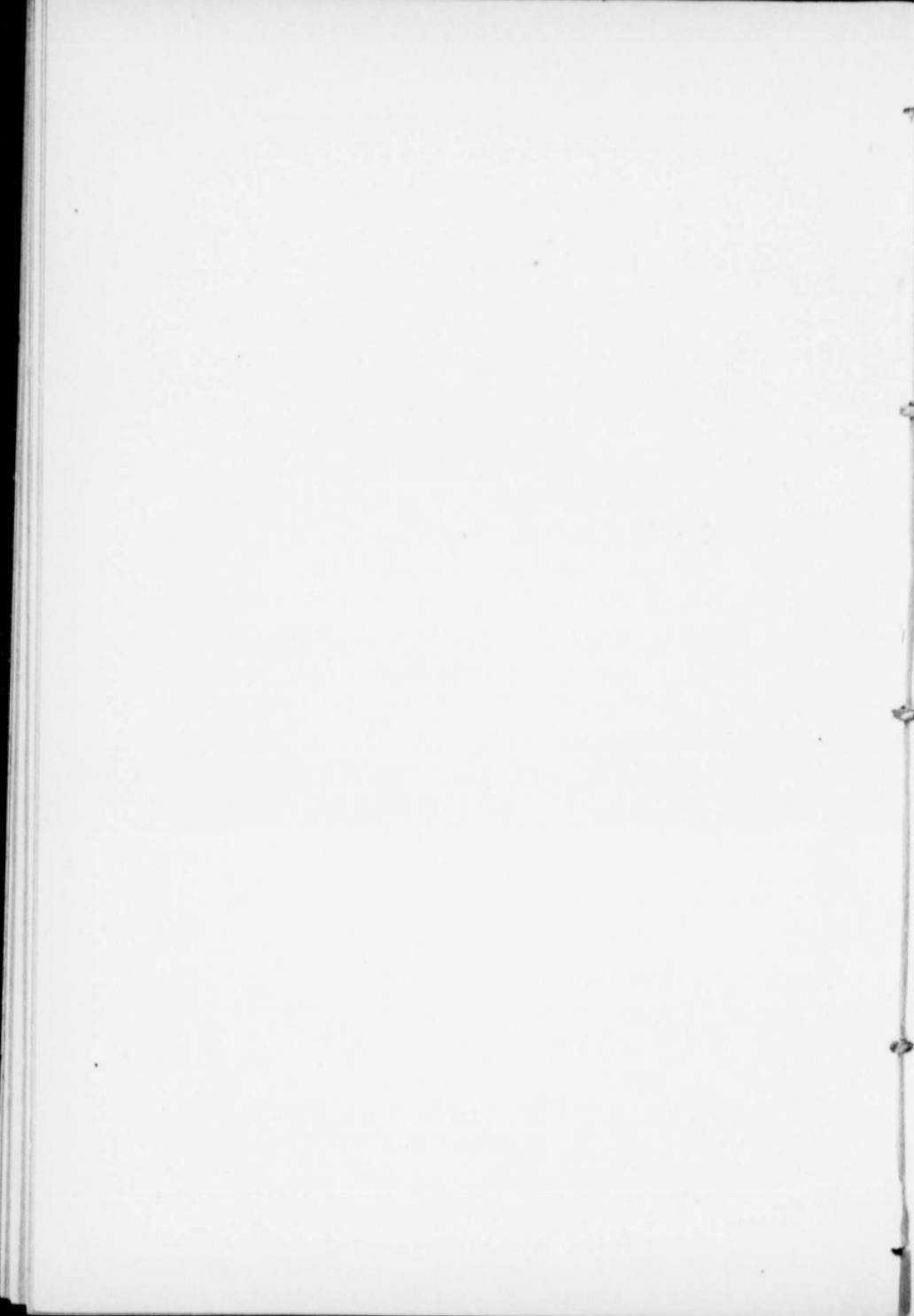
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LOVE

LOVE seeks for self no sounding fame,
Yet cannot live devoid of aim,
But longs through ecstasy or pain
To win the gift of perfect gain,
And strives to bind as years unroll
Her own soul's wealth with life's one soul.

