SIGNETS OF THE MUSE
by
GEORG CHAPMAN
Acknowledgments

The author wishes to thank the following Magazines for use of material printed in these Publications: The Apollonian, Alentour, Bozart-Westminster, and Silhouettes.

Especial gratitude is in order in reference to these News Sheets (presently incorporated in The Lowell Sun), namely, The Lowell Sunday Telegram, The Courier-Citizen, and, in particular, The Lowell Evening Leader. All these Publications printed the author's initial and (very) green offerings. Wanting their encouragement this Compilation might well be of a lesser scope.

SPIRIT, the Magazine which above any other has advanced these efforts, has published, among others, the following: The Aging of Agnes, Senior And Junior, A Plea To My Beatrice, Spring Genesis, Autumn Hour, Return To Wisdom, Christ: The Key, Rock Versus Stone, On The Coming of the Word, Whom Beauty Wounds, God Has Shaped Each One In Strangeness, The Dual One, Who Bears A Dream, Such Is My Shield, Padraic Longs For Heaven, Knell, and Now. — "from Spirit, copyrighted by the Catholic Poetry Society of America."

Finally, the author is deeply indebted to The Reader's Digest for use of certain data from Mr. James' article "The Children's Crusade," the same having appeared in the Digest issue for May, 1934. (See Notes: rear).
ADDITIONAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To Mr. Willis S. Beane, (deceased), once City Editor of the (since defunct) Lowell Evening Leader, along with his Associate, the then-Managing Editor of the same Sheet, Mr. Charles E. Gallagher, the author of these SIGNETS owes a debt for initial encouragement in hitching his “Pegasus” to an ascendent Star. The Immaculate Conception gained much of its “form” from Mr. Beane’s insistence on terseness allied to “rolling cadences”. This same poem was the first of my works to be purchased, that heart-lifting green-accolade being bestowed by Mr. Gallagher. Within the same year (1934), the Lowell-born Cardinal O’Connell lent what might be termed a red-coronal in permitting the Honor of his Name and Title in association with these verses, they being the more pertinent for him in that his Birth-day coincided with the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Also of the Staff of the Leader in that period was Mrs. (Mountford) Benedict. Of the many benefits she extended toward stabilizing the author’s tentative attempts, none transcends her capable and warm Critique on the occasion when the brochure “From Many Roots” was issued by Alentour House, 1939: Mr. Michael Largay its Publisher. Mrs. Benedict was the first to cite the closing line of KNELL—“Man is caught by what he chases”, as being “most memorable”: a summation frequently echoed even to the present time by various critics.

An equal warmth of encouragement has accrued to the author from the able and gracious pen of Miss Anne Donaghue, present Editor of the Ladies’ Section of The Lowell Sun, being foremost among those who rightly summed up the intrinsic merits of his first published essay, Through A Glass Darkly. Deep gratitude is also due Miss Donaghue and her sister, Mrs. Mary McCabe for the practical assistance lent in advancing the sales of his brochure, A SONG OF A CHINESE NIGHT.

Finally, (and to mention but one more out of several showing an equal interest, there is the City Editor of the SUN, Mr. Charles Sampas, to whom pronounced gratitude is due for various favors, among them the initial publication of Lines On The Beautiful Church Of Saint Michael: (Lowell). (Feb. 18, 1947.)

Singular among all is Lowell’s Librarian, Mr. Hugh F. Downey, who has gone so far as to contribute gift-volumes from his own private Collection, that I might not be hampered for proper reference-material in various literary efforts, particularly in respect to the (unfinished) novel, The Rock And The Stone. Also to his able Assistant, Miss Alice Donehue, an equal gratitude is owing, especially for her kindness and gracious deference to Tassie Pan, when that sweet-Spirit was among us, and haunted the Library stalls in search of whatever would serve her Kiminkamor’s Pen.

G.C.

[iii]
Tribute Preface

An equal-sharer with Tassie Pan in guiding the author to such realization of his intrinsic-potential as these Sheaves may illustrate, is one who has earned the reverent-affection of this heart:—that genial Lion of the Christian Brotherhood, famed even in his teaching-days, and known abroad as at home

Brother Leo,
Dean and Chancellor Emeritus of St. Mary’s College, California.

Of all the Personages who have honored this Collection in permitting their Names in association with these Works, he alone was not approached with a request for permission to include this poor “salute”; for most poor and inadequate it is as against the quarter-century-debt it strives to acknowledge.

This omission of a courtesy never before neglected was predicated upon my knowledge of this illustrious Scholar’s modesty, and a consequent fear that he might possibly deny me the pleasure-injustice derived from acknowledging the trenchant rebukes, inspiring encouragements, and especially the magnanimous attitude which marked the innumerable Critiques dispatched from the ivied Halls of St. Mary’s to the poplar-spires of Edna Avenue;—these in prompt-response to appeals from one less learned than Keats “in the dower of spanning wisdom,” and sweating away in near-despair at the task of evolving what he could only hope would develop into valid “Art.”

Insofar as my Preceptor’s standards have been met, insofar as I have fallen short of them, I have succeeded—or failed. In summation, (employing his Family-Name, which he assumed upon retirement); this Quatrain:

To Francis Joseph Meehan, M.A.*
Kindler of thoughts and of quills,
Who found no truth superfluous;
Who taught that Awe is chief of skills,
Without it, naught magnanimous.

* A body must despair of acquiring any list of Honors from one who, in respect to the striving after the same by others, tersely advises: “As to Degrees, I would have all in double-surety: Get them—and forget them!”

Thus unto the Sage of Casa della Madonna this semi-salvo from the Bard of Varnum Turrets, the same being but a hint of a fuller tribute to the works and achievements of Dr. Meehan when opportunity permits, and certain rafts of profundities yet to be acquired, may afford a more adequate encomium.

Meanwhile, —Palms!

GEORG CHAPMAN

October 8th: 1958.
A question that haunts poets, troubles scoffers of the Art, is this: “What is Poetry?” Briefly stated, Poetry is Truth and Beauty expressed in inevitable terms. Inevitable is the key-word, for lacking this most elusive determinant no “poem” lives much beyond its printing-date. This inevitability when achieved in the prose form, is merely prose-in-seeming. Properly scanned, the obvious poetic qualities are at once apparent, for then the organ-roll of feeling draws on the very tap-root of all responsive hearts:—even as does the “prose”—splendor of “The Gettysburg Address.”

That Poetry has suffered a near-total eclipse in this age can be laid to an appalling ignorance on the part of the general public as to its function in serving and developing man’s understanding of Man. Child-labor received its first telling blow from the delicate hand of Mrs. Browning; even as sub-decent working conditions suffered initial set-back from Hood’s “The Song of the Shirt.” Once the New England Poets rose against the Institution of Slavery, the South heard the iron-knell of inevitable doom reverberating through that unhallowed System. The Ivory Tower throws a broad and potent shadow upon the affairs of men; nor should this writer be amazed if Communism yet trips over a lyre, falls afoul of liberating Song. So closely allied is Religion and Poetry that as one is seen, so the other is found: respected—or despised. A deepening awareness of this interaction by both lay and moral leaders has, at long last, brought about some prospects suggestive of healthier attitudes.

But who writes would not present the modern poet as merely a victim of these jaded times. All too often he has been the chief culprit, selling out to Mammon; taking on the role of a scintillating moron by way of earning the plaudits of mediocre cliques. In their strivings to reduce Revelation to a set or irrelevancies; in trotting Liberty out like a circus clown to serve License by every perversity of “thought” vaunted as “vital innovations”;—by all such puerile devices all too many modern “poets” have degraded their Craft in the public’s estimation.

Such travesties can be left to perish of their own tawdriness and lack of substance. They cause us no serious worry. What does excite distress is a too-frequent finding of valid Art gone “broad”—with a consequent loss in depth. John Hall Wheelock’s “Earth” is genuine poetry,—but! In “Earth” Jesus is matched with Plato and Homer,—merely one of the ‘divine’ among his Peers! This dismissing of the Divinity of Christ as a “myth,” an anachronism, is the core-error of our Era. Much “learning,” equally with “a little,” can be a “dangerous thing.” Admiring in a literary sense Mr. Wheelock’s “Earth” as much
as this writer does, but lamenting his neglect of the essential Merit sprung of the dust which frames us and our world, the author of this Collection took up the theme and, depending more on Mary than on the Muse, developed it as found under Earthanthem.

Since Emerson and Renan the Son of Man has been humanized with a vengeance. In Mister Maugham's *The Razor's Edge* the sheer-nadir of this trend is reached. For by grace of the gospel according to Somerset, it seems Satan tempted Christ to waste His Life on the Cross, and—"Jesus fell." Each of the Four Evangelists has a livestock Symbol. Somerset's Bray cites that Beast it was Christ's pleasure not merely to make, but to ride.

Again, as to theme:—it has been stated by some who saw this Collection in manuscript-form, that the *Philomelan Ode* "too closely approximates the opulence of Keats' diction in his 'Ode To A Nightingale.'" One brighter-than-average Character volunteered this summative-gem: "As regards nightingales Keats has said the ultimate!" For our part we must resist any inference that the *Philomelan Ode* is a sort of carbon-copy of Keats' masterpiece. This is one of those dictums grounded upon the apparent rather than founded upon the real. It recalls to mind one Brick-layer who was an indubitable authority on mortar, who challenged this writer thus: "Just tell me what's th' difference between St. Peter's coop-o-la and St. Paul's dome. Now, jest tell me!" Of course there was nothing wiser than to concede that the latter was, as in respect to the former, nothing if not a veritable Wrendition!

But "we" digress! Returning to the notion that opulence of diction "dates" a poem, we must dissent! For it is obvious that diction, (whether luxuriant or plain), is an off-again, on-again enigma. If the "Grand Style" is not countenanced today as in prior times, we may-be sure it will duplicate its vogue in some Tomorrow—mayhap on *this* side of A.D. 2000! The gorgeous Elizabethans were "improved upon" by Popes and Johnsons; and Wordsworth and Coleridge came in orating about "simplicity," but Shelley and Keats were abroad—not to mention Byron! Wordsworth and Coleridge found themselves endowed with the inevitable, and *Romanticism* flashed back with a vengeance, dominating the Nineteenth century and, fit splendor-cap for the Vogue, the matchless Meta-Odes of *Laburnos*. (Francis Thompson).

Now, as to the idea that any poet, even a Keats, has "eliminated," or could dispose of such a universal-symbol as the Nightingale; say the "ultimate" about life and death as his thoughts were stimulated by the intershading chords of Philomela's Tenebrae, is absurd on its face. Might as well say that Shakespeare had, in *Hamlet* or *Othello*, disposed of all psychic states possible within the scope of human
psychology. How motiveless then were a Macbeth, a Lear! How pointless the gay-quailing gyrations of Falstaff's easy virtue!

The simple truth is that the reactions of men to Nature, Life and the World,—are infinite. Keats in point, his reactions are such as Pindar might have recorded—Pindar, whose niche-in-time granted him no knowledge of Jesus, albeit he might well have possessed as much knowledge of the Book of Ruth as Keats displays in his exquisite response to her plight:

"... Perhaps the self-same song that found a path  
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
She stood in tears amid the alien corn . . ."

Humanist to the core, aesthetic to his nail-ends, Keats was winged to span any and every Paganscape. In his Ode to a Nightingale, this negation turns up as positive neglect of what one might term Christian Inevitabilities, which same are "celebrated" in the second stanza of the Philomelan Ode. In omitting the Christian-note from his Ode, Keats left his theme in anything but its "ultimate expression" . . . Prone as folk are to give signal respect to that which is prior in time, Keats' Ode has a hoar-advantage;—the sole thing I would protest. For surely an Eyes for Amiens, lids on Reims attitude were a travesty of the critical function. Those so-akin Gothic "odes" are simply not twins! Rather each is an entity of so individual a cast as to augment the other, this intercomplementing sprung from that common-source of Truth which they thrust forth as—Beauty.

G. C.
Tribute-Preface: *TO LOWELL*

The poem *TO LOWELL* owes its existence to a long-standing sense of gratitude which finally fused numerous impressions into such an entity of valid emotion, it all needs must not merely be said,—but sung.

Those whose innumerable graces and services truly framed the Theme, are listed here, the sequence being determined (in the main) by calendar-periods.

Mr. William H. Gallagher, (deceased); Mr. Eugene A. Fitzgerald, P.E.R.; Mrs. Mary G. Welch, Mr. William R. Maloney, Mr. James F. O'Neill, Miss Margaret A. O'Neill, Miss Arlene K. Redmond, Mr. Robert McGovern, Miss Mary J. Malloy, Mrs. Molly B. Bagley, Mr. Patrick F. Flannery, Deputy Sheriff Edward F. Ryan, P.G.K., Mr. Leon J. O'Brien, Mr. Delphis J. Levasseur, Jr., Mr. Donald E. Scott, Mr. Francis E. Maguire, Mr. Walter F. Coleman, Miss Pota Mavraides, Mr. Paul W. O'Brien, and Mr. Herbert White.

Most of whom *Tassie Pan* holds in eternal remembrance;
All of whom *Kiminkamor* holds in abiding good-will.

(See Index: Tassie Pan).
TO LOWELL

Ere I in need, or your kindness wealed
My plight, there broke upon my eyes a shield
Of crystals hued by craft of stains and sun,
A dark-halo of words about them drawn;
This coronal-of-words I dwelt upon,
Sensing an intimation
Of prophecy
"Art is the Handmaid of Human Good."