Love has not here a settled home,
Nor Temple crowned by swelling dome,
Where rest and worship may enthrall
The senses with contentment's call,
She works where'er in stretch of space
Grief leaves unsoothed its lonely trace.



“DEATH IS EVIL”¹

AS noiselessly like bird of night
Death sweeps along life's many ways,
Wide desolation marks his flight,
Dull vacancy the victim's gaze.

Down flowery path, to busy mart
This keen-eyed watcher deftly goes,
Unseen, unfelt, till by his dart
The mortal that dread presence knows.

A cry of fear, a grappling fight,
Perchance a sometimes brief escape,
Sore wounded, in dishevelled plight
As woman from half-conquering rape.

A cry for help, then dumb despair,
Sharp struggle, resignation's calm,
Strong murmured word of soul-born prayer
Low passing into silent psalm.

¹ “The gods have so judged : had it been good, they would die.”

SAPPHO (*Edition, Wharton*).

“ Death is Evil ”

Dark stillness under ravening beak,
Loud wail upon life's crowded way,
Slow clearing of the battle's reek
And love in madness all astray.

High rising over war-stained ground,
Death—only Death, unrivalled flies,
Last champion of Hell's vengeance, crowned
By grief and unavailing sighs.

A THOUGHT FROM THE
" EXETER BOOK "

COULD we like the Phœnix
 Frail with by-gone years,
 In some nest embedded
 Shed all mortal fears,
And while fire devours us—
 By a spirit stroffg
Full of bliss exulting,
 End our day in song ;

Could our gathered ashes,
 Pure from burning strife,
Cling and cleave together,
 Feel the gleam of life ;
Till with flesh invested,
 Youth renewed again
Stands amid earth's forces
 Man among all men :

Would we, like the Phœnix,
 Winsomely upgrown,
Seek the sun-bright dwelling
 We before had known,

A Thought from the "Exeter Book"

And once more through ages
Here contented be,
Once more from the flame's heart
Rise resistlessly?

Would we world-possessions
Eagerly retake,
Leaving spirit shelters
Face the long death-ache?
Ah! I think life's journey—
Well, serenely made,
Naught could call us backward
Down Time's colonnade.

DEAD FACES

WHO has not looked on faces of the dead,
On faces known in love's lost golden
hour,

Nor asked that question, "What from here has
fled,

Bereft those features of their radiant power?"

Who has not looked and wept? Half-startled,
seen

The cold, blank, set indifference of death,
That instant, all-impenetrable screen
Between life's presence and the vanished breath?

Great mystery of failure! Flesh-decay
Fast changing into nothingness of shape.
Once moulded were these forms beneath a sway
Uplifting man beyond the man-like ape.

Does life press on to ruin at the last?
Where shines the glow of love's enchanting
smile,

Which came to cheer us when our hearts were
cast

In fell despondency, unnerved awhile?

Dead Faces

Where is love's glow? Where is pulsation's
dance

That throbbed with energies above each ill?
Where now is beaming life's triumphant glance
That well we knew, and know death cannot
kill?

Gone from our ken like things which ne'er had
been.

Gone as unknowingly they started here,
But living somewhere, somewhere though unseen,
While human hope yet seeks them with a tear.

ON THE CANADIAN SOLDIERS
WHO FELL NEAR YPRES

22ND-28TH APRIL, 1915

HUSH! Hush! All softly tread
Above the valiant dead,
Our heroes buried under Belgium's
clay,

Canadians who lost naught in battle's day.

Though wearied not forlorn
They sleep until the morn
Shall break encrimsoned o'er expiring Time,
With fragrance wafted from life's nightless clime.

Hard suffering is gone.
No more their stern eyes, wan
With eager straining through the poison-gas
Can face unawed each hurrying German mass.
Let not the sad bells toll!
Let not our drum-beats roll!
Stand here in silence but with pride of race
And thank high heaven by this resting-place.

Ye breezes bear the tale,
Out, out on Ocean's gale,

On the Canadian Soldiers who fell

From Flanders to our Empire down the seas,
That love of country scorned the love of ease.
 They weighed no pro and con
 Where honour's pathway shone,
They heard the call of duty's clear command
And perished for their king, their mother-land.