Dear City!—so long at breaking bread for me,
This thought of your heart, wrought on your Seal,
Calls up swift tears from the mounting flood
Of all I feel
In taking still,—and gratefully!

Was ever city parent, patron, friend?
All three were you when Life, nonplussed,
Within this bosom paused
As if to end
Need for breath and bread.

All this worn heart felt then, be said
Now, since Atropos owns Lachesis
Has allotted potent years
Between heart-strings and shears:
Clotho's Spindle mine augury! . . .

Many dyings insure not death.
Nay, out of dire-narrows a soul comes into a breadth
Prone to by-pass "heights" in pursuit of depth,
With a heart equal to the sterner living.—
Twice-equal mine
Because a kindred-heart on this
Laid a Bounty
That staked my quill at prime.
My spirit retains her spirit's kiss,
Rich-leaven for a city's palliative bread!—

Her words,—scarce modest from one, living,
Are not so from one dead,
Who, sharing in my debt to Lowell, said,
"The kindness of the giving
More than the bread,
Nursed such talent as may be."*

*Quoting Tassie.
ELUCIDATION

Lines On The Beautiful Church of Saint Michael: (Lowell).

Of the many splendid churches the author has studied, he has never seen such flawless symmetry as, in this Church’s interior, magnifies that “Style” known as Romanesque. These Lines were occasioned by what may best be termed the fulfillment of this edifice when, about a decade-and-a-half ago, a glorious set of stained-glass windows were installed.

These “crystal-visions,” as they have been so aptly described, are original as to composition of subjects, and juxtaposition of hues, with the present Rector, The Right Reverend Monsignor, Francis L. Keenan, D.D.

LINES ON THE BEAUTIFUL CHURCH OF SAINT MICHAEL
(Lowell)

Of all things Romanesque, none lovelier than this
Fair Temple mortared with the workman’s mite;
Of archangelic architecture this house is,
An old frame ever seen as a new thing of delight.
Wings are here, and a sense of cloistered thought;
Here, the Presence, Whose being here has wrought
It all. Dear Home, where the soul sups and finds
its light.

Upon the brows of architectural art
Looms Buonarroti’s glorious Cap,
But that enfolds the soul, whereas this heart
Cleaves to this Roman House not on the map
Of “Famous Sites”, but celebrated still
To one who heard herein of Faith, Goodwill,
When but a toddling stranger from his mother’s lap.

The Basilica AEemilia, domus of Lex Romana,
Has here a proud descendent through the loins of stone,
A thing created like the Miracle at Cana
That truth, hedged by wonder, might be better known:
A fragment wrought from Art’s design when art was simple,
Wherein occult symbols speak of the All-Beautiful
By a “Grammar of Assent” born of the Sacred Noun.

O sterling Chip of the Universal Rock!
Sturdy little Fane of Faith wherein Chaos meets
With serene rebuttal: where the Verities outlive all shock,
Remote from noise yet intimate to streets.
Loom on, dear House! Pens, like lips, fall short in love,
For concerning a thing the heart would utter of
No word suffices, and no phrase completes.
ENCOMIUM: E.A.F.

A taut countenance, no thought in the buff;  
His word, once pledged, equates with statute,  
Singular and hardy as a banyan-root.  
Against what's gruff or harsh there lies a stuff  
In that self-interdicting smile which compensates enough;  
For when the rigor of that grim-set line  
Breaks in tenderness, all that is fine  
In manly nature looms forth in pregnant print.—

In the stern fathoms of his eyes no hint  
(To common searchers) of what he most is—kind.  
But the kindness is austere:—pulsed by a mind  
Too sincere to dodge life's edge where most severe,  
His heart beats resolute for Justice ever.  
Hating falsity the more that it is clever,  
He stands a glad life-prisoner to Loyalty,  
To Truth, and has the wisdom of his stand!

His future what it will, his past has writ for Age  
Security, with all the honor he could bring to it,  
Equating the late-sheaves of life with their intrinsic-wage.  
So far is he just: beyond this, was he sage,  
For of him a youth was taught to aspire to more than wit,  
To write large of all things girt in Verity:  
Of Honor, Love, Justice, as of Liberty  
With a hand firm ever for the Ends of these.  
Who writes is grateful, and would worthily  
Compass that trenchant lesson,—if God so please.

* Lowell Lodge 87, B.P.O.E.  
(Dedication by express permission).
Who would judge a man
Must know his work,
Prove equal to his thought.

George Chapman
THE DIVINE PLAYMATE

Wherever a child plays alone
Unasked, I come and join the play,
I make his loneliness My own,
Give joys no one can take away.

Unheard I come upon his grief,
The secret quivering of his heart,
And bring on Laughter's kind relief,
Having taught his tears to bathe his smart.

Unseen I sit among his toys
And make them wondrous in his eyes,
I pulse his heart with secret joys
That tease his lips with happy sighs.

I weary him with blissful play
To reconcile his eyes with sleep;
Then lay his heart where angels lay
Their dreaming wings among My sheep.

THE AGING OF AGNES

Agnes, aged five, hid
Under a heart turned stone,
A small sin which felt big
Under her breast-bone.

She faced her doll, her dad,
Smiled as usual,
Finding it good to be bad
So long as casual.

But night came, and Sleep
Stared winkless as One,
The while her heart would leap
Over a small thing done.

She never told a soul
Save God, (Who forgave her!),
Agnes, still five, still beautiful,
Though ten years older.
SENIOR AND JUNIOR

Senior, Junior, peas of one pod,
Drip out of the lake, the younger god
Adoring the elder-deity,
Who, sensing his own identity

Bone-deep in the youth, cuts a prank;
Giving the curl-capped head a yank.
Follows a tussle: Senior thrown
By David, Junior, (and without a stone!)

Leg-free in jersey shirts and trunks,
Kicking pine-cones, munching chunks
Of cottage-cheese and "Mom-bread",
Their thoughts so linked they bind, unsaid,

They swing down the sun-freaked timber road,
Laughing according to the code
Of fellowship — their holiday
Most possessed when put away.

THE LEAST TOUCH OF THE WORLD

God's Eye was upon her,
This she knew—
And at least one neighbor
A witness too.

By her gate she had done
Too open a thing,
In full view of the sun
And the crediting

Of Mrs. Vaughn's eyes
(Not safe behind lace!)
She had— scarce hoping to rise—
Fallen from grace.

For not only pledged
To Goodness was she,
But to keep each good hedged
In with secrecy.

Yet here, here by her gate,
Where all good seemed secure,
She had marred her life's slate
Because a stranger came poor.
Her Sunday-born Vow
"Not to tell even Mommy",
Just a grace gone now
With her Circus-money.

EVEN AS A CHILD FOUND IN THE TEMPLE
(On the death of Diane Marie Naish)

The Mass of the Angels said, a little form
Folded in earth's bosom, warmly kept
By Providence until that Promised Morn
Shall wake it from the peace in which it slept:—
This Little-Form so lovely, and so fair,
Its fairer Spirit joining in that Heaven
Where her Angel-Soul is now, and shall be even
When her Parents, losing now, regain her There.

O at mending hearts the Lord is ample,
Profound in power against sorrow and despair;
And even as that Child found in the Temple,
A child to parents lost, is lost within the Father's Care.

BERCEUSE

This World is a cradle made by God
For the children of His Love,
Who cry the life-time of their rocking
As if He were not above.

But one by one they fall in sleep,—
Each age-worn girl and bearded boy:
And beyond their dreams, a Carpenter
Mends each broken doll and shattered toy.

(in Alentour).

AT PARTING

Life's span, if fickle, is often short:
Your twilight was my noon.
Nor sail you for so far a Port—
My sails shall follow soon.
FIRST NIGHT—AFTER

This room that was hers,
A verra-urn of her tranquility,
Makes it seem she is here,
Would make response if I breathed, "Tassie".
But as far as blurs
Serving for eyes, can see,
Her bosom can't be quieter,
Not colder than this pale sunshine
Wraithesque as wansails on an out-borne sea.

Sunset: shadows made and merged,
Dusk pouring freely its cypress-wine,
Blotting out her trinkets, her pins and combs;
The kindest darkness about her dresser yet . . .

Embraced, this dark entombs
That prime-bourne of this heart, never more mine.
These eyes in their close-grapple with Grief
Labor and sweat
To no purpose. Time, not tears, must bring relief.

Certain small, shy stars, come out to shine,
Brave the bleak window,
Their wan-lamps and the moon stealthily looming,
Out of the gloom etching
Her party-dress,
Nor ever was apter shroud for sorrow
Than this veil for a broken face.

O never, never more that loveliness,
(Which was the grace of her soul's impress),
May blossom in this bodyless,
This heartless
Springtime dress
That keeps its brutal blooms.

(See Notes.)
CONJUGALA

In this,
Our consummative kiss,
There is a throe of bliss
Love-divorced from the nerve of sex;
Something which the full lips curving up,
Cannot cup:
Of the honey,
It traps the honey as in a purity of wax,
Chastening the sensuous bee,
Reserving the comb as in chastity.—

Strange, inscrutable tax,
Imposed upon our old time levity,
Encumbering us as with paucity,
Stressing the dark over the light
Of the blood's rifting penumbra,
Till Passion halts, white,
Goaded by restraints into a wild surrender. . . .

There is a bell
In our tower of ivory
Ringing back the race-deep-swell
Of woman's prime maternity
Harvested of man's husbandry:
And that bell rings like a cry
Between us, within us! my
Rose in a lily-sheath,
Flushed out of bud beneath
The spur of a thorn,
And soon to be borne
Into that ill-lumined, tempestuous bourne
Of faltering being, and quailing breath,
Where death,
Or life, will be shorn
From a tenuous chord drawn
Between bearer and born.

Tenderness leaps out of strength,
Chasteness from fire,
Backward on our desire
Some cool-hour will look.
But now, in the flush of it,
Creators, nigh-infinite
In scope, since in love,
We may glimpse if we will
From what reaches above
Flesh, have we plucked what is taken:
Boy, or girl-angel?

Love, even as buds on a bough,
Prophetic of fruit,
Between our pressed hearts a palpitant-bruit
Of life ripening now:
Fruit blown of the Vow
Which we uttered with Bread
When, the Sacrifice said,
And over, we kissed,
Who were blessed.

Blessed as we now are,
Blessed in each other,
And soon — how soon!
To be blessed in a third,
Who will come as small,
As golden as wheat,
As poignantly sweet
As the Word!
And under herald of star
Whose shining will be
Of the pure light that you are!
O my bride, turning mother,
Does not the warm-tide in your breast
Flute a white singing
To the small one you nest?
Do the gongs of your pulses not ring
In tune with my muscles grown eager,
Grown keener,
To be sower and gleaner
For you who are bearer
Of the Ineffable Thing?

Sweetheart and wife and transcendent lover!
All these, and now mother
Soon to befall,
And what title for all?
O, I scarce know,
Scarce know what to call you!
You, who are all to me,
You, who are all of me,
You! —
You, who are all.

(See Notes.)
PORTRAIT OF A LADY
(M. McC.)

Adam's child not less than Eve's,
She has a sexless sort of way;
A virginal nature that upbears with ease
Virtues laughed down in this, her day.—
Not quite as shrewd as she is wise
She bargains poorly when she shops;
There is a largess in her eyes
That mothers "dolls" and fathers fops.

If her little ears have largely heard,
That Chivalry, which is the man in her,
Recoils upon the rapeing word
Which jeopardizes character:
Her voice swoops like a silvern net
And with an adroit word retrieves
Some neighbor's name, and those her 'set'
Once rejected, it now receives.

She has a tolerance for creeds,
A firm distaste for warring sects;
She thinks neglect of human needs
More terrible than crimes of sex.
Her humor is a brittle sword,
She says she'd like the Pruderese
To find some 'Publicans round the Lord
At one of her infrequent teas.

Impersonal with men as men,
She probes to find the Boy in each;
When he is found, (and only then),
Will she permit herself in reach
Of the male her technique has disarmed,
And he will talk expansively
About himself! and will be charmed
With her attention and her tea.

Her walk is bird-like; on the street
She is a tailored nightingale.
The flowers in her hat are sweet,
Her cheeks old-ivory, powdered pale.
She scatters smiles and gathers them,
The newsboys love her as do the clerks
In shoddy basements where the gem
Called Life, is but a stone that hurts.
She dwells alone, is old, but none
Could think of her as overlooked.
At sixty-odd she wins, who won
Masculine hearts, (and some are booked!)
She ages as lace, as poems do,
Like tapestries that brightly fade:
O, to the last Our Mary will be new,
and after ——far more than a Shade!

SPRING’S STARS WERE OUT

Spring’s stars were out — and so were we,
And we were younger than the stars!
Our lips were vows, and our gods were “Ah’s!”:
We and Love teening into twenty!
Young flowers lay wide, uncowed by night,
Open, and fragrant, and heady as we;
And there was a wise-headed surf on the sea,
Winking back our eyes’ tumultuous light.

We strode into the wave-beards, kicked the sea!
Shouted down the sky and soundly cuff’d the wind;
All things before to be trampled like everything behind:
O never was Eros so strong as when armed with Our decree!

Spring’s stars were out — and so were we!
And we were younger than the stars!
Our lips were vows, and our gods were Ah’s!
We and Love teening into twenty!

A PLEA TO MY BEATRICE

Trust not that love which is full and soft,
Nor trust a heart cast in the all-male-mold;
Nor hold at all with that lover who goes daft
Over your charms set-off in white and gold.

One would have you flesh alone; one would have you stone:
One would have you for his flitting-place—
But this heart would have you for yourself alone;
A pulse, a breathing, and a lasting Grace.

Oh, kindle not darkly like Dante’s Star,
Undoing what little of heaven I hold!
Be your heart a shell for this voice afar
That a sweeter tale than Dante’s may be told.
DAUGHTER OF SOMNUS

Out of the midnight-mist she came,  
On a footfall of feeling,  
Her proud bosom breathing my name,  
And my own breath stealing.

She was not for my arms, though her coming  
Filled them—with more than her form—  
Her chaste beauty realized in the numbing  
Of this heart where her image lay warm,

Queen of its pulse and high mistress of  
Its every love-gesture to take  
The least bloom of passion from Love  
Ere that frail sleep-of-love break

Into fragments of wistful waking,  
Cheating of kiss and caress:—  
Yet, thus it was in the dawn's gray-flaking,  
Thus it was—and my heart's a heart less.

TIME BLURS THE IMAGE

(In dedication to Helen Adrian, R.N., M.A.)

Folded within a night, we met, and drew  
That dual-intimation at which sham-lovers scoff:  
She, vibrant as her Calling, unafraid and true,  
Marigolds in her eyes and daisies in her laugh.

My urban heart, once cool and lover-wise,  
Fumbled through its pulses, skipped a beat.  
Before the nineteen hierarchies of her eyes  
I moved easeless as a boy on culprit feet.

I look back on it all: too late I see  
The shy-reciprocation in her face.  
A bolder man has plucked fruit meant for me:—  
Time blurs the image it can't erase.
THE STARS LIE CLOSE

The stars lie close to the breast of night,
   As my child to thee:
And the light of heaven lies cold and white
   As the milk of thee.
   Ah, how tamelessly
Went thy wild, young heart to its rest;
   With the child of me
So small, so white, against the brown of thy breast.

Our love was a rose that thorned my pillow:
   A flame that charred my heart.
Far as Egypt’s palm from the English willow
   Were our ways apart:
   Yet, the ways of the heart
Caused thee to bloom in my arms, and decline,
   While that fearful art
Which worketh in blood, child-bound my life to thine.

The desert now beds thee, dark-star of my heart!
   But ye sleep not alone:
The pale son I gave thee lies cold where thou art,
   Unnamed, and unknown.
   Like a storm that hath blown,
Thy going hath left a dull calm in my breast:
   O, my own! My own!

(in Bozart-Westminster,
Oglethorpe University, Ga.)

NOW

Eternity has no tenses.
   Alpha is Omega
   And both are Now:
Nail this to all five senses,
   Nor spare the hammer:
   Forever is —— Now!

[10]
TRIBUTE LINES TO HELEN KELLER

Beauty that sires, and Grace which shapes all clay, 
Wrought as one in the season of your birth. 
Was darkness, was silence crossed with the earth 
Of your being? Still, the Potter’s Hand lay 
Upon your heart, urging His Code of no dismay; 
Shaping new worlds about a life lost in its path:— 
Despair burnt,— nor in effigy!— on your hearth 
Once there was Interpreter to break a way.

When the darkness on a soul breaks into light, 
How great a light must that Spirit become! 
A beacon-lamp, a symbol by which men live.— 
Intrepid Lady! High Valor’s own delight, 
His touch, and all a harp may say or sum 
Of beauty, love and truth, is yours— to give.

BRAILLE

Braille-led, the soul despite each shuttered eye 
Can walk through the Orchard of Capulet, 
Surprise bold Romeo and Juliet 
And, ere her kinsmen come, warn them to fly! 
Though blind, one can witness brave Sidney die, 
Touch the cup he willed, the water that whet 
The valor of Europe, that stirs it yet 
With a pulse that races and will not lie.

At the call of the touch the Heart of the Past 
Upleaps to the senses,— and Homer’s tears 
Fall fresh as our own! Galileo’s eyes 
Shine bright with remembered stars . . . . and the Task 
Grave Milton embraced in his darkened years 
Is an ever-blossoming Paradise.

Published in the brochure 
“From Many Roots”— 1939. 
Alentour’s “Art in the Mart” Series
SPRING GENESIS

Spring with little green-quills in hand,
Re-issues her Book of Genesis.
Far older than Sanscrit this scented script is,
And the flair of her genius all over the land.

Again the skies are new and glad,
Again the sprouting girl and lad
Come to the reading, and laugh to know
Of a whiter season than lies with snow.

And no heart so alien to the good,
No mind so riven from things fair,
But these oldest charms are re-understood
As Beatitudes outliving care.

Life again as it was at prime,
When Love first kneaded its Form with clay.
Love again as it was in that time
When Adam found Eve under the day.

Again the young earth all-glad, and again
The purple-wonder and the levin-stain:
Light-Life burgeoning Nature's bosom,
Again upon the waters a kingdom come,
God's glory breaking, and gone — so soon!

KNELL

Dust is the end of all pursuit,
Ash and worm the doom of faces,
Quakes and holes the fate of places—
Yes, hounded like a wounded brute,
At last with all his worldly loot
Man is caught by what he chases.

Included in the Anthology
“Masterpieces of Religious Verse”: in which book Knell
was erroneously ascribed to
the Elizabethan George Chapman. Harper & Bros.,
have pledged correction.
RETURN TO WISDOM

Knowledge alone will never fill the gut
Of that innermost hunger man can know:
Nor learning open one door the heart finds shut —
There was a time I did not think this so.

But now I know it is; now that I have
The delectable lean, who have had the fat
Of schools! And yet — I'm too illiterate
To read some meaning into life, although I starve!

Having lived for long on stones I yearn for bread!
All the more because I've found each Hippocrene
To be no more than the dregs of what I mean
When I speak of wine and drink of four words said.

Now that I fly hurt on a humbled wing,
I remember Wisdom as a wounded Thing!
And, remembering, rise past the orbit of bird,
Flying back to the Wounds! — To the wounded Word!

CHRIST: THE KEY

The Cross that countersigns our valid skies,
Blurs within the shadow of a world's arrears.
The door of darkness latches on our fears,
And the word of the hour is "Atheize!"
Augmenting their old arsenal of lies,
The casters of stones turn on Him whose peers
Are none: Cry, "Stone Christ! — His two-thousand years
Must go! The Gothic fall that the Goth may rise!"

But no more than the door of old availed
When Christ would come and stand among His own,
Avails this Darkness, nor availeth stone,
For lo, the Cheek so often turned is mailed!
And He who might have legions stands alone,
His Cross triumphing where the Sword has failed.
ROCK VERSUS STONE

Rock shares identity with stone
But they are alien, never one
Save in matter; their natures are
As strange to each as earth to star.

Stone is apt substance for a fence
About our lives; but the permanence
Of death impels the heart to lock
Its treasured dead in during rock.

Stone is base ore; a thing to throw:
But rock is that which takes a blow.
Of rock we make our altars, thrones;
To unmake them men use stones.

Knowing how even archangels fell,
Christ reared a Rock for citadel.
Against all stone-mortality
Stands that Rock's vitality.

Every stone thrown in its way,
Is predestined but to ricochet
From history. Ho, for gird
This Rock has adamantine Word.

The strength of stone is the strength of sand:
The Rock gives shadow in a weary land.

ORPHANS OF THE CROSS

Born a Child, and obedient to his birth,
Subject as any man to His Humanity,
Stark on a Rack-manger, Christ from earth,
"Father, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

The cry rent Mary's breast; in headlong love
Her heart leapt, but only leapt to falter,
Recoiling on her whose will lay with the Dove:
(Dare creature mother where Creator will not father?)

Mary nigh, and faint from loving, being mortal! —
God withdrawn from Son, aloof to Daughter,
Abandoned them to the voiding-thrall,
Orphans of the Cross, that foundling-Man might claim the Father.
AUTUMN HOUR

Tree, sky and star my teachers,
What do I not learn.
Out of my heart a heart reaches
For a light that may burn!

High as God's brow this heaven,
Deep as His thought, this sea,
And all the earth a leaven
Working wonder in me.

Bright hues of the Fall, and over
The hues a red-shadow of sun;
Hyperion gone home like a lover
Proud of the loving done.

His fire in every changing leaf,
His blood on the brooding sea,
And his joy like a thing of grief
Rising in tears in me.

And to cry were a manly passion
When such beauty walks in power,
And things man cannot fashion
Fall to man for an hour.

(Included in Dr. J. E. Tobin's
"Supplement" to Joyce Kilmer's
"Anthology of Catholic Poets").

WHO BEARS A DREAM

I summon Christ to witness,
I call on Simon of Cyrene,
And assert (nor fear denial);
He bears a cross who bears a dream.

Parnassus stripped of mantling stars
Can substitute for Calvary!
And masters die as died the Master
For a vision's immortality.

Without the stone the root is slack;
Without the thorn the rose eludes.
Pain is Patron — and the only one —
For beauties and beatitudes.
BE IT NEVER IN OUR SCORNING

High thoughts will come to mind
Against the grubbing and the gain,
Recall some largess of the wind,
Some bounty from the rain.

Ho, a flight of slightest birds
Is amply strung to bear
Up from the heart all words
Of anger and despair.

As the dawn is more than lamp,
So a day is more than light:
Be life but a dark and broken camp
The hearths of God star-buoy the night.

Say the navel of the sky is loud
With clap and bolt and ruin's word;
Say the udder of this winter-cloud
Will smog the world with flake and curd.

Yet Wonder, serving as fairy-ring,
Makes a wand of each carping finger,
As faith feels in the pink-heart of the Spring
The white-ardor of the Winter.

Soon the rose, God's wee-aurora,
Blushing the green-land of its bush,
Will gladden the caterpillar
With a scent-fall fit to flush

The vast nostrils of the morning. —
Great God to our faith be kind!
Be it never in our scorning
To think Thy sun is blind.

SCANDAL STONE

Here lie the dishonored dead:
They are my very own.
I broke each heart, bowed each head,
I — the Scandal-Stone.

(in Silhouettes).
SUCH IS MY SHIELD

Against this stress of days, this rash of hours,
Beauty is weapon in the hands of fortitude.
Life's itinerary includes few flowers,
And fewer stars, but these seen in the nude

In valiant gardens or in valid skies,
Soft with a rifting moon and vapor-curds,
Compensate for hurt and non-replies;
Comfort beyond all pillowing of words.

When unnerved spirit prompts flesh to cry
For the insulating-solitudes of night,
Of little matter my bed, or how I lie;
These things I hold as witness of the Light.

Though a parliament of shadows void
What gleams I have, an unfrustrated peace
Illumes what would be dark, and, unannoyed,
I await my cross, my Judas, my release.

PADRAIC LONGS FOR HEAVEN

Och, I'm aweary of the lonely road
And the road's aweary of me;
And I'm aweary of the heavy load
And the load's aweary of me.

'Tis I'll be glad when I come to the Inn,
To the House the Carpenter built;
And lay down my stick and my bag of sin
And confess a share in the Guilt.

Shure I'll know the Place by the pierced Sign,
By the sheep and lambs in the yard,
The wheat in the field, the grape on the vine
And the Gate with angels on guard.

God willing, these same, to my needs will see
When I proffer the pence I've stored
In the needy pocket of Charity
To pay for my shelter and board.

Och, to be gone from this World of fable,
And have spirits making my tea;
And the Holy Virgin setting table
And the Saints hobnobbing with me!

Included in
Moult's Anthology,
"The Best Poems of 1937".
RECEIVE A VISION

Magic-impressions from afar —
Foreign ways and folk no longer strangers:
Upon a screen this importunate star,
A World's heart beating at our fingers,
Dialing in the Drama of Humanity:
War, crime; love greatly over-riding
All baser tides in this tremendous Sea
Where the breakers are hot blood, nakedly confiding,
And every shore a world's edge, cutting life
According to swift patterns ever-changing,
Ever-new:

Dialer, resting from the strife,
Safe home from ship or forge, and ranging
From plays-of-fact to dramas fictional,
Blind Dabbler in a science raised to art,
A casual-partaker in this miracle
God-given for the enlargement of His Lex,
According as Compassion vex:—
If less than a child you marvel,
And have less yearning in your heart
Toward the stranger and the criminal,
Or, seeing into motives, refuse a part
In the New Understanding proffered thus,
Great is the guilt of heart and mind:
Astray from humanity, you are not of us.
Vainly breaks the Morning on the blind.

THE DUAL ONE

The Sinner clung to his shadows;
The head he bowed was fair,
Much too beautiful for gallows
Was its mouth and eyes and hair.

The Saint sat at his side and saw
What jailers seldom see —
Man's grief for breaking that Sovereign Law
Of all the laws that be.

In silence they sat and saw the dawn,
And went forth when it came:
Together their necks were noosed and drawn —
Who were one and the same!
A spark,—issue of carnality,  
Odd fledgeling of some master-spore,  
Yet scion of eternity,  
Each human is a light foreshadowing  
A form not visible in the mortal thing.

Man’s prime-anatomy is no more flesh  
Than light is darkness.—Who shapes a fresh  
Concept of life in words, or pigment, is  
Radiantly aware of this.

These obvious contours of flesh and bone,  
The hair that plumes, the tints that tone,  
Spawn of that tide in our vessel-cups,  
Are but life’s outer forms and props.  
For life is a dwelling within a core  
With a spirit who dwelt there long before  
This or that certain mortal came  
With his peculiar bent and claim:  
Soul versus Individual!—  
Out of their old struggle of good and fell,  
These know each other by a deeper term than name.

O Man, no density of blood,  
No humours of flesh in carnal-mood  
Can cloud your spirit’s altitude.  
For Heights you are, hence of a depth  
To plumb the best in life, the worst in death.