 Pale maple leaves of Spring
 With Belgium's wild flowers bring,
Our unforgetting tenderness to prove,
And deck their graves with gentleness of love.
 They have not lived in vain,
 Pursued no selfish gain,
But breathless, black and struggling for relief,
Sank murmurless yet strengthened under grief.

 Let storm-clouds gather in
 More densely o'er the din
Of millions urged by hatred into strife,
By mad ambition to draw fury's knife ;
 Our men whose hearts were true,
 Who knit race-threads anew,
Who sought from bondage freedom's full release,
Though cold and still can speak from homes of
 peace.

 Each lingering mourner sighs.
 Low, low from vision flies

near Ypres, 22nd-28th April, 1915

The German genius once a human guide,
But wounded now a dying suicide.

Brave heroes in the gloom

Of death's untimely doom,

Sleep on and rest beneath War's lowering sky,
You lived like men, you taught men how to die.



THE LAST ENEMY

UNFETTERED Time! How steadily
you flee—
Ignoring man, along determined way ;
No great results, no hopes unfilled we see,
But vanish also like the setting day.

Youth lifts the babe from childhood's happy
sphere,
Till man's bright glories high uplifted bloom,
Yet all progresses through each passing year
In circling courses onward to the tomb.

Impenetrable ill as if a pall
Hangs o'er our sight and hides the coming
morn,
When light ablaze will break, when life will call
To waiting life, "The world is newly born."

Ah, Death ! We know you—cumulating dust,
An enemy who conquers in the mind.
Your sway is limited, at last you must
Yourself die out, yourself to self resigned.

The Last Enemy

Your inmost nature doth betoken end.

Your icy fingers make no answering grasp,
And quick aversion grows while changes lend
A deeper sorrow to your cruel clasp.

Wreak then your worst on unresisting clay,
Far from Sun-glory fast consume the fair,
Lead love and courage, honour to decay,
And sooner you shall learn your own despair.

IN MEMORIAM

WHEN touched with keenest grief love's
heaving heart
First feels the anguish of a sudden woe,
And life-threads of long years lie torn apart,
Forever broken by a fatal blow ;

When round the confines of some well-known
place
Where every corner speaks to memory,
Stirs not the hand, nor smiles the welcome face,
But hours are dreary like a fog-bound sea ;

When all of life seems as it used to be,
And in the silence we can almost hear
The footstep's brisk approach, till fantasy
Brings back a voice upon the listening ear ;

When all is changed, and all we knew has gone
With mournful form, with sympathetic tear,
When weeks appear as careless days move on,
Then, Death, you have your gloomy triumph
here.