Pose the body as we will,  
The bright-contours of the spirit still  
Dominate the outer rind,  
Silhouette secret soul and mind  
On the very flesh that would serve for blind!

Light—Light is man’s prime-element.  
Sun in wheat; Son-in-Sacrament,  
Illume his nature and keep it bright.  
Yes, light shapes and foreshadows us,  
Transmutes all that is dark in us,  
Makes a lamp, aye, an ark of us—  
Let there be Light!
GOD HAS SHAPED EACH ONE IN STRANGENESS

With earth for substance, Self for mould,
God has shaped each one in strangeness:—
All men from an abiding
Self-awareness
Know each conscience is an old
Recording of Everybody's Story;
But differently told,
Individual in its baseness, in its glory.

He who diffused the grass
Blade by blade,
Segregated from the mass
Each man made.

It is said that here and there
There are two identical:—but no!
The difference of a hair
Limns its shadow so
All likeness takes dissolving-wing
And from apparent oneness
Dual contours show!

How many shades within a shadow?
How many rays within a light?
No man may say since none can know,
Beholding only black and white.

THE POET

Down the trammeled centuries the poets wing,
Tough relay-runners bearing on a Light
No tyrant can eclipse whatever might
He sports. Not swords, nor the more subtle sting
Of ridicule awes the song, nor they who sing!
Each poet reaps adversity by right
Of breasting wrongs. His tongue outlaws the trite.
Truth is his though he have no other thing.

A wasting-fate for rocks, for dynasties;
Each crumbles in its place, fades like a mote.
Time's virus reaps, and never antidote
Save the Poet. He animates the Past,
Calls flames back to their embers, and decrees
What shall perish utterly, what shall last.
ON THE COMING OF THE WORD

Out of Heaven, wonder-spurred,
Arrow-swift, obeying aim;
Bearing words fraught with the Word,
The wing-hurled Angel came.

He entered without let of door
Where Mary knelt before her prayer;
Her knees an ardor on the floor,
Half cushioned on her teen-bright hair.

Save for the wings no one would know
Which was angel, which was maid.—
Could odor come from burning snow
'Twould be the scent the lilies laid

Before her heart when it looked up
To question him who was from God:—
His voice poured rich as wine from cup:
"Hail! Maid-Lily of the Lord!"

The silence was an altitude
Of peace beyond the scale of bird,
And Gabriel an interlude
Of wings between her and the Word.

The Angel spoke: (his voice had knelt).
His words were attars, vibrant, white.
And Mary in her quick womb felt
The Infant-Flickering of the Light.

WHOM BEAUTY WOUNDS

It is Beauty's prerogative to wound.
Hiding her poniards in chords, in flowers,
She stabs with sound and scent or, having tuned
The heart to her key, breaks it. Wooing hours
Out of my time, music out of my tongue,
I have travailed in her thorn-prints, loving
The bee she sics on the heart's honey; — long stung,
This heart goes pulse-in-hand for her engloving.

Whom Beauty wounds is never free of her,
Yet her wounds have depths which complement that Height
Out of whose Shadow all tapers fail of light.
Omnipresent Angel, troubling the heart's water,
Her tears have healing, and in Heaven's sight
Man is naught, wanting her imprimatur.
THE DARK CANVAS

(Paraphrasing Ormond von Oph)

The multi-colored paint pots of the self,
And every brush-with-life, my tools,
Whispers of saint, of evil elf,
The humours of sages and of fools,
All these to prime my eye and touch,
But the canvas ordained as mine
Is dark. Doubt, that such-and-such!
Doubt, blighter of things divine,
Rings, veils, sunders all my life.

Dutiful to my art as to a wife,
I dab in the dark-daubs,—I, darker than they!
Paint found as futile as print to say
That ultimate syllable with which despair
Mocks the grooving wit.

Still, my untamed soul champs at the bit,
Sounds in me of fury and strife,
Signifying something! Infinite
God! what use, what end shall I make
Of this circle You bound me with?

This mock-Eden whose monarch is the Snake.—
To what purpose wit, spiritual ache,
The erections of genius, the pith
Of creative power, when all is void?

The ample seasons went; the lean ones came;
Still the Darkness, unalloyed,
Ruled on, but I was not the same.

If the light in a man be darkness,
How great is that darkness?—Great
As the light in a man when his darkness
Hounds out the Light!—

Now, Heaven be mine, though late.

THE POPPY OF THE KING

O Poppy of the King, flushed by thy nature's sting;
Wick-Flower of Dreams, with lev in in the dreaming!
Lo, from thrall-of-opium, a lauded kingdom, come,
Poised in thy certain soul against all seeming!—
Blown Poppy of the King! Omega hails thy wing,
Obedient to Alpha, Who ordained
Thy song-brood should stand, live-dreamers in the land,
While sleepest thou in the Lily, by her Cup redeemed.

The Poppy of the King, framed after Francis Thompson's Lilium Regis,
is taken from the author's Scion of the Stars, an essay in-preparation for the
Birth-Centenary of the great mystic-poet: Laburnos.

[22]
TO FRANCIS THOMPSON

Sweet bosomer of God’s all-clement things,
Trouba-adoring mysteries as if they were
Casuals of thy faith’s perimeter
And not the occult-czars of thy life-springs.
Chief lyricist of all those mystic-kings
Who held the Laurel as God’s Imprimatur,
Beauty was Truth to thee, nor free to err! —
How shall the frets of ages moult thy wings?

Fixed like some regnant star that mocks our ken
A magnitude of light whose fealty
Thralls beams back on their Originator,—
Such thine art: a prime-light in this Regency
Of Darkness . . . . Abiders in thy Song, meek men
And strong, hound thy steps “i’ the pathless awe”.

NO “TRACKLESS FUGITIVE”

Tribute-Lines to the Lady who befriended Francis Thompson.

Life was easing a Burden from its care.
Slow, fog-veiled, flowed the Thames,
And bleeding near on the forked horns of despair,
A mute mendicant, grasping at Heaven’s hems,
Clutched a far humbler skirt: — ’Twas yours,
Poor Drab, with a soul-of-flowers.

Wherever a man’s cross bleeds, trust Mary,
(Brooding ever upon this Race she cradles),
To post a virgin,— or a Magdalen!
(For Charity’s gate still shuts on Hell’s). —
So, to him your squalid room, chaste-haven,
And you pure as any white rose, fallen.

To fly when all turned well for him but proved
The Angel in you! And tho’ your flight was down
Among gross-briars, upon his matchless spires
Of Song, your spirit looms in blest renown,
Even as your heart, made known, remains beloved.

So vain to fly! In feeding him your bread fed many;
Fed you! made you the Hound’s choice-quarry —

_For Christ pursueth most that soul which ‘seeketh not its own’._

[23]
AMERICA GO-BRAGH

This virgin-land found fit for bearing
Freedom, mounting Liberty in men,
Under Jefferson's overshadowing
Genius, the kenosis of his pen,
Thrice rose to breast home-wars, their wrath and searing;
A Handmaid firm to hold all Washington fathered,
With all that humble Abe Lincoln saved.

Great America! as thy founding be thy faring,
Unto all earth a mighty saviour sprung!
Ageless in valor, thy First Aims ever young,
As kept in Lee's true heart, the vision of MacArthur;
As re-nerved by Webster's faith, McCarthy's iron valor:
Steadfast in these, be thou disciplined for daring!
Thy power vowed to keep Tyranny enslaved,
And thou subject to that Mercy which alone is strong.

March 7th, 1958.  

( _Go-Bragh_—Gaelic: “forever.”)

WESTMINSTER

Among all gothic fanes there looms this Throne.
Here Britain crowns her divers-kings—the Great.
The death is deathless that pervades this Stone
Where mortals assume immortal-estate.
Far stretches the Files that upon thee wait,
Thou granite-shroud of an Empire's glory;
Thou Tome, wherein England still 'graves the story
Decreed to her Sword by a lofty fate.

Great Britain! the alien within thy gate,
Though sprung from the loins of thy staunchest foe,
Must stand in this Awe—a reverent seer.
This Temple of Glory disarms all hate.
These Dead have voice: each Witness stern to show
All adverse-query is well answered here.
Excerpt from the (unfinished) novel "THE ROCK AND THE STONE"

THE MAN JESUS
(As word-limned by St. John).

. . . . John, the Beloved of the Lord, loomed now over the hybrid gathering; — a white-robed, aesthetic figure, capped with a halo of crisp white hair, strangely luminous.

"Ye have asked about the Christos," he began, "wondering as to what manner of man he was. Peter, whom He has set over us; Paul, who has met him face to face in Light; — these could tell you far better than I. Yet, I am charged with this task. Then, insofar as words avail, be ye told:

"Jesus, the anciently named Shiloh, the carpenter of Nazareth, the Redeemer forth from the Paraclete and a Virgin's womb, was true Man: even as ye are men, so was He. . . ."

It was as though breath, life itself, were suspended in the high-roofed kuriakon, such a hush there was, such expectancy upon the upturned faces. Even the sophists in the legate's retinue, the glib scribes and Rabbi Simon, were rapt, all their cross-worldliness fallen away. The angelic voice, vibrant, Isaiian, had trembled to a pause. John's eyes were those of one sighting a new star, bright with imponderables. The vision filled his voice.

"This Man Who was my Master, was my Friend. We were as brothers from the one womb. I knew Him in work, in play; in the love of men I knew Him. And from this knowledge I say, He was good beyond knowing, great beyond telling. A bright vitality as of stars shone from Him; from Him came that vital Breath men cannot draw from air. In Him was power, and the power was good. In Him was knowledge, and the knowledge was pure. In Him was healing, and that Healing is forever. . . ."

Paul was aware that John's eyes were upon him; that these splendid words were meant more for him than for any other. The thought eased his aching affections, his thorn-buffeted mind; bereavement and affliction giving ground before this voice, this radiant message wherein abode all the beatitudes of the ancient Shemoneh Esreh, most dear to Israel. All but wounded with peace, the Tarsian surrendered his heart to the voice, John saying,

"Would you know this Man past forgetting? be at-one forever with Him, the Holy One, the only One? Then cherish your crosses! abide with Pain! Holding Him ever as One apart, as One who was deep as the sea is not; as One existing in an Element deeper far than ours, and tangible to us in this only; — that his Person came by our flesh, that his Spirit moved upon the face of the waters."

(See Notes)
PLEA FOR ANOTHER LINCOLN

A Nation needed a son,
A son without whom the Mother
Would break in twain, and wither:—
God to her need, her Greatness,
Framed an equal Grandeur,
Sent as symbol of His care, Abe Lincoln.—
Pity again, O Lord, and send! (Our Needs confess!)

OMNISCOPE

Space is breaking-in upon our ken.
The Meter-masters, working out a scope
Of OM-nascent numbers, bring to birth
Far-marching Arcs which daunt man's eye most when
Comprehension glimpses intimations of the earth
Reduced to a speck — nor less, we hope!

Language falters even as Imagination gropes.
The compassing words of yesterday, impotent, paw
The race-course of our tongues; and lo, we babble!
Speech in delirium before the evidence of telescopes
Which merely spot the nearer bournes, define a rabble
Of galaxies whose flashing bruits hint the ancient Awe,

Give forth a mystic Calculus non-integral with flaws!
Ho, our clock of light-years boasts by a darkened dial,
Leaving our wits stranded nigh perimeters — of what?
Beams from Sirius bay aeons off — or on — the straws
Of divination: Canis Major become a minor mut
As Science re-works the giddied data of its file.

Doubt reduced to teething! Faith alone looms equal to these voids;
These oceans of cosmic-dust whose breakers roar
On whirlwind-strands of eddying worlds: — Compute,
My seers-of-science! Say under which Arc is buoyed
The beginnings of Ultima! Some signs Science can refute
Tomorrow, are all she quotes Today! Yet Faith has paced that shore.

O this Hour we live in is not among things "late". —
Man's plastic foot is poised on thresholds wrought of wings.
A firmament of flaming continents invite his stride,
And he goes forth — a Magellan sportive with his fate.
Not since Lucifer fell such an equation with his pride,
But this last is of ascent! the Sign shadowing from the wings.
"Church or king? Fear but one, and choose!"
"Fearing the King, I choose," said More.
"Ha! then thy treason's been but a ruse?"
"Ay, a ruse of faith!" said More.

"Now, what's thy faith to do with Hal?"
"Verra little, I fear," said More.
"Come, Tom! no jests; the king's at Whitehall —"
"Nay, at Heaven-Hall," said More.

"Tom-Fool! the king's of a mind to relent.
Ye have only to wink at a thing or two —"
"My Cromwell, winking were blind consent,
and not being blind, I'm na' consenting to —"

"More! England is not Utopia.—"
"Now, that is perturbing news!" said More.
"Th'art betwixt Charybdis and Scylla—"
"But our king's in messier straits," sighed More.

"More sense, More! Switch coats, and the king
Shan't harm one hair of you, his endearéd—"
"And rightly!" cried More, "for treason's a thing
That could never be charged to my beard!"

"Thy beard? Thy beard! B'Jove th'art mad!
What's thy beard to do with treason?"
"Naught, my Cromwell, yet if mine had
I'd not go to the block with it on!
"No!" laughed More: (he laughed like a lad):
"I'd not go to the block with it on!"

SATAN'S QUESTION ON BEHOLDING THE CREATION OF MAN

. . . . Satan wallows in wrath, his boa-voice writhing:
"Shall WE, who heard
The Breathing of the Word,
Suffer this creature to give it Flesh,
And claim with It, relation?
Shall WE, who shook the Throne of the Most High,
And crossed swords with the Seraphim,
Clog the bowels of creation
When dust is given countenance and breath,
And a seat amidst the stars?"

(from Canto IV: A Song of Suns).
THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Ere the sea possessed its restless soul,
  Or earth's deep womb secreted seed,
Ere cloud or vault composed the heavens
  Or torrents from the steeps were freed:
When Creation was to be created;
  When Time passed — inarticulate,
She was from out a Boundless Love
  Conceived of God — Immaculate.

Ere sound had formed a single voice,
  Or vapors hung their veils abroad;
Ere light illumed the sun or moon
  She existed in the Soul of God.
Ere dust was whirled from flinty spheres
  To mother Man's inception,
The Almighty Heart, become a womb for Grace,
  Forelimned the Mother of the Son.

In dedication to
His Eminence, William, Cardinal O'Connell,
by his express permission.
MacARThUR

A brow above the great, a soul to take
Firm-issue with Defeat: *I shall return.*
A braw heart, brave to bank its fires and burn
To valorous ashes for a nation's sake,
Chance be death snapped its pulse ere it could break
Chains that trussed the freedoms his Race had strown
Across the world.

Wide-famed, he was not known
Till he retrieved our blunders; made Nippon quake
And sue for peace beneath a Sword benign.—
The Orient's soul-symbol of Man—free!
First among the few Giants in those days!
Pre-cast in the mould-of-ages for a sign!—
No fit reward hath America for thee
Save such love as makes hearts falter as they praise.

In dedication to
General of the Army, DOUGLAS MacARThUR,
by his express permission—given at New York
under date of September 13th, 1957.
AFTER READING CARLYLE'S ESSAY ON BURNS

The Thistle honored for its sting,
Deep-set in the proffered laurel,
Nor figs from it, nor anything
To feed a heart and keep it well.

Edinburgh to Scotland's Bard
What Florence was to Dante!
Taut smiles undoing the eyes' regard:
(Hail, bright-yokel from the country!)

So much for Fame's soul-hobbling sceptre!
For garish-circles closing in;
Better a man should have for center
His own tough heart, his own less-mortal sin!

With the daisy and the field-mouse,
And your strong heart's wild-compassion
You were at home, Burns! nor so loose
As those who sinned in a brighter fashion.

Rage at injustice, you, the just!
And heap upon the hypocrite
That buoyant wrath which fires our dust,
And alone quite purges it.

Quit with Life ere life was prime,
And quit with women known too soon,
Your lips have still the ears of Time,
And each listening heart a boon.—

Edinburgh is standing strong
Not by granite and favored plot;
Two luminous-shadows, growing long,
Endow her greatness: Burns and Scott.

(See Notes)
Tabby Boo is a kitty
So sedate and so pretty,
None would think her so thirsty
For Alive-Meat—but O!

She spars with some sparrow
Thru' an alley, tail-narrow,
Purring, "Mouses and Birdies,
And Alive!" Alive? O!

All the tongues snared in Spanish,
All the finesse of English,
Have one throat in her Feline-ish,
Jungle-tempo'd, "Yu-ur-ow!"

Tabby Boo is a Madam—
She rules a Male-Harem—
Oh, th' yowlin' and th' howlin' 
FOR WHAT'S ALIVE, O!

There's no Dick, nor a Harry,
This brindled Beauty would marry—
But there's one Tom, just one Tom
Alive e-NOUGH! O!

Alive, alive, O-HO! . . .
All-alive that "Me-ow-ow!"
Ere the fur flies, and life strives
For a Litter: "me-e-ow!"

Tho' to Her minions, a tigress,
To her master, Her Highness
Is a prim, Pagan-Damsel,
And so-o a-live, O!

ALIVE, ALIVE, OH-HO!
ALIVE, ALIVE, HO-OH!
Clawing Life for its sweet-meats:
And Life's so sweet, O!
MAGUS AHRIMAN

When the Magi from the Cave had gone,
A Fourth Sage came, and "wise" was he;
With a gift he came to the Child new-born,
Feigning love and humility.

To the Virgin he spoke with subtle grace:
"A rumor is rife that Heaven's King
Hath stooped through thee to this lowly place—
Lo, I bring a gift I can afford to bring!
"My gift, though humble, was chosen with care!
Not so this frankincense and myrrh.
I have brought flawless wood for I am aware
Thy husband is a carpenter.
"'Twas my thought that the Child might learn the trade,
And thinking thus, I felled a tree.—
Mayhap from these beams shall a Sign be made
To assure men of their destiny . . . ."

And the Mother knew not why words so fair
Should transfix the pulse in her breast.
Nor could Joseph for all his probing care
Find harm in the words of their guest.
So the gift was taken and laid away;
The giver thanked on the Child's behalf.
All angels sang on that certain Day,
But one Angel tuned Hell's throat—to laugh.

OF MAR'S COLD TEETH

The World trifles with its soul. God's sceptre
And Man's, like swords, are crossed. All seem bitten
By Mar's cold teeth. His North is everywhere.
The Chiefs, their Compasses of Peace, smitten:
Best needles threaded with a Chain!—As written
The Apocalypse comes on. Red the Star,
The gleanings of the Sickle . . . . Should God hold War
His rod, bitterest bread shall be eaten.
Sovereigns of the Cross live—crucified!
The wielders of the Hammer use our nails!
The tools, the twists of Teheran and Yalta,
Serve to make a gibbet of God's altar.
Diplomacy, our Word, long deified,
Still stammers over outrage, and cavails.
SIGNETS OF THE MUSE

BETA SHEAF

In dedication to

The Honorable
Edith Nourse Rogers, M. C.

(Dedication by express permission.)
EARTHTHEM

Earth is sacred: this we know
Not by a flaking-spilth of snow
Upon it fallen; not by its bosom's
Unremitting love for blossoms.
Not by anything earth may yield
By casual stream, in pregnant field,
In form of stalk or leaf or bud,
Do we know the August-Motherhood
Of the common earth is God-confessed
Holy, sublime, sacred, blessed.

Earth is flesh-substance, hearted, souled. —
The tradition-saturated mold
Of her gold-and-purple past makes rich
The miasmal bowels of the ditch.
From sand-dunes and from canyons flash
Tyre-mica and Troy-scented ash!
The current-dust swept from a sill
Comes from beyond the local hill.
Annihilated Nineveh,
Those towns of Eld, Balkh and Ur,
Live in the dust-spores that we sweep
Into a dull inglorious heap,
All unaware our brooms have massed
Immortal particles of the Past,
Atoms of that Thing which will outlast
All worthless things, all things of worth,
God's Image regnant in the earth.

What is earth? . . . . A mystery.
A gravid substance, ruthless, dull,
Intuitive, obtuse, stoical,
Earthly in every particle.
And yet some fire deep in her heart
Plays fuse to science, learning, art.
On her universal-verity
The hinge of all philosophy
Swings nigh the Truth . . . . She is the door
Through which all things come for ever more—
Through which all things go—forevermore.
Each issue of her titan womb
Is an epic-tidbit for the tomb.
Egoist, she primes each thing
Of which she has the offering.
Still, should a flaking seize her slate,
And names fall that we own as great,
Her heart would not articulate
A deeper cry for these; to her
The rose is not above the burr.
In the equality of her plan
Insect and stone are par with Man.
Without appeal, without demur,
She gives the one imprimatur
To all! (Which truth should bid man's wit confess
Earth nothing more than Titaness.)

But fallacy-hitched, that innate clod
Man, seeks Deity in sod.
Exalts mere clay in awe to be
His sole author and eternity.
But earth stays earth: a pregnant Orb
In debt for her life to Helios,
Whose atom-pulse is her kindling-throb
From Fires of the Everlasting Heart.
Yet, the Sun is of the stars; Earth moves apart,
Primate of the Universe.

This Mystery bearing mysteries
Wombs much more than she conceives!
The root-decrees which order her,
Bind all her dignities in mother.
Merely mother, never Maker:
God's agent as giver and as taker.
Awed by her Text man must concede,
Adheres he to, or not to creed,
Hers is the birth but not the Seed.

As pass all things she gives in birth,
Even so shall pass the Earth.
What then exalts the Earth as more
Than earth? . . . . What sanctifies it rind and core?
This: Jesus permitted earth enmesh
His Divinity in flesh.
The Spirit spoke to one preferred
Who gave womb-utterance to the Word.
Lo, what were merely elemental,
Became a Substance, sacramental,
When Mary, large with earth and Heaven
Gave birth to both at Bethlehem.

Though this world God owned abjure the Glory,
God's Birth eludes the transitory,
(Unlike his death); for with earth's womb
Christ made covenant, not with the tomb.

What makes earth more than mere sod
Is that it is potential God!

The Shadow of the Paraclete
That fell on Mary, now falls on wheat!
The same dove-contoured, Spirit-Shape,
Hovers over the chosen grape!
Thus Earth conceives, earth re-creates
The sanctioned Species; this consecrates
The meanest particle of her,
Since from which speck God will recur
We know not, only knowing
The constancy of His coming. . . .

No word of man, no nature-sound
Can compass the pulse of that vast Profound
Humanity speaks of as the ground.
No delving sense or thought can plumb
The awesome mystery of that womb
In whose dark-substance has occurred
Unending Light and endless Word.

(See Notes).
SONG OF THE CHILD—CRUSADERS

The rose-window was a halo above the children's hymn, Parnassian peaks were the organ-pipes, and seraphim Flew like comets through the transcepts, winged harping up the nave! All Christendom was young with hope for its children go to save The Holy Land from the Infidel! — as hermit-Peter bade Their grandsires when thru' ancient Gaul he preached the First Crusade.

Seven cathedrals like to bellow-shells, sounding the Christian-Sea; Trumpets that shook the Heart of the West with militant piety. Jewelled and mitered bishops sat meek on their dais-step And Etienne's child-generals upon their thrones were set! Thus a credulous Church faced Islam with a vision and a child:— The Bedouin laughed in his savage beard — Fatima smiled.

On the morrow grave Etienne, obedient to his Lord, Shall leave the thatch-mud-walls of Cloyes to break the Moslem rod! Shall ride forth like a shade of Christ, on an ass with naught of arms But the roses of the populace and the moral-strength of psalms! Shall ride to crush the Crescent and to void the Turk's defense With the might of virgin-banners and the Sword of Innocence!

His eyes are clear as his vision, his mind is webbed with dream; He has looked upon the Future and has in converse been With the Lord who shall cleave the Alps and pave the Adrian Sea; With the Lord who shall crown this Venture with bloodless victory. Lo! Etienne the blest, the elect of Church (and God!) Looms small in the tapered chancel, Child-champion of the Word!

He has yet to suck the paps of a shrivelling Illusion He has yet to feast on famine and wrestle with delusion. In the lull of a stark Tomorrow is his pledge to prove a thorn, Is the Vow to be accursed and the Standard left forlorn! But now the paeans thunder, now incense wreathes the Host, Peacock windows color all and organs vaunt his boast.

Cecile, the peasant-mystic, the holy maid of Reims, And all her little ewe-lambs bleating about her dreams, Grouped in choir and transept, Cross-herded to their death; Host-high the questing of their eyes, anthem-myrhh their breath. Lo! the pendant-cross in the apse, the carvèd Christ in throe, The wooden Christ re-crucified to see these children go —
Go in His Name to slavery, to butchery and lust;
Go with lilies in their hands, pure-symbols of their trust
In Him!—who must seem as Judas when treason voids their bliss,
When their child-green breasts turn sickly-ripe from Islam's viper-kiss;
When Carnal-Night has fallen, a hell's vomit on their dreams,
And their infant-souls are ravished in the temple of their teens.

Three lengths of golden hemp girt the waist of each eager tot:
Saint Dominic's new-born Rosary,—each Mystery is a knot!
Each child-breast bears a medal entwined with a scapular,
Bright symbols and bright targets for the Turk's deft scimitar!
Today all life and papal-pomp; Tomorrow—the holocaust:
Today the blessed Eucharist-Bread; Tomorrow—Islam's crust!

In the dawn the Child-Crusaders will gather in the mart
To see the Mecca-Crucifix with a crescent through the heart
Of their beloved Savior! to kiss the wound and kneel
And vow to win with virtue where their fathers lost with steel!
Vow to convert whom they conquer! vow to make one Fold
Of East and West while Herods of those Halves debate their worth in gold!

Now glory and pomp and glamor, and trumps of wild applause!—
On the head of a mad Tomorrow the gray-hairs of the Cause!
Now mystic-thewed Te Deums out-soaring the gothic spires—
In the lap of a sad Tomorrow gaunt hopes and dead desires!—
Now the exultant paean, now the clamorous prayer;
Now faith in Faith and miracle-feats, soon terror and despair!

"Glory to Christ! to Elohim! all praise to the Trine be given!
All hail ye Martyrs of old; ye Saints enthroned in Heaven!—
"Dieu le veut! Dieu le veut!" . . . . Throughout Europe crashed their cry
A-breaking with sane Traditions:—breaking the Heart on High! . . . .
The monstrance high up-lifted . . . . the crowns of Europe bowed:
Etienne wrapt in his vision, calm and cherub-browed . . . .

* * * * * * * * *

The rose-window is a halo above the children's hymn,
Parnassian peaks are the organ pipes, and cherubim
Fly hymning through the transepts, wing harping down the nave,
All Christendom is young with hope for the Christ-Child goes to save
The Holy Land from the Saracen, with the Cross!—the Christian's blade
Since Saint Louis sheathed his sword in the tomb of the Last Crusade.