In Memoriam

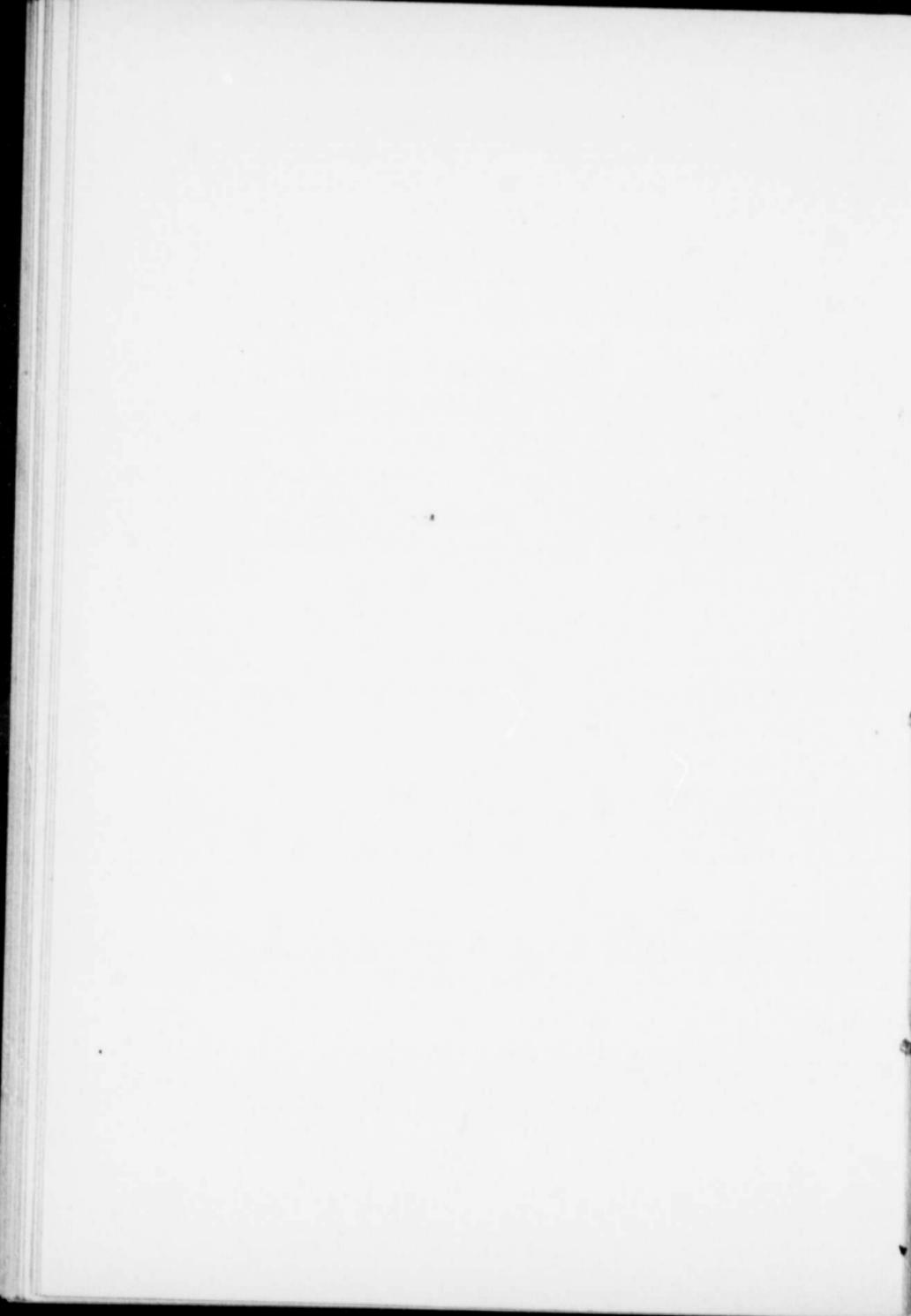
A gloomy triumph to an end not won,
But conquest yields no final fruit of toil,
Your master-stroke has Nature's work undone,
Sent down its type in failure to the soil,—

And, there remains the lingering sense of pain,
The heavy numbness of unspoken woe,
An absent form which effort strives in vain
To fashion briefly with its living glow.

Has Death then conquered? Must the callous
grave
Contain loved features that displayed the soul?
Awhile, 'tis sadly so; but Evil's wave
Again will curl, will curl and break its roll.

A PRAYER

IN glory and splendour
The high God is dwelling,
In songs round His throne
Swing the hosts He has made,
Up, up to Him soaring
From rough paths of earth,
Come the souls that in dimness
God's beauty have seen.
Ah, God! 'mid the love-light,
The peace of Thy dwelling,
Hark! Hark to the souls
Rising upward from earth!
Show Christ in His glory
Their Brother, Redeemer,
Give rest to these weary,
These war-weary souls.
O Lord of the living,
Creator of Worlds,
Inspire with Thy Spirit
Each man to his deed,
Till full in love's glory
With songs round Thy throne,
We suffer Thy splendour
To serve Thee, our King.



O NOTHING LOVED ON
EARTH IS EVER VAIN

O NOTHING loved on earth is ever vain,
If looking onward into growth and
change

We feel with life a new relation formed,
And see no labour lost in aimless drift.

O all things loved on earth are firmly held,
When through an intuition once we see
The high achievement of a Spirit-thought
For helping man to reach ideal ends.

O naught of heart-things of the passing earth
Can pass from memory with Time away,
When man makes life one long triumphal road
In love's great service by herself revealed.

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