(See Notes)
PHILOMELAN ODE

The casements of the night are glassed with song.
And though darknessthe corner of the sky
Where broods the moon, the nightingale is seen
Silhouetted by Orion's hunting-beam,
Winging with his fledgling notes where cedars throng
The margin of the skies,
A small dun-cloud trailing a golden stream . . .
Solicitous for his song he picks a tree
Whose tops turn roots to springing melody.
Ho! where the virgin Pleiades have flushed
The darkness with their argent-chastity
His song ascends . . . The heavens overplussed
With beauty, swoon among their zenith-boughs;
The dull earth sleeps with music on her brows,
Grass-clay upon her eyes,
Whence roll her ocean-tears in sad monotony.

O dolor-raptures that have roused the sense
Of guilt and pain and loss since Eden's gate
Was barred to man, pour forth tonight as full
As then, and steep him in the beautiful,
And lead him with a song to penitence . . .
Dear Philomel, lift this sphere,
This braggart world that glitters, but is dull!
Weft it in a web of song and bear its freight
Of grievances and woes, and know the weight
Heaven shouldered when men gibbetted their King:
Yea, of that Golgothan Tenebrae articulate
Till all niobe-chords in Nature, nightingaling,
Evoke from earth that God-wrought, dark-delight,
Most native to Man's heart, his natal-right
Since he sprang Joy's first tear,
And predestined sorrows gathered on the lips of Fate.

Care slips from wakefulness; the spirit, walled,
Work-confined and imprisoned through the day,
Sweating the flesh to earn its primal need,
Now draws the bolt of circumstance, and freed
From drudgery, clings to its couch enthralled
As with a soul's incest,
Spirit and its Muse joined in a single reed.  
The nightingale impassioned with his lay,  
Interprets things divine while blooms a May  
Of child-like hopes upon this wintered heart. . . .

Far-blown, the sails of fancy blur away:
Things real turn sweet as dream-fruits from the cart  
Of Somnus stolen . . . Sing on, my Bird of Hope!  
Sing, till the conscious-noose has slipped its rope,  
Till all with sleep are blessed.  
Till weariness is lost and consciousness is stray.

Eros rapes the heart in many bower.
Not age, not birth, not wealth, nor time, nor place,  
Can alter, void, nor change what from the First  
Was made synonymous with hunger, one with thirst:
A passion pulsed by song and breathed in flowers,  
Early-blossoming and late,  
Through youth, maturity and age its blooms dispersed!  
Ah, Love has ever with the Night found grace.  
The chivalry of Time has touched the face  
Of Romance lightly. . . . So, tonight she fills  
Responsive hearts, and secrets in the vase  
Of encompassing night, gloom-etched with hills,  
Gems lapidaried with a kiss or vow:  
O the world is blessed — so very human now  
That I, poor celibate,  
Would welcome even Lethe's kiss, Oblivion's embrace.

Yet never Shade conveyed by sullen Charon  
Across the Triple Rivers where they rage  
Through the labyrinthine caves of Mors and Dis,  
Was ever nearer anguish, nearer bliss,  
Than I, forded on this catamaran  
Of linkèd carollings  
Across the flesh-murked waters of all This:  
Life, lust, love and labor, with death for wage.  
Who learns of Beauty is the only sage.  
Though we grope blind or palsied to her shrine,  
Her ever-budding breasts will nurse our age  
Into a vigor nor of milk nor wine.  
Swoon on, pale Voice! and from each fall arise  
Attar-winged, if dolorous to the skies,  
And beatify all things  
That walk or swim, creep or wing within this terrene-cage.

[40]
Ere freaks-o'-dawn wink sunlight on the rim
Of sky or sea, upon the world's rent eaves
Unfount the cloud-burst of your final rapture;
Eddy the world in song that it may capture
Those peacock-chords that plume this plaintive hymn,
Else breath and being part,
This heart become a censer to this vocal-myrrh!
All men are beauty-lovers and beauty-thieves.
E'en through that androcephalous Pile, there breathes
In Egypt-land, the self-same pulse I own
When your sob-singing throat a magic weaves
Of such sad substance as to soften stone!
When through the brindled dark your warblings ache
In anguish-ecstasies that ever break
The Night's star-shining-heart,
To leave her like some Thor-struck yew mourning for its leaves.

In centuries long dead, in ages gone,
Your wildest note was tamed with reticence.
But this night your unleashed throat has given
A doubting world an aural-glimpse of Heaven! . . . .
A breast—aashen-throb beats through the dawn,
And I, saddened by your flight,
Brood upon your sure return at even.
Night-thaw . . . . and a pausing . . . . and a silence
All tremulous with intermittent sense
Of Song in nested-transportslowly drowsing
Of a Continent's thews a-stir and tense
For duties which the day-hours ever bring.
Languorous still, the dawn-skies gloom and drowse.
Somnus quits his place between each man and spouse.
And twained in Day and Night
The earth moves in a listlessness of lulled suspense.
PART II: BETA SHEAF

Phantassic Phases

In dedication to Canada's Shakespearess

MAZO de la ROCHE

Acknowledging the profound pleasure of two hearts long since gone out to those wildering, witching Characters of the enchanted realms of Jalna and Vaughanlands.——

—Kiminkamor and Tassie Pan.

Utopia Terrace,
Varnum Turrets at Lowell.
October 1958.

Dedication by express permission.
speaking of Tassie,

More than one witness from Follyfoot,*
More'n one from Ashton and Manchester,
Had naught but "Nay!" for the bruit
Of Sara's 'plainness'. These spoke of her
Jocund eyes, pale-saffron cheeks
With pinking-buds in their hollows, and
Lacking words, each deployed a hand
In finger-fanfares on the syllables "Such hair!"—
Now, who badgers dozens, comes to find
One who not merely sees, but speaks
In such wise all become his vision's heir:
(For eloquence serves sight even to the blind).

Imponderable net in the snaring of a man!
Hair minted out in gold, in bronze,
In blonde-hues or in copper,
A la Raphael; a la Titian,
Have all been seen and marvelled at.
But the Archangel of Chapeaux,
(To whom God lends his choicest heads to dress),
For trick-of-coil, and wick-of-color,
For shift of sheens and swirl of tress,
Went all-out in the capping
Of winsome Sara Thatcher.
God's will done, and no mayhaping!
God's will done: the veriest golden-deed;
And all of Nature's arts caught napping,
All feats of stylists gone to seed!
—As there was never such as Sara
Among Modern misses or Classic girls,
Never was such a visor-of-curls
On brow of Garbo or Minerva;
Never such a sagittaric-mitre
On any head in Christendom.
Golden fabric and copper fibre,
All shot through with such a pale-blonde bronze!
Astral-attars intertinting

* Follyfoot: actual place-name.
The burnished flax o' the sun,
Wrought fine upon gossamer-spindles, and spun
Into eye-wilderling glory.
Every hair an antiphon-tone,
Chanting bright-responses on a' the prisma-tints
That embridged halo within halo
To create a hallow-zone
Less of hair than light!
O those high-massed sceptre-glints
In that shimmering hersute-crown!
Outward sign and seal of a Girl
Whose soul's Nature was imperial . . . .

Ho, the highest hats in Follyfoot,
Ape-ing all caps in Follyfoot,
Came off at Sara's passin'
Never young-blade in Follyfoot
But with her would go a-lassin'
But she had sober-gear to tend,
A family's woes to carry;
Nature's nun, pert to befriend
The seven sevens who sought to marry
This home-spun Belle of Follyfoot,
As light of heart as light of foot,
And all her nature winged!

In Follyfoot, in Follyfoot,
In England's Pudding-Shire,
Bloomed she who stuck to Nature's ribs
For all her singing in the Choir.
A Ho and a Hi for Sara Thatcher!
It was in her to slap a squire,
To keep a king true to his sceptre,
Her name a Cheer-Word in the land
From Whitby to Manchester!
Ho-alo-hi for Sara Thatcher!

Now, the wisest head in Follyfoot,
The canniest skull in Yorkshire,
(Not even when abetted
By a "Reeder of Skull Bumps,
Hopperatin' out of Lancashir'"),
Came within a wit of guessing
At the fabulous Soul of Sara,
Tho' rare-signs she gave kept their senses whetted!—
Not those of her blood, nor those of her 'Set',
Tho' affectionate and pressing,
Knew her for a spirit
Alien to their assessing:
For 'their' Sara was that most-secret thing,
That most elusive being,
A mind-pied enscura Offspring
Of the unquenchable race of Pan:
O-a-Ho-a-Lo-Hi!

Now for a Wit-salute to Sara
Who wouldn' be led by goofs,
Who had an inside-eye
That looked thru' each essential Why
And saw among all sorts of proofs
Of Immortality
One truth beyond faint intimations:
*Her youth was not to die*!

Those who knew naught of the term,
Much less aught of *unique*,
Weighed Sara in their puerile-scales,—"A freak."
Who bore a secret beyond the common-ken,
A sprite-limned *Temperament*
That only she could reckon with,
Not that she was always mistress of its pith,
Nor always in the know of *what* it meant.
Yet this one thing she knew:
Her Kindred were in fact her kith.
Her true, her high-born Kin,
Were only where
Her Destiny was to find them.
A magi-crew—

> In mere numbers such a few!
> And ever scattered far.

Nor these to be sought after,
But only to be found
Laughter leading at beck of Luck:—
Each Meeting itself a stratagem of bonds,
The ardent-ancient Greeting
A rushing Hush across all lesser sounds . . . .
Even so They met.

For even as ordained the Event befell,
A heart-wildering, soul-veritable
Meeting and merging of minds:
One of those "Nonesuch", ineffable
Unions which make a mock of time,
God overseering the Eternity that binds.
Intimates—on that instant their eyes met,
Each come seasoned from a vacuum
Filled with people, yet empty of one host
Equipped to have either heart for guest;
Each unrequited soul largely "to let",
Both having barren rooms when came One
Of these upon the Other,
Creating an Arcanum
In which, on which, they lived,
Wakened, matured, and thrived!

Sara, far more self-barred than nature-forbidden
From the role of paramour,
Braced herself to mother
That Imponderable: a "son" she had not borne.
But Kiminkamor, (incorrigible Romanceer),
Would have her naught of either,
Insisting she was his Bride!
Were their souls not wedded? and their minds beside!
A Fact he would have in the nude.
Neither half-veiled, nor varnished,
And the wit-of-his-will quite vanquished
Half the sty-conclusions so native to Cad and Prude.
Zoons agazz! the Pair actually flourished
And in Philistia! Leading Respectabilicans,
Wholly charmed by Tassie's artless fortitude,
Could not but admit to his rectitude at home,
Though certain he doffed it when abroad!
And so their "tune" changed, Tassie an "Angel",
And, wanting her, Kiminkamor—a "scoundrel".

These very Names they'd come by
In coming by each other,
Raised a froth n' pother
In folks who'd sooner own a papal Peter
Than bow their brows to Barrie's Chap!
Folks so "down-to-earth" they couldn't
Give a resounding rap
For anything above roots and ruts and dust!
But Kiminkamor, who hadn't grown up,
And Tassie who simply wouldn't
Ever let herself or him
Obey the world's too-mortal whim
Paired their Secret inside a single thought, and smiled:
—— "Unless ye become as a little child..."

When Destiny's far-flung, long-looping noose
Encircles its cherished prey in interscape coils,
Vain cry the creeds, and every clan
Must tongue a void. For what power can foil
The course of a wheel God breathes upon?
His knots are not even for the bound to loose!
And triply bound, these off-Springsters of Pan!

O, common 'tis for hearts, for wills, for flesh to merge,
But rarely, even upon that vibrant-verge
Of Life, where Love dawns fully
Are two beings wrought into one
As were Kiminkamor and Tassie.
Two spirits so starved, Love's manna deified.
—— One knows, who cannot but walk
Under thrall of that deism,
Albeit the purer divinity has died...

Now this Mirificca that had come
Upon Kiminkamor and Tassie,
Is a Tale for the telling,
And who, if not Peter Pan (or Sir James),
Would find it valid and compelling? —
Peter, the more available!
Approached, proved jealous of his famed Sur-Name's
Lustre, forbidding the linking of Tassie to it!
Whereat, Sir James Barrie, his snozzle lit
With real Scotch Rye, bopped his-self free
From the witching bonds of Never-Never Land,
Gave sad Kiminkamor his hand,
Pert Peter Pan his foot!
And all that follows is but
A minor-flush
Of the pregnant things and lush,
Which that most gallant of authors said.

"Noble Sir, I pray you may accept from me
Peter Pan's apology,
For you may be sure he's sorry now, being 'Down-Under'! —
I, sole author to have created
A valid PAN since the Ancient Piper
Was cognatalated in some Attic head,  
    Find your Theme in honor!  
How could I less? ——being, among others  
A failure at making Age and Youth  
    A credible Twain —— as Lovers:  
My Lord-of-Learning and his Lass,  
Set beside this real-phantasy Two lived,  
    Is a tale less told than lied!  
Nay, were kindred-lovers brought on en-masse  
    In vain had each Pair vied  
With you, Kiminkamor, and your Tassie.  
    Between Marceline Valmore  
And her so-loyal, youthful husband,  
Fate set more years to stand  
    Than a few above that score  
Which lay between great Johnson and his ‘Tetty’—  
These jested at mere years, gallants all!  
Yet these scorned Grotesque the Less.—  
Only to you and your Tassie were to fall  
Thirty-Seven — to be surmounted!  
Such a Triumph for Love and Lovers  
Foregone, had you or your Tassie counted!  
Simplest of hearts! ——— an Aeon-Star for honeymoon!  
Never truer hearts by Love’s occult-pulse allied,  
Minds so-akin; not space, nor creeds, nor voiding years  
    Had foresight to divide!  
Caesarian souls born out of Nature’s unfeigning side,  
    That met, and fused, and simply fronted  
A gross-world with this wholesome fact:  
    Heart-within-Heart sans  
Ring, bell, or booking — your Banns  
Under AEgis of the symbolic Seven*  
Fore-posted in the ‘Nurseries of Heaven’,  
For each of you, ere cradled, were betrothed.  

“Oh, get you some living author, Kiminkamor!  
Tell him this Tale, Kiminkamor!  
Roll your soul in the unfolding manuscript!  
    If true to the truth of your Theme  
His pen canna’ be less than tipped  
With a diamond-bulb of crystal-gold,  
    All facets acting as retrievers  
Of each vital, each exquisite scene,  
A consummate boon  
For all insighteers and True-Believers!  

[Seven: symbol of completeness.]
"Divine enchantments; headlong loves;
Of these Christ and Eros inherit well,
And true-love's fresh-antique spell
Is celebrated in all sane hearts enough.
But few life-urns compass those ashless troves
Fate mines and mints from virgin-ore,
   Nor stamps alone what's gold-i'-the-buff,
      But seals with Love's Insignia
         The regnant-core.
A Gift princes would go a-begging for!
A Pearl cradled in the Shell of the Unknown,
   And THIS free-strown
      Upon Tassie Pan and you!
Chosen Two of a necessary Few!
   Elect of Eros, that lord of love
Essaying to have one love as pure, as dear.
And you doubt this Story should be blown
   Into the wide world's ear
Lest some heeder barks, 'Incredible!'
   Come, my man!
Who doubts there IS a PETER PAN?
And how oft we've heard that thunder-Clap
   Revoke the death of Tinker Bell!
Ten-thousand hands quitting the peace of the mass-lap,
   And 'cynics' first in that call-to-arms! —
Why, Our Lord alone has evoked a greater show of palms!
   — Of all who've heard, you should most heed,
      Having a true-tale to tell,
Where I had but a fable-case to plead! —
Your fay-like Tassie has no real,
   Much less a mythical peer,
Being a Spirit quite-un-fictionated,
A creature by the Master of us all created,
   Albeit she was plighted to Pan's Domain whilst here!

 "O would that the Genius
Whose fires you have urned in the name Laburnos,
He who catered from choice to Sita-Folk**
   Might be cornered in Charing Cross,
      And tempted with this Theme!
His Orphean-gifts a beaten yolk
   Of fantasstic-stars;
His quill plumed with thoughts of his lost Anne,
   And all the Child in him lured to a stirring
Under sweet-stress of a syllable-dream: —

** Little Folk.
What rainbow-fonts were jet-loosed for an airing!
A Song then for comparing
With his 'Sister Songs'!
Exquisite, quintessential thongs
Such as bind Monica and Sylvia
To immortality,
Strung taut to bear the graver audacity
Needed to en-star
The folly-fair Graces of Tassie Pan.

—Take heart!
There's never a lack of Quillsters here below!
Bludgeon, blackmail,—stop at naught
Until you've got one hobbled to your thought,
Then paddle into him the Particulars . . .

By such as Tassie with you, conjoint,
Literature's ever-coming Star
Should acquire some needed Point!
For now, mine host, what can I other
Than confess me nothing loath
To right warmly own you and Tassie both
Rightful heirs to the pipes and crown
Of the High and Ancient Pan-Daemon!
—And this, by a seldom-out Fiat!

Whereat
Blythe Sir James took off . . . Then
There broke a silvery-singing:
Never in such voice was Tinker Bell!
She a-flutterin' and a-tinklin',
Her pretty virgin-wings a-crinklin'
As they fanned out this Aria of welcome and farewell:

"Love (over) enough to Tassie Pan!
A Spirit we found so real,
She must at birth be barred forever
From our Land of Never-Never:
Yet—for this woe there was a Weal:

"Tassie's heart, all-wholesome-core,
Found a lasting-niche and seal,
Found both in America
When she'd found Kiminkamor!

"And, once he had discovered her,
A Pilgrim-Heart like to his own, and true,
He cited to Fate the Pilgrim's State
As their Land of Ever-Aver!

"Bra-vo! Tassie Pan:
Bra-vo! Kiminkamor:
Viva! delightful Twain
Forevermore!"

(So long as nuptials of fact and fiction last
'Tis a safe-say
No brash-waxing ass will dast
Bray aught to the contrary
Of the in-kennin' eye of Sir James Barrie!
Viva! Tassie Pan!)

No Damozel inadequate for Heaven,
Nor fancied dryad of a fabled tree,
Nor the like of that un-brined Aphrodite
Shell-borne from the Sea:—
Nay, Tassie Pan was real!
A being selfless to the Ninth,
This virtue her inviolate dais,
The Father's Justice
Its enduring plinth.
Spiritual daughter of occult Seven,
Elfin-hearted as never elf,
An Adornna made for some mystic-shelf
On the laughing-side of Heaven,
But loaned by the God Who made her
To a poor fool who so needed her
To warm his poverty, and foil his folly,
A youth who would find her jolly
In periods dire for both.
Oh, the death of Judas on him were he loath
To flake his heart and rain his mind
In a storm-of-tribute to her:
Kindling fire and burnished steel
A mind that dared to understand
How Evil lies in need of Good;
Even as dared her heart to feel
For the fallen who had nobly stood
Had their lives been blest with Woman-Weal!
Oh, feather-soft kindness, strong to bind
A fallen man to wings! —
Even one erst-fallen, sings —
And the world cannot but hear.

(End of Proem: Tassie Pan.)
THE PASSING OF KUBLA KHAN

I

Nigh Xanadu the gnarled witch-trees
Shed the scents of their deadly spice,
Shed their wan-leaves in the shadow
Of Kubla’s dome—all sun-and-ice!—
This for a sign: the Khan is dead;
Kubla gone, and the Dome to follow,
Follow the orient-shade of the Khan
Through caverns fathomless to man,
   Down to a sombre sea.

II

Still cloud-borne above the river,
   The Dome laughs back its head!
A thing of life and pleasure
Still—of such a stinging beauty
Hearts ask, “Is Beauty then, as the bee?
This honey-colored dome her hive?”
But no: the sting in this beauty is solely this:
The kind and kingly Khan is not alive.

III

In a night when the world was dumb,
   Even the nightingale!
The Dark-Roc had come
Under the shearing-wings of Azrael,
And gathered Kubla’s spirit up—
   Om! Dyaus Pitar! Om avo’!
   Yatha ahu vairyo . . .
The moon, Night’s fanusi khiyal,
Nor light, nor image showed,
But the far skies were white
Where the flaking Parwin snowed
Athwart the vaulting shoulders of the night
All-shrouding . . . . It was then
That under thrall of Yama’s Orb, Tijen,
The divining-bard of Tartar-Realm,
Saw in his glass the Shade of the Khan
Quit the pall of karma

[52]
And, touch-lead by his wee Cocacin,  
   Enter upon Nirvana  
To find the Galilean  
   And the elder Polos there!

((When, late, the gay Venetians hear,  
Be this bruit as fragrant-lees in Marco’s cup,  
For there is much sipping of wisdom here.))

IV

Though the Orient’s heart be wrung,  
   And the far-flung gongs resound,  
The noble Khan’s last-words are hung  
   Within each subject-ear —  
Balm for an Empire’s wound.

“Be it known that Fate is a mask to kiss,  
That the Wise hold Anguish the wry-twin of Bliss.—  
Be then no mourning upon this  
Heart’s deposing of its pulse.

Nay, confide it when throeless, unto Alph,  
   Our sea-seeking River,  
   That Ocean may bed  
This heart where no dust is,  
Nor vile worms to unthread  
The fabric of its sanctities:

O children of Immemorial Verities,  
Inherit of my peace in this ye do!”

V

Within the sentinel-walls of Xanadu  
The ancient, Solemn-Rites are heard,  
Even as Kubla would have them said,  
   Barren of one cypress-word,  
For sorrow were dishonor!

Lo, seven creeds become as a single Sraddha!  
Each having had strict reverence from Kubla,  
   Nor any thwarted by his Sword.  
So each of the Seven now invokes its Lord,  
Chanting, “Peace be unto him! —  
   Peace upon this vast Domain! —”

But alas for Kubla’s realm,  
Outcasts from the Awe,  
Hone even now the Scimitar,  
Take vows against this quietus  
Upon their echoing “Ancestral voices  
Prophesying war.”

[53]
VI

Urn-night,—and the child-heart of Cathay
From mourning mutely in its ancient-crib,
Rises to breast the funeral-day,
Filling court and street with plaintive-cheer:
Mongolese interstrewn with Persian,
Tongue favored of the Khan,
Bell-tongue of Khayyam
Tolled to Hope's measure about the eaves of Xanadu:
"Life,—a subhi kazib—
Death,—the Subhi Sadik!—
O, at Tamam Shud each noble, mortal-candle
Inherits an Eternal-Wick!
Then rejoice for Great Kubla,
Our Khan's glory aver!
Never one throe granted Rue
Out of all the hearts in Xanadu!"

VII

Thus dark hearts light up with love for the Khan
Who built the breast-like Dome,
That the passionate-searching eyes of man,
(Seeking ever for Beauty's home),
Might look above the mud-drugged river,
And drink of a deeper draught than water,
And turn, ere tipst, with scornful laughter
From the purple-teats of the vine;
For what is water and what is wine
Beside a milk that is all-divine?
Beside that milk which each mortal craves
From Beauty who ennobles and enslaves.

VIII

But Fate now rules at beck
Of the Black Lama of the Gobi,
Whose sceptre is the gruesome Arbre Sec,
Tree of white boughs, be-writhed with leprosy,
Its carnal-brawn eaten of by Adam
After Lilith diced with Eve, and three were wise!
So—nigh Xanadu now the white-witch-trees
Cast down their leaves for dice.
And Who games with the Reaper-Wind decrees
That the Khan's sunny dome with its 'caves of ice'
Shall pass as though never made!
Thaw from the world and fade
As a dream on the dreaming river,
Give itself to the Veil-ward waves,
And return its Thrall to the giver.

Ah, better to fade than break!
To pass like some halo'd myth:
Better thus to go and take
Its Grace to the Khan in death.

Oh! stricken where it stands,
The Dome wavers down to that heart-of-hands
That raised it above the river.
Goes like a ghost-moon fading ever—
A fair image showing its contours thrice:
In air, in water, and through the ice!—
Trine-visions returning never!
Fading amid the eerie waves,
Fading among the yawning caves
Where Alph, the sacred river,
Undefiled by sail or swimmer,
Surges down for ever,
Down to a surfless sea.

Call back the damsel, the dulcimer,
The song of Mount Abora,
To mourn what man cannot rebuild,
That blonde-vision in alabaster
More golden than Savitar, the Master
Of all golden things, could gild!
Call back dulcimer and damsel
But Song, though it were sung
By those old Sanangs of Kubla's tongue,
Can never cast nor cancel
Death's shadow from the river
That mirrors back no vision
Of the glory that is gone,
Of the beauty doubly gone:
Gone to the old creator, Khan,
Through caverns fathomless to man,
Down—down to a cypress-sea.

XIII

Wise that Oracle which saith,
The living are most cheated by Death,
Who draws each thing exquisite,
Be it of mortal made, or mortal spirit,
Through the div-womb of his Holy Mountain,
Too high for fondest heart to follow,
Too high!—even though its pulse be drawn.

XIV

Not the heart?
Then the soul goes out on the breath!
Goes hounding out the haunts of Death!
Goes wailing through vale and chasm
Wilders than ever woman
"Wailing for her demon-lover!"—
A shree that leaps like a dirk from cover,
Divinely stabbing away from human!
Stabbing like the temple-falcons thrown
Into the air of the Unknown
Where, (once Earth reels from its orbit-thrall),
Kubla's Dome may bloom and brood forever.
Ah-h-h-h-l-l-l! —

Above the ghoul-howls of the mountains,
Shriller-rising than Kubla's fountains,
High-under the wan, beam-shredded moon,
Eerily flowing as the river,
It passes—a mournful-passion,
Into those caverns measureless to man,
Where a mute and tideless ocean
In a trance of green devotion,
Buys the sunny dome of pleasure
Above its only mortal treasure,
The silent heart of Kubla Khan.

(See Notes)
Author's Notes

To Lowell: The opening stanza refers to a happening around 1931: the author, about to leave City Hall, was arrested by the play of hues in the stained-glass representation of Lowell's SEAL above the entrance. Though vividly retained, memory of this incident was not to take on any marked significance until a full decade later.

Stanzas 2, 3 and 6: The sentiments expressed are of such type and depth, it becomes them to be packed-in-brief.

Stanza 5: “a kindred heart” . . . . See First Night—After.

Lines On The Beautiful Church Of Saint Michael: (Lowell). Of the many splendid churches the author has studied, he has never seen such flawless symmetry as, in this Church's interior, magnifies that style known as Romanesque. These Lines were occasioned by what may best be termed the fulfillment of this edifice when, well over a decade and a half ago, a glorious set of stained-glass windows were installed.

First Night—After: Tassie—a name coined by the author for his foster-mother, Sarah Thatcher, a Lincolnesque soul whose death this poem commemorates. Many poems in this Collection are the better for her sage insight and ever-constructive criticism.

Conjugala: pronounced, Con—joo—gay—la.

Tribute Lines To Helen Keller: “Interpreter: i.e., Miss Anne Sullivan. On Reading Carlyle's “Essay On Burns”: Somewhere around the mid-section of his splendid “Essay” Carlyle says: “The Edinburgh Learned . . . looked at Burns . . . as at a highly curious thing.” Again: “Had the 'patrons of genius,' who could give him nothing, but taken nothing from him!” The Poet's election as poet-laureate of the Canongate Kilwinning Lodge of Freemasons aided him in no substantial sense. Even so, Edinburgh outdid Dumfries—handily! In the latter town a smug set of alleged “Aristocrats”, warmly cherishing the most flagrant “bounders” within their Caste, made savage amends for this flouting of “respectability” by pilloring Burns for transgressions minor by comparison. Nature had sprung one of her Aristocrats upon them, and the reality of Genius allied to basically sound Character was not to be suffered by those jaded Dumbfrians. Putridity will out—Iago!

“Edinbur”, incorrect. Edinboro is the proper pronunciation.

The Man Jesus: Shemóneh Esréh—“Eighteen Benedictions".
Earthanthem: “Mary large with earth and Heaven”: “Dust thou art” applied to Mary, but she was preserved from any “return to dust”, Her Son’s Power effecting her Assumption.

The stanza beginning, “Though this world God owned abjure the Glory”: — These four lines compass the most singular of all Divine-Paradoxes. For Christ’s dying was, in effect, an Act of Birth; His Death a transitory Fact. As Saint Paul witnesses, Our Redeemer died but once: “As often as you shall eat this bread, and drink the chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord.” (I Cor. II, 26). In a word, Calvary presents the Consummation of the Incarnation. Under the species of bread and wine by which means the Sacrifice of Golgotha is commemorated, we have the prime elements of the Saviour’s “cov­ enant with earth”.

Song of The Child-Crusaders: Of various sources consulted the most authoritative, and certainly the most succinct version of “The Children’s Crusade”, is quoted here verbatim from page 428 of “The History of the Church of God”. This volume carries the “Imprimatur” of Cardinal McCloskey, the Author being The Rev. B. J. Spalding, who writes on the page cited, (Volume II): “In the year 1212 some fifty thousand children, mostly French and German, under the leadership of a pretended monk, who preached to them that the Holy Land could only be reconquered by innocence rather than by valor and military strategy, set out for Palestine. Those of them who did not perish of fatigue and hunger were betrayed into the hands of the Saracens, and were sold as slaves.”

No other version of The Children’s Crusade which this writer has studied, confirms the death—or enslavement of the entire 50,000 participants. It is “known” for instance that the German children, led by a youth of 17, named Nicholas, and roughly numbering 20,000, became separated in the Alpine passes, a host of some 8,000 returning to their homes. The remainder, suffering numerous losses in crossing the Alps, marched upon Rome where the Pope, Innocent III, praising them for their faith and courage, advised their return. The few thou­sands who returned by ship reached Germany little the worse for their venture. But the 6,000 who returned by the land route, were severely decimated among the treacherous Alpine passes. Not only were they at the mercy of the elements, but open to a worst fate from the unconverted Barbarians who dwelt in the mountain-caves. The ragged and wretched remnant of these thousands who did reach the Rhineland struck all beholders with such a wratful pity that the crusading spirit could not be roused even by the appeal of Innocent III, in 1215, roughly two and half years after this catastrophe. But the fate in store for the French children (who set out within months of the German tots), was of a far worse order. This is the phase of this weird Venture which the Poem in this Collection deals
with. It appears that the French host under Etienne, gravely paraded to the Alps but, recognizing the delays incident to crossing them, turned south; marched on Marseilles. This port-city had a Ghouls' quarter, and it was there that Etienne's host was inveigled to ship on various boats, their "officers" gaining the children's confidence by several means, the most effective being the fact that some were veterans of prior Crusades. Once the Mediterranean was crossed, masks fell, and the children found themselves fore-sold into the ruthless hands of Saracen masters... Doubtless some boats reached Christian havens or, landing at enemy ports, found here and there a Saladin quick to moderate their plight with justice and kindness. But these are hopes echoing legends of dubious worth. Under the rosiest glass The Children's Crusade marches with rending tread across the senses. Even so, this dark enigma is not lacking in rational light. For it seems plain enough that the Prelates of Germany and France saw the recruiting and departure of the tots as purely a harmless venture fraught only with means for instilling those sturdy virtues necessary to meeting the rigours of their times. Their trust in the Bishops of the south to turn the marchers back was fully realised at Arles, Rome, Ostia and Brindisi. What was not foreseen by the Innocents of the Cloth was the monstrous betrayal by the Judases of Christendom. Scripture cited, fully compasses the Event: "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Lu 16, 8.

Clarifications by stanzas: "Seven cathedrals" (stanza 2) refers to the chief scenes of jubilation before departure, notably Paris, Reims, St. Denis, Chartres and Arles, while in Germany the centers of celebration were Cologne and Strasbourg. Etienne: (Stephen). "... child-generals upon their thrones": This legend likely. Children are allowed great latitude in the churches throughout the Christmas Season in certain European countries, Italy especially.

"Thus a credulous Church faced Islam," etc. "Church" in this context refers to France and Germany primarily. (That the Roman Court was aloof from, indeed ignorant of, this particular Crusade is shown by Pope Innocent III, in discouraging those children who reached Rome.)

Stanza 4: To Etienne, as to Nicholas of Cologne, the "vision" was valid past question. That their elders could share so whole-heartedly in their credulity attests to a vital faith, and draws upon the sympathy of this writer, much as he deplores the unfortunate results. It is a chastening thought to reflect upon the dismal fact that we of these overly sophisticated times would shrink from even the minor difficulties which beset this major enterprise.

Stanza 6: Girls and young ladies, attended by sturdy matrons (chaperones), proved themselves as dauntless as the boys. Happily, most of the females in the German ranks returned home while still within
Europe. Those who took ship, even as some who did not, were ill-treated and raped, nor by the infidels only.

Stanza 10: How characteristic of infantile enthusiasm that Te Deums were sung ere the triumph!

Stanza 11: "Dieu le veut!" i.e., "God wills it!" A rallying cry for all the Crusades, originating with Peter the Hermit.

Stanza 12: "... the Cross! — the Christian's blade," etc. is, broadly considered, correct. For Lepanto was a Battle-in-Defense of Europe and Christian interests. The Church's recourse to the Sword after the death of St. Louis, whether against Lutheran, Calvinist, or Saracen, was based on the necessity for defense, albeit there were occasional infractions against this new principle.

Étienne: pronounced, Ahr te en. (Stephen.) He was 13 years old.

* * * * • * * *

The author wishes to acknowledge the gracious permission given by the Editors of THE READER'S DIGEST, by which certain data contained in an article by Marquis James "The Children's Crusade", has been condensed and incorporated into the above Notes, those in respect to the German children in especial point. Mr. James' article appeared in THE READER'S DIGEST issue for May, 1934.

Author's NOTES on "The Passing Of Kubla Khan".

I, VIII, IX: "Witch-trees", a semi-barren species supposed to have sprung from the Forbidden Tree of Eden, Adam having unwittingly taken a limb thereof for his staff ere leaving Paradise. This staff, buried with Cain, became the root from which sprang the Arbre Sec. —VIII: "Black Lama of the Gobi": mythical demon-ruler of that Desert: Lilith: According to both Persian and Rabbinical lore she was Adam's first mate before Eve was made. See Bible, Isaiah, 34: v. 14.

OM: (III), A mystic salutation to Deity used by both Hindus and Buddhists. Dyaus Pitar, a Sanskrit term meaning "Father of Light". Om Avo, "God calls away". Yatha ahu vairyo, "The Lord's Will is righteous law". Fānūsi khiyāl, a magic-lantern of cylindrical shape, painted with Images which blend as it revolves. Parvin, the Pleiades. Yama, Hindu god who takes charge of the dead. Karma, Law of Retribution. Cocacin, beloved grand-daughter of Kubla Khan whom Marco Polo loved but, obedient to the Khan's will, the Venetian escorted her to Persia where she became Queen of the Khan, her cousin Ghazan, she dying within a year. Nirvana, the state of perfect union with the All-Good. The equivalent of Heaven, Paradise; hence the Galilean there: (as 'divined' by Tijen.)
V: Sraddha, i.e., “Faith”. The Seven (creeds) being the major religions of India, China and Persia, and including those of the Near East and the West, namely, Judaism, Mohammedanism, and Christianity. All these Faiths were given equal status in the Mongolian Empire, which fact of itself shows Kubla the most advanced Monarch of his era. Nor was his a mere attitude of toleration. He sent the Polos on a mission to the Pope, (Gregory X), requesting that a hundred Catholic theologians be sent to expound the merits of Christianity at his Court. (Presumably the drain caused by the Crusades prevented the Pope’s granting of the Emperor’s request.)

VI: In that all the languages of the East are in direct debt to Sanscrit, the Persian phrases are in essential harmony with Indian, Mongolian and Arabian terms as found scattered among the stanzas. Subhi kāzib: “false dawn”. Subhi sādik: “true dawn”. Tamām Shud: “The very end”.

XII: Damsel, dulcimer, “Ancestral voices prophesying war”; — and other well-known terms from Coleridge’s Kubla Khan were employed for what might be called “the power of association”. Their use should not lead to the rash assumption that The Passing of Kubla Khan is an attempt to “complete Coleridge’s fragment. Rather, the contrary is in point. For where Coleridge would rebuild the Dome

“Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song. . . . . . ”

my concept depicts the Dome as vanishing past recall: — symbolic of the in evadible doom (in the Here) of all things superb. Hence, div-womb, (XIII), symbolic of an ultimate renaissance of ‘each thing exquisite, Be it of mortal made, or mortal spirit’ . . . . Div: Hindu term meaning “final”; “ultima”.

Sanangs: Mongolian mystics whose esoteric chants were supposed to bring about miraculous effects.

XIV: Shree: a plaintive, piercing cry.

These “Notes” have been drawn up as aids toward clarifying a Fantasy built around random data, loosely related to certain historical person ages and facts.

G.C.

Note: The Lines on the Beautiful Church of Saint Michael were first printed in the Column conducted by Mr. Charles Sampas: Lowell Sun: Feb. 18, 1947.

Notation: All poems in this Collection are in their final-form, voiding any and all versions dated prior to January 7th, 1959.

G.C.
Index

TITLE PAGE .................................................................................................................. i
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ............................................................................................... ii
ADDITIONAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ....................................................................... iii
TRIBUTE PREFACE — A Salute to Francis Joseph Meehan, M.A. ...................... iv
FOREWORD .................................................................................................................. v
Tribute Preface: To Lowell ......................................................................................... viii
To Lowell ...................................................................................................................... ix
Lines On The Beautiful Church of St. Michael with Elucidacion ....................... x
ALPHA SHEAF (In dedication to Eugene A. Fitzgerald, P.E.R.) (With Encomium: E.A.F.) xi
The Divine Playmate (and) The Aging of Agnes ...................................................... 1
Senior and Junior (and) The Least Touch of the World ......................................... 2
Even as a Child Found in the Temple, Berceuse, (and) At Parting ......................... 3
First Night — After ...................................................................................................... 4
Conjugala ...................................................................................................................... 5-6
Portrait of a Lady ........................................................................................................ 7
Spring's Stars Were Out (and) A Plea To My Beatrice ............................................ 8
Daughter of Somnus (and) Time Blurs the Image .................................................... 9
The Stars Lie Close (and) Now .................................................................................. 10
Tribute Lines to Helen Keller (and) Braille ............................................................ 11
Spring Genesis (and) Knell ...................................................................................... 12
Return To Wisdom (and) Christ: The Key ............................................................ 13
Rock Versus Stone (and) Orphans of the Cross ...................................................... 14
Autumn Hour (and) Who Bears A Dream ................................................................ 15
Be It Never In Our Scorning (and) Scandal Stone ................................................ 16
Such Is My Shield (and) Padraic Longs For Heaven ............................................. 17
Receive a Vision (and) The Dual One .................................................................... 18
Anatomy Of Light ..................................................................................................... 19
God Has Shaped Each One In Strangeness (and) The Poet .................................... 20
On The Coming of the Word (and) Whom Beauty Wounds ................................. 21
The Dark Canvas (and) The Poppy of the King ........................................... 22
To Francis Thompson (and) No "Trackless Fugitive" ................................ 23
America Go-Bragh (and) Westminster ...................................................... 24
The Man Jesus ......................................................................................... 25
Plea For Another Lincoln (and) Omniscope ............................................. 26
Two Toms (and) Satan's Question On Beholding The Creation of Man ...... 27
The Immaculate Conception ..................................................................... 28
MacArthur .............................................................................................. 29
After Reading Carlyle's Essay On Burns .................................................. 30
Tabby Boo ............................................................................................... 31
Magus Ahriman, (and) Of Mars Cold Teeth ............................................ 32
Beta Sheaf:  
(In dedication to the Honorable Edith Nourse Rogers, M.C.) .................. xiii
Earthanthem ......................................................................................... 34-36
Song of the Child-Crusaders .................................................................. 37-38
Philomelan Ode ..................................................................................... 39-41
Part II: Beta Sheaf (In dedication to Mazo de la Roche) ......................... xiv
Tassie Pan ............................................................................................. 43-51
The Passing of Kubla Khan ..................................................................... 52-56
Author's Notes ....................................................................................... 57-61
Index ...................................................................................................... 62-63